

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD  
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
January 12, 2010  
MINUTES**

**Call to Order**

6:00pm: Chairman~ James Spillane called the meeting to order.

**Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag**

Chairman Spillane asked all to rise and pledge allegiance to the Flag.

**Present:**

James Spillane~ Chairman, Don Daley~ Vice Chairman, Richard Pitman, Tom Dillon and Harriet Cady

**Also Present:**

Steve Barry~ Selectman Representative, Bonnie Beaubien~ School Board Representative and Nese Farrell~ Recording Secretary

**Absent:**

Kevin Briggs, Liz Murphy, Peter Menard & Bill Carboneau

**Announcements:**

Chairman Spillane announced that the Public Hearing notice was posted some hours short of the seven days prior of the meeting requirement and upon advisement, the Public Hearing was rescheduled to January 19, 2010 at 6:00pm at the Town Hall; the reschedule notice was posted around town and on the Town website.

**Citizen's Comments:**

Walt Hooker asked how the Municipal Budget Committee (MBC) missed the deadline by ten hours. Chairman Spillane replied that it was posted Wednesday morning (1-6-10) and someone called up stating it should have been posted by 6:00pm on Tuesday, January 5<sup>th</sup>. He added that although they counted seven full days, the DRA said it was their understanding of the RSA that it should be seven full 24-hour periods, not seven full days.

Selectman Barry noted that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) has a public hearing at 7:00pm on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 and they may have to suspend the MBC meeting and move to the BOS meeting. They would be unable to do both meetings at the Town Hall, as the BOS meeting was already posted as being held at the Town Offices. There was discussion on which groups could begin speaking first to allow the BOS to get there after their meeting; they may take a Motion at the beginning of the meeting that the order may be moved around.

**Unfinished Business:**

None

**New Business:**

Selectman Barry stated that he is really concerned about the amount of email being generated by the MBC and asked who was saving the emails. Chairman Spillane stated that if it is email to everyone on the MBC list it is typically regarding coordinating or minutes that are unable to be opened. He said records of the minutes are being copied over to the BOS representative and the Town Administrator. He said that he was told when copied to the Town Administrator it was being downloaded, and that he himself saves all the emails. Selectman Barry confirmed that the BOS are not saving the MBC emails.

He added that he is concerned about minutes being put out to be edited, prior to being brought to the following meeting (that the minutes are to be sent to all the members to see what's going on). He stated they are to be completed, presented to the Board and then corrections or comments can be made upon the approval process. He feels that there is entirely too much business being conducted on email. Chairman Spillane disagreed, as he feels that discussing when they are going to show up to the meeting, talking about spellings of names or asking for assistance on difficulty opening documents is not conducting business. He added that he does appreciate the input and in the future they will try to cut down on the number of the emails that are going through or being copied to recipients that don't need to be copied.

Selectman Barry stated that the Town is now working on a policy to make sure that all their Boards and Committees understand the posting requirements, as well as all the requirements of RSA 91A.

**Old Business:**

None

**Updates:**

**Board of Selectmen Updates**

Board of Selectmen Representative, Steve Barry referred to the warrant articles and notified the MBC that the Broadcast Article has been pulled, as they have found a cheaper way to broadcast; by either getting Metrocast to give them a grant for it or fund raising. The IT Director believes that they can use the existing video camera equipment by buying some microphones; at an expense of \$3,400.00.

He informed the MBC that the warrant article concerning purchasing the Volunteer Fire Department and the Deerfield Rescue Squad property is back on the table. He said that the DRA and the attorneys have said that a Public Hearing needs to be held and it needs to be considered like a bond issue; there were concerns on how they were going to pay this, who they were going to pay, the deed restrictions and bond issues.

Selectman Barry informed the MBC that the Library's heating system broke down and is in need of replacement. He said that the BOS added \$4,000.00 to the Library Maintenance Repair line at the BOS meeting last night. This would bring that number up to \$4,600.00, raising the Library total to \$81,778.00. He added that they have been made aware of grants that are available that may cover this and they will be looking for an offsetting grant.

**MOTION:** Selectman Barry moved to approve the new Library total of \$81,778.00.

**SECONDED:** Bonnie Beaubien seconded the Motion.

Harriet Cady asked if the \$4,000.00 was put in the budget and then they get a grant for it, would it mean that the money would be in two places, as it will be in the budget already, where as a warrant article would offset. Chairman Spillane confirmed that they have to budget to offset by a grant. Selectman Barry replied that due to the late hour, the BOS didn't have time to put a warrant article in and no matter what happens the Library needs to be heated and viewed as an emergency repair as time is of the essence; if they pay for it out of the budget and receive a grant, the money will be returned to the General Fund.

**VOTE:** Chairman Spillane called for the Vote. It was a Unanimous Vote in Favor.

Selectman Barry referred to the Data Processing line and said they have received and awarded bids for the Revaluation of properties; the total cost came in as \$149,500.00. The BOS has adjusted the Revaluation Budget and have changed the contract appraisal line to \$180,500.00. They have added \$3,500.00 to the postage line, bringing it to \$3,750.00; which would lower the bottom line to \$220,241.00.

**MOTION:** Selectman Barry moved the Data Processing bottom line of \$220,241.00.

**SECONDED:** Vice Chairman Don Daley seconded the Motion.

Mrs. Cady did not agree with the BOS bid process and the \$17,000.00 to the appraisal company on top of the Revaluation of a year. She feels that the Revaluation should take care of everything; the updates and others. She believes that anything previously billed to April 1<sup>st</sup> (when the Revaluations are dated) goes in it; valuing everything up to April 1, 2011. She stated that the last time Deerfield did a Revaluation that the revaluation company did the mailing and mailed the Town a book that listed everyone's valuation. She feels this contract will cost the Deerfield taxpayers and this line should be cut \$17,000.00 as they should not be paying for anything update wise in that year.

Selectman Hooker replied that the \$180,500.00 is made up of three lines; \$149,500.00 for the Revaluation, \$17,000.00 for General Assessing and \$14,000.00 for Utility Assessing done by another company. He added that the \$17,000.00 for General Assessing includes things that are not included in the Revaluation; such as an Abatement for last year and pick ups during the year. He confirmed that April 1<sup>st</sup> is what the Town is assessed at for an entire year and if something comes down before that or after that it is not included. There are pick ups to account for those things that are not there and will eventually come back (ex: sheds could come up anytime during a year, home remodels or home additions put on that were not part of the Revaluation done on April 1<sup>st</sup>).

He confirmed that DRA reviewed the RFP for the Revaluation and General Assessing and gave it their approval, as well as the final copy with all the changes that was released for the bidding process. The bids that came in were evaluated and the contract was awarded to Avatar and has been sent to DRA for their review.

**VOTE:** Chairman Spillane called for the Vote. It was a 6-1 Vote in Favor.

**MOTION:** Harriet Cady moved to remove \$17,000.00 in the General Assessing for "pick ups".

**SECONDED:** There was no second. The Motion failed.

Selectman Barry confirmed the warrant article to lease a truck for the Highway Department was pulled and that the BOS decided to put a warrant article forward to see if the Town would vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$111,764.00; of which \$79,500.00 is for the purchase of a 2010 International truck and \$32,264.00 is to purchase and install a body/sander. He added that the BOS feel it is as important as a cruiser is to operating the Highway Department and based on past experience, the best way to go is with a new vehicle.

Vice Chairman Daley asked if they had any discussion on the removing the \$35,000.00 in the budget for the used truck. Selectman Barry confirmed that the BOS would restrict the use of that \$35,000.00 should this article pass. Selectman Hooker confirmed this and added that the \$35,000.00 is allocated for the truck and cannot be pulled out before the warrant article either passes or fails. Chairman Spillane asked if the \$35,000.00 was cut out of the budget and the warrant article failed, would the old truck last another year, and if so, would they have to increase the maintenance line. Selectman Barry confirmed it could last another year, and the maintenance line was sufficient as it stood.

Selectman Barry offered to go on record to fight any attempt to use that \$35,000.00 if this warrant article passes and added that the Town should trust their elected officials to do what they say they are going to do. Tom Dillon stated that due to the economy, he would feel more comfortable to spend \$35,000.00 for the used truck, even if it only lasted a few years. Vice Chairman Daley would recommend the \$35,000.00 be a warrant article as well.

**MOTION:** Selectman Barry moved to approve this amended warrant article.

**SECONDED:** Vice Chairman Daley seconded the Motion.

**VOTE:** Chairman Spillane called for the Vote. It was a 5-2 Vote in Favor.

### School Board Updates

School Board Representative, Bonnie Beaubien referred to the information she provided the members and summarized: Shall the District vote to raise and appropriate the cost items set forth in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Deerfield School Board and the Deerfield Education Association for the 2010/2011 fiscal year, which calls for the total of \$48,832.00 for increases in salaries and benefits. And to further raise and appropriate the sum of \$48,832.00 for the 2010/2011 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional cost attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year. She referred to the Note: Pursuant to RSA 273-A:12, if approved, the terms of this collective bargaining agreement, including the pay plan, but excluding cost of living increases, will continue in force and effect until a new agreement is executed.

She stated that this is an explanation of the Evergreen Law and it comes directly from the Legislature (whom passed it in the last Session), which took effect July 1, 2009. Selectmen Barry questioned the wording of the warrant article stating "estimated increases in salaries and benefits". Mrs. Beaubien said that due to FICA and the percentages may be why they needed to use the word "estimated", but that Peter Aubrey would need to be the one to explain it. Chairman Spillane added that the word could leave it open to an estimate that may go up and maybe it should read "no more than" or "not to exceed".

Mrs. Cady addressed the wording in the Note: Warrant Article #1 (operating budget article) does not include separate Warrant Articles #2, #3 and #4. She asked if one is missing as there are only three shown. Mrs. Beaubien confirmed there are four and this information will be completely presented next week.

Mr. Dillon asked what the items are that added up to \$48,832.00. Mrs. Beaubien said that according to the contract that the teachers have now, when they reach the tenth step on the salary scale, they are at the top and unless the base salary increases they will not receive more money. She offered to try to explain it the best she could. She explained that it is an attempt to make sure there are no problems; because the contract did not pass last year, they may have a teacher that did not move to the next step (ex: a new hire, someone retired or someone who had left the district). She used an example of a new hire that comes in with five years experience needing to be hired on the fifth step of the contract. However, no one got anything this year and the salaries are becoming unequal. There was discussion on this topic and it was decided that it would be addressed in depth and in writing at the next meeting.

Mrs. Beaubien stated that they are trying to keep the teachers they have and have invested mentoring time in. She stated they have added a Master's Degree + 45-hours of extra study as a track to the salary schedule that would help some of those people on the tenth step and above (for someone who gets more course work or puts more time in to get an increase by moving to a different track).

Mr. Dillon mentioned that next week he will be questioning the implications of RSA 237-A:12 to this new contract. Mrs. Beaubien said that if it passes, it will stay in effect even if they do not reach an agreement. Chairman Spillane requested a copy of that RSA.

Mrs. Beaubien addressed #3 regarding the Paraeducators Contract: Shall the District vote to raise and appropriate the cost items set forth in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Deerfield School Board and the Deerfield Paraeducators Association for the 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 fiscal years, which calls for the following estimated increases in salaries and benefits totaling \$14,000.00 for 2010/2011 and \$25,000.00 for 2011/2012. And to further raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,000.00 for the 2010/2011 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year.

Mrs. Beaubien confirmed that the number of Paraeducators has decreased and they do not have a step and track program. Mr. Dillon said it looks like a 2% raise this year and a 4% raise next year. Mrs. Beaubien said the \$14,000.00 was due to a language change in the contract, relating to health insurance buy outs. She confirmed that there are no increases to any hourly wages for the Paraeducators, this is a benefit change. She stated that the \$25,000.00 is going to be the buy out and possibly holiday pay; which is not necessarily out of the question for an

hourly wage employee.

Selectman Barry stated that the BOS specifically declined to offer raises to the employees of the Town of Deerfield for the year 2010 and that they put forward a COLA Article asking the townspeople to decide whether the employees should get a 2.5% raise. Mrs. Beaubien responded that the \$14,000.00 is a buy out for employees that do not take part in expensive health insurance and they view it as a cost saving measure; increasing the cost of a compensation package, but reducing the cost of health care insurance. Selectman Barry asked if they balance out; does the decrease in health insurance wash out the increase of the compensation. Mrs. Beaubien said this is what they are hoping for.

Mr. Dillon does not agree with this as his feeling from the School Board meetings and at other hearings where the School Board Budget discussed that they were fighting for zero raises this year. Mrs. Beaubien said this issue has come up every year with the Paraeducators and they do not see it as a pay increase; they are not getting more per year in a per hour basis. She added that as a District, they feel it is going to be saving them money. She confirmed the most these people could get is \$700.00.

Mrs. Beaubien referred Warrant Article #4 and that it was to pave the front parking lot; hoping to put up to \$20,000.00 out of surplus (set up the way they used to do for the catastrophic special education and for the building). She informed the members that they are getting some firm estimates and it was discussed to be over \$60,000.00 due to the work that needs to be done beneath ground.

Selectman Barry feels that if the parking lot needs to be paved, it should be put in the budget. He would rather see the School Board get some numbers, put it in the budget for paving and then put it out to bid when the budget is approved. Mr. Dillon asked if there has been any discussion on the back of the building being paved. She said that there has been, but for now they would like to focus on the front parking lot.

Chairman Spillane would like to see it put out to bid prior to trying to raising money, so there were factual numbers involved, and see it put before the town as a warrant to complete the job, as he is against moving money from surplus into a fund to try and "save up" for a job that get more expensive every year with no definite plan or cost.

Mrs. Beaubien informed the members that the Board is working to get some hard and fast answers as to why Concord High School's tuition increase was as great as it was. Vice Chairman Daley asked for more detail next week on the actual number of students and what their buffer is. He requested the difference between real and estimate numbers. Mrs. Beaubien said that when putting the budget together every year they have to estimate the number of high school students they will have the next September. When they put that number in, it is the number they think they are going to have from the Deerfield Community School (there could be some moving into or out of town).

#### **Citizen's Comments:**

Walt Hooker stated that RSA 91A:5 IX says "preliminary drafts, notes and other documents not in their final form and not disclosed, circulated or available to a forum or a majority of the members of the public body"; it was listed under exemptions. He said that the MBC minutes are not exempted, because they are sending them to the whole the Committee; so therefore, they are conducting business via email. When the secretary does the Minutes, sends them to the Chairman to make changes and then sends them out to the Board, those are the minutes that are available to the public; at which at the next meeting, if the Committee chooses to, they can make corrections and approve them.

Selectman Hooker referred to the teachers and the Paraeducators and believes that in prior years the MBC actually got a copy of the contract to review; they cannot get them until they are negotiated. He thinks the MBC should get a list of where people are now and where they will be on the contract; to see who is getting what. He was curious as to why the teacher's contract was only one and the Paraeducators was for two, as in prior years the teacher's contract has been for two years. Mrs. Beaubien said the teacher contract did not pass last year, so they are without a contract. They tried to negotiate with the Paraeducators one year and the teachers the next year, so this is the year to actually do the Paraeducators; so the teacher is a one year contract to enable them to get back on track of every other year.

Selectman Hooker asked how many students for the High Schools were estimated verses how many actually showed up and were paid for since 2005. He would also like to compare that with how many students since 2005 were actually in average daily attendance, compared with what is in 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

Selectman Hooker is concerned that last year the School attempted to encumber money in July (which is after the fiscal year), and Peter Warburton said he would make sure that wouldn't happen again. He said that they can encumber money for a project that was not performed in the year the budget was raise, but they cannot encumber money say for the parking lot was much less than anticipated leaving a surplus in the budget. He feels the people may be afraid of this.

He mentioned that he thought the MBC would vote on all of the warrant articles like done with the Town, so when there is a Public Hearing they could say this is our budget. Chairman Spillane stated that if the language was there he was prepared to do that tonight, but it was decided that there was too much in question with the wording of "estimated" and Article #4 being entirely missing, so they need to return with a complete delivery of warrant articles. Selectman Hooker said he mentioned previously about moving the Town Meeting to May instead of March, so that they could get closer estimates with more time, but the estimates may not be any better two months from now as September is still a long way

away.

A citizen referenced the word "estimate" and that it is a "calculation", not an estimation and feels the term may be better presented.

**Adjourned:**

7:35pm

**MOTION:** Steve Barry made a Motion to adjourn.

**SECONDED:** Vice Chairman Daley seconded the Motion.

**VOTE:** Chairman Spillane called for the Vote. It was a Unanimous Vote in Favor.

The January 12, 2010 meeting is now adjourned.

*The Minutes were Recorded, Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Nese Farrell, Recording Secretary.  
Pending Approval by the Municipal Budget Committee*