



GOVERNMENT STUDY COMMITTEE MEETING
Minutes of December 13, 2001 Meeting
Selectmen's Office 7:00 PM

Present: Members George Bailey, David Fixler, David Hearne, Michael Schachter, Leonard Segal, Patricia Zlotin, Anne Carney

Absent: Dennis Friedman

Chairman Carney called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM. Minutes of the previous meeting were passed out and she asked that members review them for acceptance at the next meeting.

The major order of business for this meeting was to interview Claire Jackson, Superintendent of Schools and Benjamin Puritz, Town Administrator. The goal was to see if there was a way to develop better communication between the town and school sectors, particularly in the development of the annual budget. Both individuals pointed out that they have been working together very well in terms of coming to grips with the anticipated school deficit for the current year. They have also been reviewing available funds for fiscal year 2003. George Bailey suggested that it might be a good idea to memorialize an agreement to work together on planning and budget preparation by way of a by-law. It was also noted that the town has a priorities committee that has been in force for many years but there is no description of the committee or its role in the by-laws.

Dr. Jackson stated that she felt the school administration staff was very sparse. She spoke of the additional reporting burden put on local school departments as a result of ed reform. She believed a budget analyst or similar position was needed for a town the size of Sharon and Mr. Puritz concurred. Len Segal suggested that a shared position of budget analyst might be the answer.

Another idea that Ben brought up and asked this committee to consider was having the ability to transfer money amongst departments when a shortfall existed in one and another department had money left in its budget. The committee members thought this might need a legislative change.

The idea of an integrated capital funding plan in which the needs of the school and town sides would mesh into a master plan was discussed.

The committee thanked both the Superintendent and the Town Administrator for coming to the meeting and giving the committee their collective ideas.

The next item discussed was the fact that the committee had looked at a lot of issues and it was probably time to see if there was consensus for action on any of them. Anne Carney asked that the members come to the next meeting ready to give their input and possibly to reach agreement on items to pursue and items to drop.

George Bailey asked if the committee would still like to hear from Jeff Nutting, the Town Administrator in Franklin. Franklin has a council form of government and the members decided that it would make sense to interview him at its next meeting. Anne Carney will try to arrange a meeting for the middle of January and she will send out notice to everyone.

George would also like the committee to address the issue of requiring the developer to pay for an expert study for the Planning Board under Chapter 44 Section 53G. This will be discussed next meeting along with the other items the committee has considered.

With no further business to discuss, Anne called for adjournment. The motion was seconded by George and voted unanimously. Adjournment at 9:20 PM.

amc