

HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 16, 2010

Budget Committee Members Present

Mary-Louise Woolsey, Chairman
Michael Plouffe, Vice-Chairman
Jerry Znoj, Selectman Representative
June White, Precinct Representative
Pat Collins
Dick Hansen
Brian Lapham
Eileen Latimer
Jack Lessard
Mark McFarlin
Michael Pierce
Richard Reniere
Larry Stuker
Peter Traynor

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Chairman Woolsey welcomed new Committee member, Mark McFarlin.

Approval of Minutes of February 24, 2010

Moved by Mr. Lessard, seconded by Mr. Plouffe, to approve the Minutes of February 24, 2010 as amended.

Amendment to the Minutes is as follows:

Page 3. After 3rd paragraph, add the following:

“Mr. Znoj, Mr. Pierce and Mr. Lapham objected to discussion regarding on-going Legal activities.”

Vote: 11 yes, 0 no, 3 abstentions (Collins, McFarlin, Traynor). Motion passed.

Chairman Woolsey said this was the reorganization meeting for the Committee and asked for nominations for Chairman and Vice-Chairman for the coming year.

Moved by Mr. Collins, seconded by Mr. Pierce, to appoint Larry Stuker as Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Moved by Mr. Traynor, seconded by Ms. Latimer, to appoint Mary-Louise Woolsey as Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Vote: Larry Stuker 7
 Mary-Louise Woolsey 5

Larry Stuker was appointed as Chairman.

Moved by Ms. Woolsey, seconded by Mr. Lapham, to appoint Michael Plouffe as Vice-Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Moved by Mr. Lessard, seconded by Ms. Latimer, to appoint Mary-Louise Woolsey as Vice-Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Stuker, to appoint Richard Reniere as Vice-Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Moved by Mr. McFarlin, seconded by Mr. Collins, to appoint Eileen Latimer as Vice-Chairman of the Hampton Municipal Budget Committee for the coming year.

Vote: Michael Plouffe 3
 Mary-Louise Woolsey 5
 Richard Reniere 2
 Eileen Latimer 2

Mary-Louise Woolsey was appointed as Vice-Chairman.

Chairman Woolsey then asked for nominations for School District Sub-Committee Chairman.

Moved by Chairman Woolsey, seconded by Mr. Traynor, to appoint Eileen Latimer as Chairman of the School District Sub-Committee.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Stuker then took over the meeting as Chairman.

Chairman Stuker said he wanted to salute Ms. Woolsey for all her years of service to the Town. She deserves a round of applause.

Chairman Stuker said when department heads, etc. come in to testify, he wants to get them in and out as quickly as possible. He said he also wants to make sure each member

of the Committee has an opportunity to ask questions and try to eliminate some of the confrontation. Ms. Latimer said it is important to stay on point in discussions.

Chairman Stuker asked about opinions on election results.

Mr. McFarlin said he was saddened that the race for Budget Committee was not a contested race.

Mr. Reniere had no comment.

Mr. Pierce said he agreed with Mr. McFarlin. There is a need to generate enthusiasm for these positions.

Mr. Traynor said he also agreed with Mr. McFarlin. He said many who were registered did not vote. He said he feels that if you are registered you have an obligation to vote.

Ms. White had no comment.

Mr. Lapham said he did not understand why there were so many blank votes.

Ms. Latimer said she came away from the election a little confused. The fact that the Committee's budget did not pass was strange since it was lower than the default budget.

Mr. Collins had no comment.

Mr. Plouffe had no comment.

Mr. Hansen said he had picked up a sample ballot at the Town Hall. With the number and complexity of the articles it is difficult to understand them and make a determination as to how to vote. There needs to be a ballot where each article is encapsulated in a couple of sentences at the beginning of the article to point out its purpose and then there should be a number indicating the possible effect there will be on the budget.

Mr. Lessard said he agreed with Mr. Hansen. He said the Town and Beach should get together. It is one Hampton.

Mr. Znoj said he was very happy with the results of the election. The Selectmen were for the default budget. The mission now is to look over every line item and make sure amounts are appropriate. Mr. Znoj said he pledges to the taxpayers that the Board of Selectmen will continue to work hard on this. Overtime will be reduced through good management discretion.

Ms. Woolsey said she appreciates what Mr. Hansen had to say. The ballot is very intimidating. She said she was surprised that those who were for the default budget are the same ones who are always trying to save money. Ms. Woolsey said her focus has always been on emergency services for the Town. Hopefully people have a whole new perspective after the recent fire. She said she is worried that if the Winnacunnet station is done, it will be a very long time before there is a new beach station.

Richard Nichols, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen, discussed Article 39 (Solid Waste). He said a legal opinion is needed on that article. Mr. Nichols said his personal opinion is that the way the article ended up with the editing, it really doesn't do anything.

Chairman Stuker said he agreed with Mr. Hansen regarding the ballot. He said the Town and Beach really need to work together. It would be best if the fire stations were bundled because if the up-town station is done it will be very difficult to do the one at the beach.

Regarding the financials associated with the three legal actions discussed last month, Mr. Nichols said the Board of Selectmen made a decision that they are not willing to get into discussions on on-going cases. Chairman Stuker replied that without commenting on any cases, he felt that the Committee feels the public has a right to know the cost.

Ms. Woolsey went through the memorandum dated March 15, 2010 which she received from the Town Manager regarding costs for these legal actions. Total for the Sick Bank action is \$72,916.35, total for the Evergreen Clause action is \$19,160.68 and the total for the Right to Know Law action is \$4,850.00. There is also a charge for \$1,012.50 to compile this information. Ms. Woolsey said the billings should have been itemized and documented when received. Mr. Nichols said often the Town Attorney or Town Manager may have a conversation with outside counsel touching on several topics and this is not broken down.

Ms. Latimer said this Committee had the right to ask questions. A lot of money is being spent on things that can be settled at the table. Mr. Nichols said he didn't believe it was necessary for outside attorneys to break down subjects for a one-hour phone call and he is satisfied with the way it is done now. Chairman Stuker said the question is whether or not the Town is too quick to litigate. Mr. Nichols said the Town has to spend money to defend itself. Mr. Collins said he is comfortable that the Town Manager is not authorizing anything that is not needed. Ms. Latimer said the numbers did exist, but had to be researched. It would be better if they could be gathered on the front end.

Moved by Mr. Lapham, seconded by Mr. Collins, to end discussion.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Traynor brought up the subject of the doors and generator at the beach fire station. Mr. Nichols said the doors and generator will be replaced.

Ms. Latimer asked about the default budget. Mr. Nichols said that next Monday the Board of Selectmen will decide how they will get from the default budget to a revised budget.

Precinct Report

Ms. White said she had nothing to report. Mr. Reniere said there will be a warrant article at the Precinct's annual meeting on March 26th to have a meeting during the first part of June. This will allow residents who have been away for the winter to give their views about the fire station. There will also be an aggressive campaign to get the word out that Hampton Beach is alive and well. There has been a misconception because of the fire.

Mr. Pierce said that the Precinct overspent their budget by \$2,000. That was missed at the last meeting. A response will come from the Precinct.

Moved by Ms. Latimer, seconded by Mr. Pierce, that if a member of the Budget Committee asks for anything from the Town departments, officers, etc. in the name of the Budget Committee, it should be discussed by the Budget Committee first and then all information should be shared.

Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Woolsey made suggestions for some future meetings. She suggested the following:

April	Director of Public Works
May	Preliminary Meeting re SAU Withdrawal
June	Chief, Hampton Fire Department

Chairman Stuker asked for volunteers to serve with Ms. Latimer on the School District Sub-Committee. Mr. Traynor and Mr. McFarlin volunteered to serve.

Ms. Latimer said the Committee should request all information in advance of meetings from the department heads, etc. who come into the meetings if a vote is going to be required.

Moved by Mr. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Traynor, that information on any items that will require a vote at any Budget Committee meeting be made available to the Budget Committee members no later than one week before the meeting. This information is to be put in the Budget Committee box at the Town Hall.

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Vote: 14 yes, 0 no. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Ms. Woolsey **moved**, seconded by Mr. Lessard, that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary

Larry Stuker, Chairman