

Date: May 30, 2008
Subject: Sudbury Budget Review Task Force Minutes from April 28, 2008 meeting
From: K. Massey
To: Bob Jacobson, Co Chairman
Marty Ragonas, Co Chairman

List:

Members in Attendance (marked by √)	Guests in Attendance
√ Robert N. Jacobson, Co-Chair	
√ Martha M. Ragonas, Co Chair	
√ Rich Robison, Designee	Wayne Walker
√ Jeffrey Beeler, Member SSC	Maureen Valente
√ Jack Ryan, LSRHS	
A William E. Kneeland, Jr.	
A Miner A. Crary, Citizen	
√ Daniel C. Difelice, Citizen	
A Tammie Dufault, Citizen	
√ Paul Fuhrman, Citizen	
√ Paul C. Gannon, Citizen	
√ Robert C. Haarde, Citizen	
√ Karen Massey, Citizen	
√ Sabino (Sam) Merra, Citizen	
√ Lawrence W. O'Brien, Selectmen	
√ Paul E. Pakos, Citizen	

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

Minutes:

Meeting was called to session at 7:30 p.m. All committee members present, with exception of those noted above as **A** (Absent). Guests for this meeting noted above.

Topics and key discussion points of the meeting were as follows:

- 1) Bill Braun has resigned from the BRTF committee – Rich Robison replaces him as designee from SPS
- 2) Ralph Verni has resigned from BRTF committee as well
- 3) Maureen Valente provided background on collective bargaining pertaining to police and fire, including experience with the Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC) and Board of Conciliation & Arbitration.
 - a. Contracts are ratified if the first year of funding is approved and appropriated. If funds aren't appropriated, there may be a memorandum of understanding (MOU). Sudbury has an adjustment account, therefore funding is already approved and contracts are ratified before approved at town meeting.
- 4) Fire Department: discussion on what are Sudbury standards (4 minutes 95% of the time) and what state recommendations are (needs to be researched).
 - a. Committee suggested researching non-union and volunteer fire departments (members stated there may be some in western MA, Dover)
- 5) Town currently pays 50% health care coverage for retirees (50% of town plan until eligible for medicare, then pay 50% of that).

- a. Actuary report coming out soon to determine cost of this future unfunded benefit
- 6) Retirement criteria: Police 55 yrs of age, 25 yrs experience
- 7) SPS Collective Bargaining: Rich Robison presented history and experience
 - a. Interest based bargaining
 - b. Much teaching is state mandated
 - c. Only principals can supervise, collective bargaining employees can't supervise other members
 - d. State requires 3 evaluations annually – class & written
 - e. SPS has 16 years step process for salaries – currently collapsing that to be more competitive
 - f. Benefits are difficult because they are guided by the town
 - g. SPS has had difficulty recruiting because of distance from metro Boston
 - h. SPS bound by contract to only hire entry level – 60% of district has 5 yrs or less experience
 - i. This clause developed in late 80's when experiencing layoffs.
 - ii. This clause just broken in last cycle, so now SPS can recruit experience
 - i. K-8 teachers have been very flexible in negotiating.
- 8) MA is very pro union
 - a. Unions can collaborate and synchronize/advise, but the other side can't or it is perceived as unfair labor practices
 - b. Sudbury represented by 2 SPS members and town manager or designee
- 9) LSRHS Collective Bargaining: Jack Ryan presented history and experience
 - a. LSRHS represented by 3 LSRHS members and town manager or designee
 - b. LSRHS is a separate division of Comm of MA – can do everything except tax
 - i. LSRHS started in 1954 because the state created laws and reimbursements to encourage regionalization, particularly for small towns
 - ii. Hanscom has the greatest % of household with school age children in the state (Sudbury is 2nd). Bedford is currently educating them, but if that agreement terminates, will become Lincoln's responsibility (including LSRHS)
 - c. Focus will be on health insurance going forward
 - i. FinCom has set up a model with annual growth of 3.75%
 - ii. Town meeting established 50% health care coverage for town retiree benefits (active employees = 90%). LSRHS is 75% (75% for active employees).
 - d. Teacher retirement criteria: 55 yrs of age, 30 yrs of service
- 10) Maureen said she has heard repeatedly that the town should adjust salaries and benefits to the private sector. She would like to see a study of what that looks like so that option can be explored. If anyone has or knows of such a study, please contact Maureen.
- 11) It might be better for the town to pay higher salaries and reduce benefits.
 - a. Town is having difficulty recruiting because wages are lower than peer towns
 - b. Wayne offered to provide % use of benefits among teachers and tuition reimbursement, and other benefits to see if benefits are actually being utilized
 - c. Larry suggested holding a forum for all union members (or policymakers) to talk about how to move to a more controlled cost environment, and to better understand desires of these members
 - d. Maureen agreed to provide information to the group on what is legal and not in collective bargaining
- 12) Meeting was adjourned at approx 9:40 pm.
- 13) Next Sudbury Review Task Force meeting, Monday, June 2, 7:30 EDT.