

TOWN FATHERS FORUM
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 1981

Present: Chairman John E. Murray, Anne W. Donald and William J. Cossart.

At 8:00 p.m. Chairman Murray convened the 138th session of the Town Fathers Forum.

Chairman Murray reported on the following over the past month:

- The Board awarded bids for the printing of the 1980 Town Report and Town Meeting Proceedings, the Fire Station roof, and the sale of the damaged police cruiser, and rejected a bid for the supply of gasoline to the Town.
- The Board approved four site plans and two utility petitions.
- The borrowing of Two Million Dollars in Tax Anticipation Notes and Five Hundred Forty Dollars in Bond Anticipation Notes was authorized.
- Four Auxiliary Police Officers were appointed as Special Police Officers.
- The Board established the Town Facilities Committee, its charge and membership (five members appointed).
- The Board accepted donations to the Council on Aging, the Hosmer Memorial Fund and for Town Christmas decorations.
- Holiday gifts of money were dispensed from the Discretionary Fund.
- The Board renewed the annual Alcoholic, Common Victualler, Innkeeper's, Auctioneer, and Weekday Entertainment Licenses; a Sunday Entertainment License to Ephraim's was denied; a Wine & Malt Beverage Package Store License for Sudbury Variety was approved.
- Town Meeting articles were reviewed and accepted.
- the Selectmen met with the Personnel Board, the Sudbury School Committee, the Conservation Commission, the Park & Recreation Commission, the Highway Surveyor, the Historical Commission, and the Planning Board.
- All budgets of boards and committees and departments under the jurisdiction of the Selectmen have been reviewed.
- The Board established new ambulance fees in conjunction with a request from the Fire Chief.
- A fund-raising project, proposed by the Historical Commission for the Hosmer House, was approved.
- The classification tax allocation (residential factor) has been set.
- The Board signed an Agricultural Preservation Restriction application for the Verrill Land in conjunction with the Conservation Commission.

- The Selectmen discussed removal from the MBTA, the MDC Sudbury River Diversion, the Sudbury Landfill, Bowker V, Longfellow Glen project, and Proposition 2 1/2.

Chairman Murray read a January 22, 1981, report on the preliminary significant effects of Proposition 2 1/2 on Town personnel and services (which have been reflected in Town budgets prepared for FY82 and which will be presented to the 1981 Annual Town Meeting), and the possibility of a better outlook on the Town's financial situation for 1981-82.

N. Cornell Gray, Sudbury School Committee

Mr. Gray stated that the local School Committee had not yet discussed budget cuts in conjunction with negotiated settlements, but commented that there will be a certain amount of pressure on the committee to accommodate the settlements.

Responding to Mr. Gray's question, Mr. Thompson stated that the free cash figure of approximately \$625,000 available for the 1981 Annual Town Meeting is a fairly accurate one, and that the Town Accountant is in the process of having that figure certified. (Last year's free cash was approximately \$244,000.) Mr. Thompson also commented that the 1981 assessment figure has not been estimated, and, due to the delay until June of the Cherry Sheet, there are some gaps in the total picture. Mr. Thompson reported that Finance Committee Chairman Joseph Slomski had commented that the majority of Town boards have been overwhelmingly cooperative in the presentation of their budgets relative to Proposition 2 1/2.

State Representative Lucile Hicks

Mrs. Hicks stated that she has just completed a freshman orientation; the two committees the House Speaker has assigned to her are: Natural Resources and Commerce and Labor; her permanent telephone number at the Natural Resources headquarters will be in Boston, 727-2023. Representative Hicks reported that there are a tremendous number of bills filed relative to Proposition 2 1/2; that she has filed two pieces of legislation, one relative to having the excise tax reduction not take place until next fiscal year, and one which would require the State to issue to the cities and towns their Cherry Sheets or estimates prior to town meetings.

Fire Chief Josiah F. Frost

Chief Frost stated that he was pleased with the Finance Committee's decision to cut back four rather than six firefighters and expressed his hope that the Finance Committee will recognize the need to retain the other four men cut in order to provide the type of fire coverage needed in Sudbury. The Chief said that emergency calls appear to be on the rise - - there have been 76 emergency calls so far this month. The Chief also stated that there has been a surge of home and landfill fires as a result of the improper disposal of ashes, and cautioned owners of wood stoves to place hot ashes in metal containers for at least four days before disposing of them.

Town Treasurer Chester Hamilton

Mr. Hamilton reported on behalf of the Tax Collector, Isabelle Stone, who could not be present:

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| - Total Real Estate taxes | \$12,040,000 |
| collected as of 1-3-81 | 3,992,000 |
| - Total Personal Property taxes | 476,000 |
| collected to date | 201,000 |
- Excise Tax bills will be going out the first part of February.

Mr. Hamilton reported that the Treasurer's office has collected and deposited approximately two thirds of the Real Estate taxes, which, he commented, was a surprisingly good amount for a six-month period; he also reported on the status of borrowing, when notes were due, etc. Mr. Hamilton suggested to Representative Hicks that perhaps there should be some provision under Proposition 2 1/2 to help relieve those cities and towns committed to projects requiring bonding prior to the legislation; i.e., Wayland/Sudbury Septage Disposal, Sudbury Police Station addition.

Building Inspector Joseph E. Scammon

Mr. Scammon reported the following construction: 3 foundations on Thompson Road, 2 on Brimstone Lane, expects new permits to be issued on Shadow Oak Drive. The Building Inspector stated that 35% of his Fiscal 1982 budget is for fuel costs and, at the request of the Finance Committee, he will be taking another look at his fuel estimates. He noted an increase in the Town Hall fuel bills from \$692 to \$833, some of which accounts for the increase in the cost of fuel and some for consumption.

Selectman Cossart commented that it was his understanding that all construction was to be stopped on Brimstone Lane as a result of the water problems there; Board of Health member Karen D. Rasile expressed her opinion that the permits for construction preceded any action to bring construction to a halt. Mr. Thompson was directed to follow up on this matter.

Town Clerk Betsey M. Powers asked if any further consideration had been given to the idea of a 4-day work week for Town Hall offices as a conservation measure. Mr. Thompson stated that, although this had been suggested, no accurate figures have been recently put together justifying a savings by closing the Town Hall offices one day a week, but that this might be an area for the newly developed Town Facilities Committee to look into.

Eileen M. Todd, Talent Search Committee

Mrs. Todd informed everyone of a Forum to be held by the League of Women Voters on "How to Run for Office" in February at the Goodnow Library.

Frederick P. Armstrong, III, Long Range Capital Expenditures Committee

Mr. Armstrong stated that the LRCEC addresses capital expenditures over \$20,000 and places them in three categories according to priorities based on justification of needs. Two controversial subjects for the 5-year plan are: 1) proposed new fire house, and 2) Town Hall renovations. Mr. Armstrong concluded by saying that Proposition 2 1/2 will be considered in the recommendations of the LRCEC.

Karen D. Rasile, Board of Health

Mrs. Rasile stated that one of the Board of Health's budget reductions will affect work done by the Sudbury Public Health Nursing Association in the area of family counseling. Mrs. Rasile responded to Selectman Donald that somehow this work would still be done, but that she would like the Finance Committee to reconsider putting at least part of this \$3,000 reduction back into the Board of Health's budget. Selectman Cossart concurred. Also, Mrs. Rasile reported that the Board of Health is considering enclosing a pamphlet in the Town Report for distribution town-wide entitled, "How to Take Care of your Septage System".

Martin F. Craine, Jr., Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical School District

Mr. Craine reported an 8% budget reduction across-the-board for all the towns; the addition of Bolton, Lancaster and Needham, and the expectation of Dover for a 15-town budget next year; expected enrollment next year of 1150 - - this year it is 920 from twelve towns (presently 90 students from Sudbury); pledges for equipment have been received from the High School Technical Council; Minuteman will be going into the packaging business - the automotive department is just about self-paying.

Donald P. Peirce, Board of Assessors

Mr. Peirce stated that, based on the action of the 1980 Annual Town Meeting, the calendar 1981 physical measuring of property will be done by the firm of McGee & Magane, rather than by the Assessors. The Finance Committee has eliminated the travel money line item from the Assessors' FY82 budget. This money was used to reimburse the Assessors for mileage. Mr. Peirce stated that sometimes more than one trip to a property is required before a final assessment can be made, and that now the Assessors would have to be personally responsible for this expense.

Joan C. Irish, Chairman, Conservation Commission

Mrs. Irish reported that the Conservation Commission has been working on two warrant articles for the 1981 Annual Town Meeting, and in so doing, the Conservation Commission has researched and learned that in order for the Town to purchase open space (in order to maintain open space) a trust can be set up by people who are interested and able to borrow money for the purchase, rather than using Conservation funds. Mrs. Irish stated that, since tax bills have been issued, there have been several offers from people wanting to give land to the Town, some of which have been substantial amounts of land. Mrs. Irish reported that a new gate at Lincoln Meadows has been installed.

Joan Y. Grathwohl, Local Arts Council

Mrs. Grathwohl reported that there have been some State-wide workshops held for the local councils of the arts. Mrs. Grathwohl talked about the restrictions regarding the use of arts councils' funds; it was noted that \$7,500 twice a year might possibly be received by the Town of Sudbury as a result of the Arts Lottery. Mrs. Grathwohl mentioned that the local Arts Council is thinking about the addition of another member with a background in music.

William P. Reed, Insurance Advisory Committee

Mr. Reed reported that the Insurance Advisory Committee has been meeting and will submit a written report in two weeks. Mr. Reed asked the Executive Secretary if he could clarify certain figures regarding appraisals of Town Buildings for him so that the Insurance Advisory Committee can complete and review all insurance policies for the Town buildings and proceed with obtaining the policies accordingly. Mr. Thompson stated that he would take care of it immediately.

Town Clerk, Betsey M. Powers

Mrs. Powers read a list of persons who have taken out papers for the up-coming Annual Town Election and stated that the deadline for taking out papers was February 19. The Town Clerk asked the Selectmen to keep her informed as to when and if legislation is passed giving the Selectmen the option to postpone Town Meeting until June, which is when we can expect to have the Cherry Sheet.

Lois Fink, Committee on Town Administration

Mrs. Fink had no report but commented that the CTA is looking into pension plans. Mr. Thompson stated that he will forward to the CTA a copy of the Selectmen's article, Actuarial Study-Retirement Pension.

John C. Cutting, Planning Board

Mr. Cutting stated that Proposition 2 1/2 has not put any pressure on the budget of the Planning Board since they depend on the Law and Engineering Departments for most of their work. Relative to the recent tax classification determination to tax open space at a commercial tax rate, Mr. Cutting expressed his opinion that this will result in a fast rate of growth in the community, and that it was not done in the best interest of the Town. At his suggestion, the Selectmen directed the Executive Secretary to schedule a meeting with the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Assessors, Town Counsel, and the Building Inspector to discuss the same.