
Revenue and Expenditure Task Force
Wednesday, October 30, 2019 7:30PM
Second Floor Conference Room

I. Call to Order

Chair Vaill called the meeting to order at 7:30PM in the Second Floor Conference Room. Present were Tim Vaill, Tom Hartwell, Paul MacKay, Melissa Danisch, Dan Esdale and Joe Guilmartin. Also present were Eugenie Moffitt, Finance Committee, Patrick Lawlor, Management Analyst, Joel Blumstein, School Committee, Donna Walsh, Finance Director and Andrew Flanagan, Town Manager. Absent were Greg Eliassen and Kevin Connors. The meeting was taped and live cablecast.

II. Approval of Minutes – October 15, 2019

Upon motion duly made by Mr. MacKay and seconded by Mr. Guilmartin, it was unanimously voted to approve above minutes. Motion passed 6-0.

III. Review of Task Force Work Plan

Mr. Vaill outlined the progress of the work plan with a presentation beginning with Mr. Lawlor addressing the revenue questions of the task force from the last meeting. He also noted that Mr. MacKay had been hard at work on the first draft of the task force report to be addressed at this meeting and a copy thereof emailed to members. The report is due 12/10.

IV. Followup Presentation on Revenue – Mr. Lawlor

Mr. Lawlor continued with the second phase of revenue assumptions based on the budget and actuals during the recession years (see attached.) Discussion ensued including a) the impact on commercial/industrial new growth; b) the reasons for the various fluctuations; c) the moving from a five-year average to a ten-year average for new growth; d) the effect of the implementation of the new meals tax; e) the decrease in local receipts; f) the role of the Department of Revenue in testing budget assumptions; g) the lowering of interest rates and its impact on investments; h) the impact on hotel/motel tax; i) the impact on chapter 70 state aid and unrestricted general government aid; j) the anticipated economic downturn on aid; k) the impact of casino revenue on aid; l) the need for formulaic process to deal with unbudgeted overage in state aid; m) the role of the task force in dealing with “processes” as phase 2 work; n) need for fall town meeting as part of this process; and o) role of task force in educating the residents on financial guiding principles.

V. Revote on Town Manager’s Revenue Recommendations

Following Mr. Vaill suggestion that a revote be taken eliminating the word “conditional”, and upon motion duly made by Mr. Hartwell and seconded by Mr. Guilmartin, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of the Town Manager’s Revenue Recommendations for FY2021 as delineated in his attached presentation. Motion passed 6-0.

VI. Outline of Report and Timetable

Mr. MacKay outlined the three levels to be included in the Task Force Report structure (see attached.)

1. Executive Summary – statement of work output
2. Detailed Analysis – each topic area
3. Appendix – Collection of Data for Rationale for Recommendations.

Discussion ensued including a) the level of recommendations the Task Force is comfortable making; b) maintain independence but share recommendations with Town Manager before publishing; c) lead and facilitate the public discussion on recommendations; d) not duplicating Finance Committee report but maintaining unique perspective of long-range planning; e) taking consensus position as a group leading up to a work plan; f) OPEB and health insurance as fixed cost areas with fewer levers than revenue; g) unfunded liability caused by “bad assumptions” over the years; h) the need for frequency of actuarial valuations; i) compartmentalizing challenges; k) differentiating between action items vs focus areas; and l) reviewing the OPEB report of 2016 as a backdrop.

Mr. MacKay will distribute the draft report to members by email for discussion at next meeting.

VII. Future Meetings

November 5 (healthcare and OPEB and review of trust account)

Review and discussion of draft report.

November 14; December 10 working session

Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Hartwell and seconded by Mr. Esdale, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Motion passed 6-0. Meeting adjourned at 8:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
Recording Clerk

*Attachments: Mr. Lawlor’s Followup Revenue Recommendations
Mr. MacKay’s Outline of Report and Timeline*