

**Town of Brunswick, Maine**

**Finance Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, July 23, 2015**

**3:30 – 5:00 PM**

**85 Union Street – Conference room #206**

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**Meeting Minutes** (Approved 8/27/15)

**Committee Members:** Sarah Brayman, Jane Millet, John Richardson (arrived at 3:45)

**Staff:** Julie Henze, John Eldridge, Paul Perzanoski, Jim Oikle

**Others:** Councilor Kathy Wilson

**1. Acknowledgement that Meeting was Properly Noticed**

JH confirmed that the meeting was on the Town Calendar

**4. Adjustments to agenda / Public comment**

Adjustments: 1. Monthly financials should be on agenda for possible discussion even if already presented to the full Council.  
2. Wait on items 2 & 3 until John Richardson arrives  
3. Item 6 to be discussed before Item 5  
3. John Eldridge – question about option to choose counsel - to be added at the end

Public comment: Kathy Wilson – thinks Finance Committee meetings should be televised

**2. Selection of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Discussion, and **Sarah Brayman appointed Chair, Jane Millet appointed Vice-Chair**

**3. Committee approved the 6/18/15 Meeting minutes**

**6. Update on School Dept building repair proposal/funding request**

Paul Perzanoski spoke about the process since the joint School Board/Town Council meeting on 6/18/15:

On 7/8/15 the School Board approved the plan presented by PDT, including the 12 classroom modular, with an additional \$1M for paint, shades and other cosmetic work. They directed the School Facilities and Maintenance Committee to determine a more exact funding amount.

On 7/14/15, PP, Paul Caron and Pender Makin met with architect Lyndon Keck to review highlighted “optional” items in the plan and discussed adding back in the roof work which was not in the total.

On 7/24/15 (tomorrow), the Facilities Committee will meet to give direction to Lyndon Keck for the amount to be presented to the School Board.

Timeline:

7/28/15: Lyndon Keck will provide updated proposal

7/29/15: School Board meeting to receive proposal & vote on adoption

7/30/15: Materials available for Town Council agenda

8/3/15: School will present proposal to Town Council, request TC set public hearing

8/17/15: Possible public hearing

Discussion:

**1. Why not a new school?**

PP – at this point must do repairs or will have school failures. We have waited too long.

JR – the architect is saying we “are on borrowed time”

SB – it would be good to see the engineering report that states this, to help convince people this is the right thing to do. Would like to see the Town get behind the project – not that it is ideal, but that it's the only option.

PP – sees this project as a stepping stone

KW – public needs to feel that in 10-15 years we will not be in the same place, but will be ahead

SB & JR – begin process to work on facilities maintenance

PP – In October 2014, the school board voted on 4 items: repair schools now, set aside funds, apply to State, look for alternative funding

JM – finds it more palatable as a phased project, interested to hear longer term plan

PP – in 2011 he would have been advocating for a new school. Now he is responding to potential school failure.

## 2. Funding strategies

SB – can \$500K “excess” state subsidy for 2015-16 be used?

PP – can't guarantee that it can be used. Facing questions about charter school kids, state subsidy, health insurance.

PP – Revolving renovation funds may be available – up to \$1M per school. QZAB (Qualified Zone Academy Bonds) are another thing the School Dept is looking into.

JE – pointed out that both of these are also borrowings. The only advantage would be the zero interest. The drawbacks may be the process to qualify for the funding.

JM – questions about bonds. Could the term be longer than 10 years?

JE – could do a combination with some pieces of the project bonded for longer.

## 5. **Finance Committee FY 2015-16**

JH presented draft schedule of Finance Committee meetings: 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of month, with additional workshops in November and December for the CIP and in March for municipal dept presentations on the budget. JH also presented a draft 2015-16 calendar with Town Council and School Board meetings, including 2017-21 CIP and 2016-17 Budget development deadlines. On Monday, July 20, JH and JE met with Paul Perzanoski and Jim Oikle to review the draft calendar and they had no objections to the proposed 2016-17 Budget schedule.

Discussion about budget presentation workshops and best way to hear from municipal departments. Workshops in March would be department level – before Manager's budget, leaving more time in April/May for more in depth discussion by full Council. Presentations tell the “story” of municipal services. Ideally, all Councilors would receive information from presentations. Record the presentations for online viewing, Evening meetings would be conducive to more participation. Calendar may be adjusted during the year.

**Sarah Brayman moved, and John Richardson seconded, to accept Finance Committee meeting schedule as presented with change of the March 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> workshops to evening. The motion carried unanimously.**

## 7. **Update on strategy for 2016-17 budget process**

### a. **Best practices**

### b. **Players**

### c. **Timeline / calendar**

Discussed as part of item #5. On 7/20/15, JE and JH met with Paul Perzanoski and Jim Oikle, and the draft calendar was agreeable in concept.

## 8. **Discussion of option to sell property**

Not discussed.

## 9. **Update on CBA negotiations**

Not discussed

## 10. **Suggestion to record Finance Committee meetings**

SB – though interested in full transparency and availability to the public, reluctant to televise because that could limit the possibilities for frankness that are valuable at the committee level.

JR – feels the Finance Committee is important enough that recordings should be available.

JM – sees both sides, wants to wait awhile. We are a relatively new committee. Budget workshops should be recorded and/or televised.

SB – Finance Committee should use its option to go into executive session when needed. For example, in discussions of wages & benefits.

**No decision made to change anything at this time.**

(John Richardson left the meeting)

#### **11. Question about option to choose counsel**

JE presented his plan to go to Bernstein Shur for counsel on bonds and TIF work. The Town worked with Shana Mueller on the bonding for Harriet Beecher Stowe School and the Police Station, and she has a good understanding of Brunswick's environment. Joan Fortin worked on the three TIF arrangements at the former Naval Air Station. Given the changes in Town staff, it would be beneficial to get Joan's input on the finalization of the MRRRA credit enhancement agreement and modification of the development programs.

**Sarah Brayman and Jane Millett both approved the plan to engage Bernstein Shur for these purposes.**

#### **12. Adjourn**

##### **Review list of follow-up items**

Not discussed.

Remaining left over from 6/18/15 meeting, updated by JH:

1. Complete a salary survey – Saco survey was not very helpful; Jessica is requesting a quote from the consultant to give Brunswick access to more of the data.
2. Revenue ordinance – task has been reassigned to Finance Department, analysis to be completed by October 1, 2015