

Date: October 25, 2007
 Subject: Sudbury Budget Review Task Force Minutes from October 22, 2007
 From: T. Dufault
 To: Bob Jacobson, Co Chairman
 Marty Ragonas, Co Chairman

List:

Members in Attendance (marked by √)	Guests in Attendance
A Robert N. Jacobson, Co-Chair	
A Martha M. Ragonas, Co Chair	Maureen Valente, Sud. Town Mgr.
√ William E. Kneeland, Jr., Acting Co-Chair	Chief MacLean, Sud. Fire Chief
√ Ralph F. Verni, Acting Co-Chair	Chief Fadgen, Sud. Police Chief
√ Miner A. Crary, Citizen	Andrea Terkelsen, Sud. Dir. Of Fin
√ Daniel C. Difelice, Citizen	Jamie Gossels, FinCom
√ Tammie Dufault, Citizen	James Jacobson, FinCom
√ Paul Fuhrman, Citizen	
A Paul C. Gannon, Citizen	
√ Robert C. Haarde, Citizen	
A Karen Massey, Citizen	
√ Sabino (Sam) Merra, Citizen	
√ Lawrence W. O'Brien, Selectmen	
√ Paul E. Pakos, Citizen	
√ Jeffrey Beeler, Member SSC	
√ Bill Braun, Member SSC	

“Committee in these meeting minutes refers to Sudbury Budget Review Task Force”

Minutes:

- 1) Meeting was called to session by R. Verni 7:35 p.m. All committee members present, with exception of those noted above as **A** (Absent). Guests for this meeting noted above. All participants introduced themselves.
- 2) Distribution of 3 documents to all attending:
 - a. Agenda for today’s meeting (attachment A),
 - b. Minutes of the September 24, 2007 meetings (attachment B),
 - c. From the Town Manager’s Office (attachment C):
 - i. Charts:
 1. Police as % of Total Sudbury Budget, 1 page
 2. General Gov’t as % of Total Sudbury Budget FY06, 1 page
 3. Public Works, 1 page
 - ii. Budget Accounts under the Direction of the Town Manager, 1 page
 - iii. Sudbury Technology Initiatives, 5-year projections,
 - iv. Fixed Asset Listing, *Note: Certain Assets later identified to be confirmed as information may not be represented correctly.*
- 3) R. Verni opened the meeting and turned discussion to M. Valente to present highlights of town Government and questions to Police and Fire Chiefs. R. Verni encouraged all attendees to ask question and continue round-table format.

- 4) M. Valente introduced Police Chief Fadgen and Fire Chief MacLean. She advised the town structure is Town Manager, reporting to Board of Selectmen. This was established by Special Act in 1994. M. Valente also provided brief overview on Sudbury's "fragmented" government organization:
 - a. M. Valente: Town Government,
 - b. SPS: governed by Sudbury Public School Committee,
NOTE: Accounting is same between Town Gov't and SPS.
 - c. Enterprise "Departments" minimal funding from Town, mostly funded by fees collected. These are the Transfer Station and the Atkinson Pool.
 - d. Joint Venture: Wayland Sudbury Septage Facility, governed by a committee, with 4 members from Sudbury; 4 members from Wayland
 - i. Sudbury does Billing and Collections; Wayland does Accounting.
 - e. Note: Joint Ventures cannot conduct aown Cash Function.
 - f. Separate "Governments" from "Town of Sudbury":
 - i. Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School: governed by LSRHS School Committee, funded ~88% Sudbury revenues
 - ii. Sudbury Water District: independent, not funded via Tax Dollars, but through user charges
- 5) M. Valente takes questions on authority and accountability of the various groups represented on Attachment 2C-ii.
 - a. Andrea Terkelsen advises that on a regular basis "expense summaries" are sent to function heads.
 - b. M. Valente advises she delegates authority to function heads:
 - i. to spend within their guidelines.
 - ii. Purchase within the purchasing rules, over 10K requires bidding per state law. Purchasing assistance is centralized in Town Counsel office.
 - c. In response to Committee Member inquiry as to accountability of Department Heads and if meetings are held to discuss expenditures and perhaps delay expenditures, if possible. M. Valente states
 1. capital projects are typically delayed in fiscal year as long as possible.
 2. Most of the Revenues are fairly predictable as 78% of Sudbury's revenues are derived from is % Property Tax.
 3. Expenses are fairly predictable during the fiscal year
- 6) Allocation / Reallocation of Budgeted Dollars: L. O'Brien includes that per Mass State Statutes, the Town has limited authorization to move budgeted dollars between categories. M. Valente comments she can move up to \$10,000 within each functional class over that amount she is required to have a vote of Finance Committee. L. O'Brien continues that SPS and LS have full authority to move monies without Finance Committee approval. The school budgets are not "line item" or "functional"; budgeted dollars are in totality and not restricted department to department. As example, if one town department needs more money than budgeted, M. Valente can reallocate, if within her authorization limit; the schools are empowered to do this without limit.
 - a. M. Valente adds information on Reserve fund, which is approximately 1% of the Municipal Budget. This is in essence a "Pooled Risk Fund" used only in emergencies or unforeseen situations and has oversight from the Sudbury Finance Committee. Reserve fund is not "earmarked" for anything in particular, but is most often used for excess legal, snow and ice removal costs but also for other unplanned costs
- 7) In response to Committee Member inquiry as to Sudbury Procurement Philosophy (Purchasing Guidelines) and is this conducted centrally or delegated to Function heads, M. Valente confirms the state requirements are over 10K, recently increased from 5k, require bidding.
 - i. Bidding process requires excessive amount of time. Town Counsel's office coordinates and advises on departmental projects which require bidding.
 - ii. M. Valente advises that "until recently" municipal departments in Sudbury participated in a cooperative purchasing program with surrounding towns.
 - iii. Police Chief advises the purchase of Police Vehicles is done so through area buying group, which includes surrounding towns.
 - b. In response to Committee Member inquiry about guidelines to monitor risk of Conflicts of Interest and ensuring purchases are in the interest of Sudbury, M. Valente advises purchases are audited.
 - c. *Committee Member requests additional information on what offices audit purchases. Is this public auditors or state auditors?*

- 8) M. Valente moves to other information provided, specifically the Graphs on funding of Town Government, Police and Fire Departments.
- a. In response to Committee Member comments on funding comparison and “fire calls” last year.
 - b. Fire Chief MacLean advises due to increased safety awareness, Sudbury is fortunate in that we have not had high number of Fire Calls. He adds that they work on philosophy of providing safety to community and not necessarily on how often they are called, each one is most important to them. Department goal is response time in 4 minutes or less; 90% of time this is met.
 - c. Fire Chief MacLean adds that the budget process is based on historical experience.
 - d. In response to Committee Member inquiry on most challenging part of budget to manage.
 - i. Fire Chief MacLean comments OT budget is most risky, more so than labor budget, due to disability, sick pay.
 1. Shifts must be covered even when employees are out.
 2. Staffing only meets coverage. Historical analysis indicates it is nearly wash to staff more to avoid overtime.
 3. Sick time, when noted to be potentially abused, is addressed.
 4. Shifts are 24 hours, changed over years because of union negotiations. Fire Chief Maclean adds that the 24 hour shift is more economical to employees as the town allows them to live up to 35 miles from town limits and this allows them to “drive” to work less.
 5. Fire Chief and M. Valente, advise that Injured on Duty Pay that is reimbursed by the insurance policy, by state statute, is not allowed to be allocated back to Fire Department Budget. The Fire Department, if it does in fact exceed budget, they are required to ask for added funding from Town Manager, who obtains it from the Reserve Fund with the approval of the Finance Committee.
 6. M. Valente adds that most often Fire Department has to ask for additional funding due to Overtime / Disability or face reduction in staff to stay within annual budget. OT is about 360k per year or ~8% of Labor.
 - ii. Committee member inquires on policy of sending Ambulance and Fire Truck to a call such as a “heart attack”. Is it possible to send other vehicles besides Fire Truck, such as Sports Utility?
 1. Fire Chief MacLean adds it is for logistical purposes should another call occur while they are on the one call.
 2. In response to Committee Member inquiry if is possible to send from another station if second call comes in while servicing the first call, Fire Chief MacLean commented that is something they are looking into.
 - iii. In response to Committee Member inquiry on Dispatch situation between Fire and Police.
 1. Fire Chief MacLean advises there are two separate dispatches employing 2.6 FTE at Fire Station and 4 FTE at Police Station.
 - iv. In response to Committee Member inquiry as to union dispatchers or not, M. Valente confirmed dispatch employees recently voted to form a union.
 - v. In response to Committee Member inquiry on False Alarms, Fire Chief MacLean advises there is currently no charge back as safety and citizens are first priority.
 - vi. In response to Committee Member inquiry of “Bill Backs” for accidents etc, Fire Chief MacLean and M. Valente advise they have looked into this option, yet it is somewhat controversial if Sudbury were to consider billing back “out of town” recipients of Town of Sudbury Services.
 - e. M. Valente advises how budget process works; R. Verni also joins in information provided. The Town’s Budget (as well as SPS and LS budget) is due to FinCom by Dec 31 of each year for fiscal year beginning following July 1:
 - i. In September of each year, the FinCom provides to the Town Manager and the two school systems their direction on the expectation of the budget, including maximum percentage increase expected.
 - ii. M. Valente adds that all Department Heads prepare and provide their own budgets to her for municipal departments. She and A. Terkelsen review these in detail with each manager.

- f. In response to Committee Member request for clarification of Reserve Fund and Free Cash, M. Valente advises Reserve Fund is intentionally reserved and is the result of an appropriation; Free Cash is cash resulting from prior year budget overage “savings” and is available for appropriation.
- 9) Committee Members thank Fire Chief MacLean for provided the requested information. Fire Chief MacLean leaves the meeting, 8:45 p.m.
 - 10) M. Valente presents Police Chief Fadgen and highlights of his budget and staffing issues, primarily as result of retirement, yet influenced by police department employees who leave employment of Sudbury as they find other communities perceived to pay better. Overall, turnover is relatively low.
 - 11) In response to Committee Member inquiry on Private Details performed by Police Department and the cost of these details, Police Chief Fadgen advises:
 - a. As to town use of Private Details, they are funded by departments requesting, as example in FY08, the DPW has ~40K budgeted.
 - b. Private Details requested by commercial industries, including utilities are coordinated through the Police Department and the Town of Sudbury receives 10% premium for the details.
 - c. Overtime is not related to private details – overtime was approximately 211k or ~10% of budget, M. Valente adds this percent of budget is consistent with prior years.
 - d. Police Chief confirms the price paid to private details is very high yet is billed to requestor.
 - e. Police Chief confirms that Police do not call in “sick” to perform private details. He monitors this.
 - f. In response to Committee Member inquiry on how it is controlled if they can call in sick and then work detail in another community, Police Chief confirms employees are aware this is not allowed.
 - 12) In response to Committee Member on staffing and perceived excess police visibility in Sudbury, given its crime rate, Police Chief comments various options are being considered yet Sudbury needs to ensure coverage of high traffic areas during peak hours. He also spoke about geographical area of 24.7 sq miles over 190 miles of roadway and having only 3 sector cars on roadway on each shift same number as in the 1980’s, also spoke about number of calls complaining about the traffic volume and vehicle speeds that take the sector cars out of their assigned sectors. Explained that one accident depending on the severity could take all of the sector cars out of service for a few hours.
 - 13) In response to Committee Member on “Tickets / Fees”, Police Chief adds in FY07, approximately 109k, including court costs was received.
 - 14) In response to Committee Member inquiry on structural issues with Police & Fire Departments, M. Valente advises various approaches are always being considered.
 - a. Police Chief advises about Sudbury’s participation in METROLEC, a group of 43 communities established to provided highly specialized services to any of it participating towns, including services required in the event of local disaster, internet security, kidnapping, etc. This program is expensive yet far less costly than Sudbury establishing such services and abilities independently. Specialized training is required 1 day per month and the town is required to commit no less than 10% of its force. All officers are also required to attend one week of in-service training per year, as well as individual officers having to attend specialized training during the year.
 - b. Police Chief advises statistics of Sudbury following inquiry of Committee member:
 - i. 18000 calls annually
 1. therein 2230 911 calls
 2. therein 1000-1400 alarm calls
 3. therein 460-600 accidents
 4. therein 250 – 280 arrests per year
 5. due to the multitude of “call codes” over 100, it is not possible to group at a high level the other types of calls received.
 - 15) Discussion changes to Town Future Growth
 - a. M. Valente and L. O’Brien add:
 - i. Reporting indicates Sudbury has potential of 30k inhabitants, currently 18K.
 - ii. ~1400-1500 buildable lots current exist.
 - 16) M. Valente brings attention to other handouts including IT document, prepared by M. Thompson, and detailed listing of Sudbury’s Assets.
 - a. Additional information on capital spending and delays of spending when budgets do not permit. R. Verni opines that DPW probably has worse “backlog” of investment in vehicles.

- 17) A Terkelsen advises current budget discussion example, Departments requested 1.2M investment for FY09; current proposal to include 465.
- 18) In response to Committee Member on possibilities explored of leasing more expensive vehicles and/or sharing with surrounding communities, M. Valente comments, "it sounds good, yet there is risk if equipment is in need of repair and other town's don't have funding to repair and/or if machine is needed at same time". She notes the town does share equipment in certain areas, such as the harvester used to harvest Carding Mill Pond, which is shared with US Fish and Wildlife, Concord, Lincoln, etc.
- 19) Minutes of the September 24, 2007 meeting presented and reviewed by members. L. O'Brien motioned to accept the minutes; B. Kneeland seconds the motion. Motion unanimously approved.
- 20) Following expressions of appreciation to M. Valente, A. Terkelsen, and Police Chief Fadgen, R. Verni made motion for meeting adjournment, L. O'Brien second motion. Meeting was adjourned, 9:42 pm.
- 21) Next Sudbury Budget Review Task Force meeting, Monday, October 29, 7:30 EST Flynn Building, 2nd Floor.