

Warrant Committee
June 23, 2021 7:30pm
Remote Meeting via Zoom

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: October 13, 2021
TIME: 8:58 AM

Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance

Warrant Committee: Laurie Slap, Paul Rickter, Mike Crowley, Ellen Schreiber, Elizabeth Dionne, John Alcock, Christine Doyle, Jennifer Fallon, Andrew Levin, Daniel Halston, Anne Helgen, Geoffrey Lubien, Robert McLaughlin, Lynn Read, Jack Weis, Adam Dash

Others Present: Patrice Garvin, Tom Caputo

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:31pm.

I. Review and discuss FTF2 Recommendations & Financial Policies

Mr. Tom Caputo, Chairman of the Financial Task Force II, presented the FTF2 Recommendations and Financial Policies. These documents are still in draft form. The Financial Task Force II was tasked to review Belmont's financial policies and guide Belmont through the FY21 and FY22 budget process. They are currently overseeing the town's use of ARP funds.

FTF2 Recommendations

- A total of 14 recommendations were drafted by the FTF2. Two of these recommendations were voided following the failed override vote but were kept in the document for historic context.
- These recommendations included:
 - Hiring a Financial Director on the town side to provide financial leadership. This can be done by reorganizing staff instead of creating a new position. The Town Administrator's office is currently drafting a job description. The Budget Director responsibilities will be folded into the Finance Director position. Recurring revenue from ambulance receipts will provide additional salary for the Finance Director position. The Finance Director will be responsible for maintaining the financial model. The town will also be filling the currently vacant Town Accountant position.
 - Ongoing financial modelling.
 - The incorporation of FTF2 planning work into the annual budget process.
 - Creation of a Long Term Capital Planning group. This group can create an inventory of the town's capital assets and needs and build funding mechanisms that stretch decades.
 - The creation of an annual financial report for the state of the town's finances. The town can follow GFOA best practices for creating annual financial reports. The

creation of an annual financial report creates an opportunity to engage the public with the town's budget process.

- Support for a Structural Change Impact Group. This group has already been formed and has begun their work.
- Focus on Healthcare Cost Mitigation. The town can look at joining the GIC and move into a more industry standard split. Consider how the town breaks down town and school side healthcare costs.
- Consideration of more frequent, smaller overrides.
- Establish an annual wage and classification study. These studies are a very involved process.

Warrant Committee Member Questions and Comments re: FTF2 Recommendations

- How can we engage the public more into the budget process every year?
- What is the communications strategy for engaging people in the budget process?
- Ms. Doyle recommended that Belmont move to outcomes-based budgeting.
- In the fall, the work needs to begin again to determine if the town needs to propose an override.
- Ms. Garvin will look into a possible regional wage and classification study. If a study is completed it will be done in segments.

FTF2 Fiscal Management Policies

- Feedback regarding these policies can be passed along to Mr. Lubien or Mr. Caputo. This document is over 50 pages in length. These policies were not reviewed in great detail. These policies will be presented to the Select Board at an upcoming meeting. There are specific Warrant Committee responsibilities called out in the FTF2 Policies.

Warrant Committee Member Questions and Comments re: FTF2 Financial Policies

- Is civil service incorporated into A.6.? It is not.
- Maybe the town can include a compliance certificate or report into these policies to ensure compliance with the policies. Other towns have established reporting mechanisms. This set of policies largely incorporates practices that the town currently follows into one place. This document is a living document and can be amended as needed.
- Is it possible to edit the policies to acknowledge the role of the School Superintendent and School Committee in the budget process? Mr. Caputo will bring this recommendation back to FTF2.

II. American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding update.

Ms. Garvin reported that the town received the sixth bulletin this week which outlines how to set up the fund for ARP money. Once the town gets the first payment it will be 12 months before the town gets the second payment. The town has been trying to reconcile the CARES Act. The town has about \$400,000 left in CARES Act funding. Nothing has stated that the town cannot use ARP funds for FY21. Consideration for the use for ARP funds will be shared with the public.

IV. Discuss potential summer projects.

The Warrant Committee should think about what the subcommittee structure will be and who would like to become the Committee Chair. Committee members should also start thinking about the State of the Town Report.

Can the Committee think of better ways to communicate with people? The Committee should think about how they can communicate with the public beyond those involved in Town Meeting.

Ms. Dionne and Ms. Garvin are going to be looking into the zoning of the Belmont Country Club.

V. Reports from Select Board, Town Administrator, School Committee, and liaisons.

Mr. Dash reported that the Select Board will be holding a public forum regarding the tanks on 8/3/21 and a public forum with the Light Board to discuss rates. The Select Board is back to holding in person meetings. A small committee will be formed to discuss ways to fund a new rink. The BRAVE Act program design process has begun. A Solid Waste and Recycling Committee was formed. Committee appointments will begin 7/12.

The School Committee reported that there was a discussion about the potential use for ESSER II and III grants.

VI. Approve minutes.

The meeting minutes from 6/2/21 will be reviewed again offline and will be discussed at a later meeting for approval. Mr. Crowley noted he was absent at this meeting.

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 6/14/21, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Crowley, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, McLaughlin, Read, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash, Doyle, Levin and Schrieber abstained.)

5/26/2021 - Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 5/26//21, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Crowley, Dash, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schrieber, Slap, Weis, voted yes.)

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 5/17//21, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash and Crowley abstained.)

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 5/12//21, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash and Crowley abstained.)

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 12/9/20, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Crowley, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash abstained.)

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 12/2/20, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Crowley, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash abstained.)

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved to approve the meeting minutes from 9/30/20 as amended, seconded by Ms. Dionne (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Alcock, Crowley, Dionne, Doyle, Fallon, Halston, Helgen, Levin, Lubien, McLaughlin, Read, Rickter, Schreiber, Slap, Weis, voted yes. Dash abstained.)

Public Services Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

Motion: Mr. Halston moved to approve the Public Services Subcommittee meeting minutes from 3/17/21, seconded by Ms. Schreiber (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Halston, Schrieber, Levin, Lubien, voted yes.)

Motion: Mr. Halston moved to approve the Public Services Subcommittee meeting minutes from 4/14/21, seconded by Ms. Schreiber (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Halston, Schrieber, Lubien, voted yes. Levin abstained.)

Motion: Mr. Halston moved to approve the Public Services Subcommittee meeting minutes from 4/16/21, seconded by Ms. Schreiber (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Halston, Schrieber, Levin, Lubien, voted yes.)

Motion: Mr. Halston moved to approve the Public Services Subcommittee meeting minutes from 4/27/21, seconded by Ms. Schreiber (Motion passed, roll-call vote: Halston, Schrieber, Lubien, voted yes. Levin abstained.)

VII. Public comment. (none)

VIII. Adjournment.

Motion: to adjourn the meeting (Motion passed unanimously).

9:30pm