

Wakefield Budget Committee
5-8-2014 Meeting at Wakefield Opera House
Draft Minutes

In attendance:

Committee Members: Nancy Spencer-Smith, Carlene Stewart, Dave Mankus, Steve Brown (school board rep), Jerry O'Connor, Connie Twombly (board of selectmen rep), Priscilla Colbath, Bruce Rich, Lisa Kimball

Town: Teresa Williams, Town Administrator

Public: Robbie Ward – videographer

Mrs. Smith opened the meeting at 6:30.

Regarding the 3-18-14 Budget Committee meeting, **Mr. O'Connor offered a motion to accept the minutes after amending the minutes by including the names of the attendees: Carlene Stewart, Lisa Kimball, Priscilla Colbath, Dave Mankus, Bruce Rich, Ken Paul, Jerry O'Connor, Dean Giffin and Christine Nason as secretary. Mr. Mankus offered the 2nd. The motion carried 6-0-3.**

Mrs. Smith then introduced Mrs. Williams, adding that she was present to assist in the budget process discussion.

1. Mrs. Williams suggested that the Board of Selectmen needed more direction from the Budget Committee
2. Mrs. Williams suggested that the Committee meet during the summer, to review the budget process, the budget status, and plan for the next year. She suggested meeting in July to review the status of the town budget.
3. In a discussion on training, Mrs. Williams mentioned that the DRA training session is no longer free, now costing \$475 for the 2 hr. program. She suggested that if the town wanted to host this program, other towns could be invited to attend. Mr. Brown wondered if there were any programs offered in Concord, similar to the School Board Orientation offered by the state association. Mrs. Williams offered to call around to see what programs might be available, who might be interested in sharing the costs and explore alternative training options.

4. Mr. Mankus voiced a concern for the lack of public input during the budget process. A discussion about “meetings open to the public” vs. “public hearings” followed. It was suggested that a “public comment” section might be added to the agenda.
5. Mrs. Williams asked if the financial material she has been supplying was sufficient, noting that expenditure and revenue reports are usually sent out at the beginning of the budget season. Mrs. Kimball suggested that the board need fund balances for all the funds, not just 4 & 5. Mrs. Twombly noted that the funds held in the Heritage Commission account are funds raised by the Heritage Commission and are not subject to town oversight. She does not think it is appropriate for the Budget Committee to have this information. Mrs. Kimball said she raised the reconciliation issue because there is some discrepancy between the General Fund and funds passing through Fund 5. Mrs. Williams pointed out that the purview of the Budget Committee is oversight of expenditures. The town hires accountants to reconcile accounts. Mrs. Colbath referred members to last page of Mrs. Williams hand-out: Title III, Chapter 32, Section 32:22. Mrs. Smith observed that review of the other accounts gives the budget committee an idea of how much money is raised by these committees in addition to what they are requesting from the town.

Mr. O'Connor offered a motion to have the Budget Committee presented with summaries of the budgeted expenditures & revenue quarterly. Mrs. Kimball offered the 2nd. There was some discussion about the extent of reports various members thought appropriate. Mr. Mankus observed that he did not plan on being an account and that it is not the budget committee purpose to explore day to day operations. Mr. Rich stated that summaries were sufficient. **The motion carried 8-1-0.**

The committee decided to meet in July & Aug. Mrs. Kimball asked that Mrs. Williams include uncollected property taxes in the material.

Mrs. Smith announced that she is stepping down as chairperson.

Mrs. Colbath made a motion to appoint Jerry O'Connor as Chairperson. Mrs. Steward offered the 2nd. The motion carried 8-0-1.

Mrs. Colbath then made a motion to appoint Mrs. Smith as Vice Chairperson. Mr. O'Connor offered the 2nd. Motion carried 8-0-1.

Mr. Mankus offered a motion to adjourn. Mr. O'Connor offered the 2nd. Motion carried 9-0-0 and Mr. O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah D. Gauthier.