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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: October 17, 2022
TIME: 3:44 PM

**Minutes of the
Town of Belmont
Warrant Committee Meeting
Wednesday, September 14, 2022
7:30pm**



To view the recording of the meeting, please click [HERE](#).

Call to Order: Mr. Lubien called the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Member	Present	Member	Present
Geoffrey Lubien, Chair	Yes	Robert McLaughlin	Yes
Paul Rickter, Vice-Chair	Yes	Lynn Peterson Read	Absent
Elizabeth Dionne, Secretary	Yes	Ellen Schreiber	Absent
William Anderson	Yes	Laurie Slap	Yes
Tom Caputo	Yes	Matthew Taylor	Yes
Christine Doyle	Yes	Jack Weis	Yes
Elizabeth Goss	Yes	Mark Paolillo, Ex-officio Designee - Select Board	Yes
Anne Helgen	Yes	Michael Crowley, Ex-officio, School Committee	Yes
Staff			
Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator	Yes	Jennifer Hewitt, Assistant Town Administrator & Finance Manager	Yes

Annual Election of Officers

Mr. Lubien announced the proposed Slate of Officers: he would like to serve as Chair again; Paul Rickter is interested in the Vice-Chair role (Ms. Doyle will not return to the role); Elizabeth Dionne would like to continue as Secretary.

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved approval of the Slate of Officers. Mr. McLaughlin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

Discussion of 2022-23 Calendar

Mr. Lubien shared the proposed meeting schedule, which was discussed. Ms. Hewitt said the December Budget Summit has been changed to the 14th. Mr. Paolillo said the Town meeting dates were changed to November 29 & 30 and December 1st.

- 1 • September 15, 2022: Budget/Policy Summit 1
- 2 • September 28, 2022: Meeting
- 3 • October 12, 2022: Meeting
- 4 • October 20, 2022: Budget Summit II
- 5 • October 26, 2022: Meeting on Warrant Articles
- 6 • November 9, 2022: Meeting on Warrant Articles
- 7 • November 10, 2022: LWV Warrant Briefing
- 8 • November 14, 2022: Special Town Meeting (changed to Nov. 29)
- 9 • November 16, 2022: Special Town Meeting (changed to Nov. 30)
- 10 • November 21, 2022: Special Town Meeting (changed to Dec. 1)
- 11 • December 7, 2022: Meeting
- 12 • December 8, 2022: Budget Summit III (changed to Dec. 14)
- 13 • December 21, 2022: Meeting.

14 Mr. Lubien outlined the meeting options available with the new Open Meeting Law. He proposed that the Warrant
15 Committee use a hybrid approach when possible and explained how that would work. This was discussed.

16 Mr. Lubien reviewed the topics planned for the above meetings. Mr. Weis suggested that the Budget Summits
17 be based on QF/FY22 Actuals. Mr. Lubien said he would get this information.

18 **Formation of Subcommittees**

19 Mr. Lubien shared subcommittees from last year, showing where new members were needed. He will send the
20 document so members can let him know which committees they would like to participate in. He said there is
21 talk about eliminating the Long-Term Financial Planning Subcommittee and that it may be rolled into another
22 subcommittee. Ms. Helgen suggested that Public Safety and General Government probably don't need as
23 many Warrant Committee members as last year. There was a discussion of the subcommittees.

24 Ms. Garvin explained that a topic at the upcoming Budget Summit will be Core Services (categories include
25 Debt, Pension, Benefits, Facilities, etc.). She said it might be worth looking at these Core Services categories
26 to see how they line up with the Subcommittees. Mr. Lubien will discuss this with Ms. Garvin.

27 Mr. Lubien asked if the Property Tax Subcommittee had been dissolved. Mr. Dionne asked that it be kept
28 because they never received information from the Board of Assessors that they need to complete their report
29 on PILOT.

30 Ms. Helgen said it's important to document the costs that non-profits create so specific PILOT requests can be
31 made, rather than a general request. Ms. Helgen provided more details about this request.

32 Ms. Doyle said that the Public Services Subcommittee does not look closely at Water & Sewer and suggested
33 that W&S be included on the upcoming agenda to decide if the Subcommittee will dig deeper. In particular, to
34 consider adequate fund balance for capital needs and the possibility of rate relief available for low-income and
35 seniors under State law. Mr. Weis provided some background on the work the subcommittee had done
36 regarding low-income & seniors and would like this work completed.

37 Ms. Dionne said a challenge is that no one "owns" PILOT and there is no coordinated approach in Town. She
38 added that 4 of the 5 largest property owners pay no property tax, and the 5th – the country club – gets a 75%
39 tax break on the course. She said they would be asking for payments on non-educational facilities (road
40 maintenance, public services, etc.). Mr. Lubien suggested that the Property Tax Subcommittee meet as soon
41 as possible.

42 Ms. Helgen suggested that the subcommittee look at the work SCIG did on these issues.

43 Communications Subcommittee: Mr. Lubien asked for the committee to let him know what their next steps are.
44 Ms. Helgen suggested that the subcommittee regroup. Ms. Dionne asked if the charts will be maintained, since
45 she found them valuable. Ms. Helgen said they are being updated for the Budget Summits and expects that
46 Ms. Hewitt's office will take them over eventually.

47 Liaisons: Ms. Doyle will do Capital Budget; Ms. Dionne will do Community Preservation; Mr. Rickter will be the
48 liaison for the Structural Change Implementation Committee once it is implemented; Ms. Schreiber will likely
49 continue on the Rink Committee.

50 **Budget Summit**: Mr. Lubien summarized the activities over the summer, and Ms. Hewitt provided an overview
51 of what to expect at the Budget Summits. Several members offered supportive comments about this new
52 process and also asked some questions about it.

53 There were several suggestions that the impact on Property Taxes be illustrated as related to PILOTs, debt
54 exclusions, overrides, etc.

55 **Updates, if any, from subcommittees, working groups, and/or committee liaisons, including:**

56 A. Community Preservation Committee: Ms. Dionne reported that they approved an emergency funding
57 request to ask Town Meeting to fund repairs to the roofs. She also reported that they now prioritize
58 projects (rather than just send them to Town Meeting). The anticipated revenues to allocate for 2024
59 are \$22 million.

60 B. Town Administrator: Ms. Garvin outlined the expected articles for the Special Town Meeting.

61 C. School Committee: Mr. Crowley reported that enrollment is currently up by 8 and a final increase of 40
62 is expected.

63 D. Middle/High School Building Committee: Mr. McLaughlin reported that the project is about 83% done.
64 Mr. Weis asked if it has been decided who will have responsibility of the fields once the design is done.
65 Mr. Paolillo said the Select Board and the School Committee will own them. There was a discussion
66 about the fields. Ms. Dionne pointed out that the fields are eligible for CPA funds.

67 **Public Comment** – there was no public comment.

68 **Adjournment**

69 **Motion**: *Mr. McLaughlin moved to the adjourn the meeting of the Warrant Committee. Ms. Helgen*
70 *seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:43pm.*

71
72 **Next Meeting**: Wednesday, September 28, 2022 at 7:30pm

73
74 Respectfully submitted by,
75
76 Susan Peghiny
77 Recording Secretary