

Brattleboro Town

Finance Committee

Minutes

Selectboard Mtg Rm
April 24, 2012

4:30 PM

Present: Committee Members Bob Rottenberg, Kathryn Turnas, John Wilmerding (departed early). Michael

Bosworth, Spoon Agave (Chair)

Absent: Committee Member Tim Cuthbertson

Others present: Barb Sondag (Town Manager), Timberly Hund (Planning Commissioner)

1. Call to Order: 4:33 PM
 2. Agenda Review: no changes
 3. Approve minutes of April 10, 2010: **MOTION** to approve Bosworth/Rottenberg Passed 5-0
 4. Announcements: Wilmerding toured Police Station
 5. Discussion with Town Manager
 1. Current economic conditions - no disagreement that poor conditions may be long term
 2. Unfunded liability - not specifically discussed
 3. 8.3% debt/expenditures ratio limit - TM sees link with Unassigned Fund balance. Expects that necessary financing (e.g. police and fire facilities project) will push ratio well above recommendation
Anticipated that final proposal on P/F will be presented at August Special Town Meeting.
 4. Getting in the loop - there is a basic email list Exec Sec uses for all distributions.
TASK: Agave will contact Jan and get us on that list
Most information such as SB mtg admin notes and all supporting documents are posted on
Town website.
- NOTE: SB meeting of May 15th will present up-to-date info on police and fire facility project
5. Whetstone Interceptor Project - cost of short/medium term remediation now being studied.
Anticipated that permanent resolution will not be required until Federal funding is available. Other utilities projects: Filtration plant; significant aging of all water and sewer piping.

6. Long range budgeting and capitalization - no comment on 5 year budget. Need to consider.

Skill in anticipating expenses is developed thru use. 25 year capitalization - cannot do

detailed plan 25 years out that is done for 10 year plan. TM prefers to look at long range

as "usable life." Documentation of depreciation tables are available. Check library capital plan.

7. 1% sales tax. TM supports. Taking it up with SB.

Personal suggestion from Agave - study feasibility of altering tax structure. i.e. Enacting

\$15,000 automatic deduction from all taxable assessments, then add 15 cents to Municipal

tax rate. Similar to personal allowance deduction on Federal income tax. Bosworth added

also seems similar to graduated income sensitivity on assessment for school tax.

8. Establishing regular meetings with TM - quarterly? No problem.

9. Creating a "sustainability position - reasonable idea but not first priority for adding

personnel. More in need of re-splitting Public works with highway/utilities superintend-

ents; IT person; Facilities manager.

10. No time to take up readable reports.

11. PILOT program - probably not productive to try and raise contribution. Perhaps more

effective to develop quid pro quo services; e.g. do more local purchasing, require/

encourage personnel to reside in Brattleboro

12. Suggestions from TM - strongly emphasized need for FC to focus on schools. FC report

largely concerned with town yet schools are 2/3 of taxes. Painful imbalance.

6. Adjourn: 4:30 PM