

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 20, 2008

Budget Committee Members Present:

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
Richard Nichols, Selectman Representative
Jim Desrosiers, School Board Representative
Maury Friedman
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Michael Pierce
Larry Stuker
Peter Traynor

Excused

Pat Collins
Dick Hansen
Norman Silberdick

Unexcused

Victor DeMarco

Chairman Woolsey called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey introduced the members of the Committee.

Approval of Minutes – April 15, 2008

Moved by Mr. Plouffe, seconded by Mr. Lessard, to approve the Minutes of April 15, 2008.

Vote: 9-0-1 (Desrosiers). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey said that the Recycling Committee is an outstanding committee. One of the things they have been discussing is the relationship between the Town and the State of New Hampshire concerning recycling and waste. Brian Warburton, South Seacoast Superintendent for the Division of State Parks, gave an outstanding presentation to that committee and for that reason has been invited to this meeting.

Chairman Woolsey introduced Mr. Warburton. Mr. Warburton said that there have been some great success stories within the Hampton area. He said the Budget Committee understands that this is not just about the Town, but also the State.

Mr. Warburton said that DRED is responsible for the Division of Economic Development, Forest and Lands, Travel and Tourism and the Division of Parks and Recreation. DRED is the only agency that is self-funded.

Mr. Warburton discussed the beach operations. Many employees are hired during the summer months for the Sea Shell operation and also those who put out the meters. There are over 1,600 meters. There are many long time employees at DRED. There will be a Beverly Eastman Day honoring this 1956 graduate of Hampton Academy and 50 year employee of DRED working for the State Park. 50% of the help at the Sea Shell are Hampton residents or Winnacunnet High School students. Mr. Warburton said he will have over 300 employees working for him between now and the end of October.

Mr. Warburton said the outstanding issue that he could see was the environment we will be leaving for our children. Mr. Warburton showed the Committee a beach rake. This rake pulls up plastic bottles and glass from the beach and this process is done every night.

Mr. Warburton said the Town of Hampton has wonderful employees and he works very closely with all these entities. The entire thrust is towards customer service.

A new program is being started. Recycling barrels will be put around the Sea Shell. Mr. Warburton said State Parks is about caring. You cannot do this job in 40 hours.

Chairman Woolsey said the big thing the Committee is focusing on is the volume of waste and the careless manner in which tourists are disposing of wastes. She said she would like to see an effort – financial, education, advertising, etc. – focusing on this problem. The Waste Recycling Committee is considering asking the selectmen if they can find a way to prohibit sales of beverages in glass bottles at the beach.

Mr. Warburton said, the price of gas notwithstanding, this will be a huge summer. The Canadian influence will be large. The campgrounds are booked throughout the state.

Mr. Warburton said they are trying pilot recycling programs.

Mr. Pierce suggested that in ads for Hampton Beach, recycling be mentioned.

Mr. Traynor said the beaches are really clean in Florida. There are signs saying “You litter, it costs you” and there is a \$50 fine. People have been hired to police this. Mr.

Warburton said a problem is that signs are stolen. Chairman Woolsey asked about stenciling on the seawall. Mr. Warburton said that would lead to graffiti.

Mr. Traynor said the State of Rhode Island cut back on state parks a number of years ago and everything has gone downhill. We don't want this to happen to Hampton. Mr. Traynor asked about federal funds. Mr. Warburton said the wait is too long for these funds.

Mr. Warburton said he would commit to giving the Committee updates about the progress on recycling. Chairman Woolsey said she hoped that the committee report to the Board of Selectmen would spur everyone going forward together with advertising, etc.

Chairman Woolsey thanked Mr. Warburton for his input.

Mr. Traynor said that the merchants update their advertising every so often. Perhaps they could be persuaded to add just a little notation about recycling.

Selectman's Report

Mr. Nichols discussed Budget Committee and public access to collective bargaining agreements. He said the terminology is important. Contracts are documents that are signed after a warrant article is approved by the public. Tentative agreements are the agreements that define the terms and conditions agreed to prior to the vote by the public on the money. The Selectmen have a legal opinion from Attorney Higgins. The tentative agreements are not public agreements as to the right to know law. They become public documents once the people have approved the money. The Selectmen have the authority to make those tentative agreements public. The Selectmen can make them available to the Budget Committee and the public. Mr. Nichols said it is his opinion that the Budget Committee and the public should have access to those tentative agreements once the Selectmen have decided to go ahead with the warrant article.

Chairman Woolsey said she did not entirely agree with the concept. The State provides this Committee with the authority to act on the money related to the collective bargaining agreements, only the money and not the terms and conditions. The public can also vote only on the money. The purpose of negotiating contracts is to set a mechanism in place for management and the unions to follow. It is to the advantage of the Town to do what has been done in the past, i.e., negotiate, come to an agreement, have the unions and Selectmen ratify, sign the contracts, submit to the Budget Committee and the public. If the public turns down the warrant article, it is only the money that is turned down. It is a poor practice to not complete and sign the union contracts prior to turning the money articles over to the Budget Committee and the public for the approval of the money.

Mr. Pierce said he would not want to look at a warrant article until he had seen the agreement. Chairman Woolsey suggested asking Attorney Higgins for more clarification. Chairman Woolsey said she would like Mr. Nichols to provide this Committee with case law and citations where communities have been sued because the money was turned down.

Mr. Stuker said you don't have a contract without the money. If they would provide the Committee with the tentative agreement that should be sufficient.

Mr. Traynor said he had talked to several attorneys regarding this. Once a tentative agreement is reached, and the parties sign the tentative agreement, it is not a contract. It is a document only, to be presented to the Budget Committee or Board of Selectmen for their approval of the money items. The public has a right to know only the dollar value under the period. Only after the money is approved does it get signed and become a contract.

Mr. Pierce said the Committee owes it to themselves to have the LGC provide them with attorneys to resolve this.

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Ms. Latimer, to ask the Board of Selectmen if they will agree to cooperate with the Budget Committee on a request for a legal opinion from the LGC regarding agreements/contracts.

Ms. Latimer said this will not cost anything and will provide a format for the future.

Vote: 7 yes, 2 no (Friedman, Stuker), 1 abstention (Desrosiers). Motion passed.

Mr. Nichols discussed the May 15th meeting regarding the fire station. All Precinct Commissioners were there.

School Board Report

Jim Desrosiers said as of today they are expecting 133 kindergarteners next year vs. 98 this year. They are also expecting an additional 17 through the summer.

Ms. Latimer said that with the housing market being lower more families can afford a home and this may be affecting the numbers.

Mike Plouffe has been assigned as Budget Committee representative to the School Facilities Committee.

Chairman Woolsey reminded the Committee that only members-at-large can serve on sub-committees.

Mr. Pierce gave a report on the Budget Committee Sub-Committee on Schools. They have decided on their mission statement. They looked at school reports at the library. They found that the cost per student has increased significantly over the past few years. Mr. Pierce visited Sacred Heart School and asked about total enrollment from Hampton, how much other towns contribute and how many Special Ed students there were. On May 16th the Committee met with Superintendent Jim Gaylord, Hampton Academy Principal Christopher Sousa, Centre School Principal Nancy Andrews and Special Education Director Sara Stetson. The discussion covered many general areas and there was a lot of input from the school participants. The meeting was positive. The next committee meeting will be June 2.

New Business

Mr. Friedman said he had been working to set up a workshop with Jean Samms, the DRA's municipal auditor for Hampton. A date of July 15th has been agreed upon. Chairman Woolsey asked how many members would be interested. Most agreed they would like to attend.

Chairman Woolsey said the next meeting will be Tuesday, June 17th, at 7:00 p.m. in the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Hank Lipe, Hampton Fire Chief, will be the guest speaker.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Lessard **moved**, seconded by Ms. Latimer, that the meeting be adjourned. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman

