

- **Warrant Committee Minutes**

- **November 16, 2009, 6:30 p.m., Chenery Middle School, Community Room**

- Attendees: Members Walter McLaughlin, Eric Smith, Noreen Millane, Kimberly Becker, Adam Dash, Raffi Manjikian, Michael Libenson, Roy Epstein, Liz Allison, William Lynch, Peg Callanan, Pat Brusch, Phil Curtis, and Mark Paolillo

- Other: Floyd Carman, Barbara Hagg, Gerry Missal, and Mark Haley

- Chair Curtis called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

- **Minuteman – Article 7**

- Members of the working group looking into the Minuteman Regional Technical School budget discussed the process of coming to the non binding resolution that was to be presented to the Special Town Meeting. Based on an analysis of Minuteman current admissions, the school needs to be right-sized. In order to operate at an efficient level within the current facility another 300 students would be needed. Superintendent McLellan of the Minuteman has made a commitment to increase enrollment and FTEs but salary costs are still up. The group has met with Minuteman along with Joe Scali to put pressure on the school to obtain a decrease in operating costs to meet the committee requests. There is currently a district agreement in place in that all members of the district would have to vote to allow Belmont to be released from the agreement. In order for us to have a Minuteman budget turned down, we would have to get five other communities to vote that at their town meetings. Member Callanan added that Minuteman is just beginning their work on the FY2011 budget. The fixed cost associated with the size of the building is driving the current excessive cost per pupil. The current cost per pupil to Belmont (for Minuteman) is \$24K per year versus a state average of other Regional Schools of \$21K per year. Members of this working group are Joe Scali, Peg Callanan, Walter McLaughlin, Mark Paolillo, and BOS Chair Dan Leclerc.

- Although the article being presented to STM is a non binding resolution, the intent is to put the other communities on notice that if changes are not made it is our intent to gather another five votes to defeat the next budget. There were a number of suggestions for language changes. We will need to work with school committee members from other communities many of whom have only one or two students and are not interested in such small costs. Joe Scali is our member on the Minuteman Regional school committee. In addition to that representation we also have the veto power with five other communities to put pressure on Minuteman.

- **Modular Classrooms behind High School**

- Pat Brusch took the floor to alert the Committee about the possible need for a Reserve Fund transfer. The current modulares that have been occupied in turn by various school offices, food pantry, health, and council on aging. These have a problem. The modular contractor has found mushrooms on the outside of the modulares. A certified industrial engineer has examined these and determined that the flashing was incorrectly

installed and the water was directed to the interior of the building. The siding is rotting. This is a town owed structure. Member Brusch feels this is up to the town (not the Wellington Building Committee) to address since it was due to a lack of maintenance by the Town. The expected cost is expected to be in the range of \$75K. We have a current contract for this kind of work and therefore the work would not have to be bid separately and is not expected to delay the Wellington moves. The air quality in these modulares has been tested and is “fine”. Gutters will be added to those modulares. The schedule for the move will remain the same. If we looked into replacing those modulares, the cost would be in the range of \$300-\$400K. The final costs for damage mitigation will be known in January.

-

- Member Allison stated that the only reason we need to put the \$75K into those modulares is because of the Wellington need for the space. Member Smith stated that the school relied upon the Town to provide the modulares in good condition for the Wellington project. Member Callanan suggested splitting the cost between the town and the Building Committee. Mark Haley, the Chair of the Wellington Building Committee was in the audience and stated that there is black mold involved and the town would have been responsible for tearing down those modulares if they were not being used by the Wellington students. Further discussion ensued where members stated that the original purpose of the modulares was to act as transitional space for various projects – High School science wing, library, and police.

-

- Motion by Member Libenson to table the issue. Passed.

-

- **Motion to reconsider the vote for Article 8 on the STM warrant**

-

- Article 8 pertains to a zoning issue. Over the past two years there has been a Comprehensive Master Plan process in the works. Funds have been voted and the consultant has been working on the project. Discussion ensued regarding the fact that this article would actually vote a portion of that Master Plan that has not been accepted by the Town and has not been vetted as part of the whole.

-

- Chair Curtis stated that he is not comfortable revoting this issue just 10 minutes before the STM. Member Lynch felt that we should have been provided with all the information before the initial vote.

-

- Motion by Member Libenson to reconsider, seconded by Member Brusch. The vote was 3 against reconsideration and 12 in favor. Motion in Favor of Article 8 – one in favor, ten opposed and four abstentions.

-

- Motion to adjourn at 7:20 pm. by Member McLaughlin.