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MINUTES
Special 10-Year Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
Wednesday, January 27, 2016 @ 7:00pm
Drummer Room/Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Don Smith, Jeff Dussetschleger, Trish Danka, Kathie Vrlik & Rory Burke

Members Absent: Jen Magri

Others Present: First Selectman Kurt Miller

1) Call meeting to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM.

2) Pledge of Allegiance

All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) Public comment

There was no public comment.

4) Update with First Selectman

The Directors of Finance and Operations were not asked to attend because they were not needed.

Kurt: The fund balance numbers provided ahead of time were incorrect. The correct are as follows:

2015: Absorbed \$350,000 in Board of Education shortfalls. Even with that there was a \$62,000 surplus that puts the fund balance at approximately 9.1%. It would have been 9.3%

2016: Would expect a small deficit but discretionary spending will be shut down in March if necessary. Some things are trending higher than expected. The snow budget will be run through in two or three more storms. Trish recommended that that budget item be investigated.

Debt service is projected to drop sharply in FY2018 and FY2021. Any surpluses will be put into a fund balance contingency fund and stabilize the mill rate rather than lowering it. This will both increase the fund balance and give us a cushion in case. FY2019 has a small increase projected. The financial advisors have indicated that some debt may be refunded. There should be more information in 2 weeks. 2 bond issues of \$5m are being considered to hit in FY2018 and FY2021 to address roads, buildings and potential purchase of fire equipment. There will be a meeting with the Permanent Building Committee to come up with a ballpark figure for what is needed. The debt ratio is currently 9.8. If nothing changes, it will be 5.94% in FY2021. It's hard to estimate how much impact the new bonding would have. It would likely just slow the decrease. In FY2020 we would be in the vicinity of 8%. In the last ratings call, the agency said as long as any increase in debt service is planned and expected, it shouldn't affect the rating. We're working on ways to keep future First Selectmen locked into the plan with enough flexibility to adapt to changing market conditions.

The capital plan is fully-funded. It's presented with the budget. For FY2017, we have \$397,000 in requests that will need to be trimmed down. Included in that is about \$200,000 for a large dump truck. There are also payments for the new SimulCast system. In FY2018, we have

\$340,000 in requests and FY2019. It's \$100,000, but those will change as we get closer. The \$300,000 is built into the debt plan. This year's will be voted on by the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Finance votes on the funding mechanism.

Revaluation is funded and we've done 2 in 5 years, but we should be good for another 5 now. The next will be more expensive but we're working with NVCOG to try to get a discount by joining together.

We have \$200,000 in the roads account. We have about \$750,000 available in total right now and we're working on whether to increase the \$200,000 this year but the general trend will be to increase to \$750,000 by 2021. The grand list is set to drop about 3%, which will cause the mill rate to increase. The budget increase should be in the vicinity of 1% so most people will pay less. I'm trying to identify up to \$800,000 in savings to mitigate the damage. The Board of Education recommended an increase of \$267,000. We're only \$400,000 above where we were last year and that's bare bones.

The healthcare audit should be done by the middle of February. We're going to have the census go out to RFP. We will be looking at the self-insuring option. Lockton, our consultants, suggest that we investigate all the options. Because of the changes we made to the plans, we're in a better position and might see some savings. We got our initial renewal from Anthem and it's substantially lower than usual.

CCM is pushing for a tiered system for municipalities to have new employees go into a defined contributed retirement plan. Currently, we're locked into the Municipal Employee Retirement System from the State. As soon as it becomes available, we'll move towards that. Our OPEB liability is still unfunded to the tune of \$40m. The ratings agency is aware and are happy we're conscious of it because no one is funded.

I'd like to recommend we change meeting quarterly. To show progress in three months is challenging and just preparing is a lot of work. Maybe March and September or April and October biannual meetings would be preferable.

Our new Public Works Director has substantial performance management experience. Public Works will be the first targeted group. He comes on right after Presidents' Day. We will take what he does and try to expand it to all departments.

Kurt is chair of the NVCOG Municipal Shared Services Committee Chair. Ansonia and Derby got a grant to study joining WPCA facilities but Derby backed out so Seymour came in. Seymour, Oxford and Beacon Falls have joined forces for an ICE grant and got 3 pieces of equipment for \$18,000 each. We got a screener, roller and excavator that are housed in Oxford. They are available as-needed. There are agreements in place and a joint maintenance account will be created. If it's broken by normal use we'll all chip in. We're also working with Ansonia on starting to combine services in Animal Control, Engineering and Building Compliance. Initially, each town will hire the same engineers and see how it works. Eventually we may just hire a full-time employee. We have Building Compliance for 25 hours and Ansonia will hire our inspector for 20. We may hire him full time eventually. Ansonia has full-time Animal Control and we have 2 part-time. We would use the Seymour shelter and put about \$100,000 into it. We looked at merging with Shelton but that didn't work out because the numbers didn't make sense. We're

still hoping to combine Operations with the Board of Education but it's a difficult solution. The professional staff is on-board. We're going to try to use the IT model. Insurance will be shopped next week. We have also set up an inter-service Worker's Compensation fund with the Board of Education so we shouldn't see a hit like we did this year.

The State uses the Willis system for employee performance management. We're looking to see how we can implement it but the unions are resistant. **RORY WILL SEND IT OUT TO EVERYONE.**

Kurt is on the Executive Committee for NVCOG and CCM and sits on several boards within CCM. It helps get Seymour's name out there and makes it easier to do business.

Department heads are asked to do their own budgets and they present their own budgets to the Board of Finance.

We've done well in changing job descriptions with turnover and we're seeing the results with Public Works, Community Services and Recreation in particular. We're also trying to work to make sure we get the best quality of candidates for boards with turnover.

Kurt wants to start doing biannual open houses. Ansonia has a similar program and Kurt will work with them to try to make it appealing.

In terms of technology, all Public Works and Police vehicles are GPS tracked. The new payroll system will come in on July 1st. Two years from now, we'll be updating our accounting system which will include infrastructure more effectively.

LED streetlights should hopefully get underway in the spring. SolarCity will be coming to the Selectmen in February. We're hoping to put a solar array in the industrial park that could power all municipal buildings. Garbage saw substantial savings but now we're beginning to see more garbage in addition to recycling.

5) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6) Adjournment

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting.

Motion: Rory Burke **Second:** Jeff Dussetschlager

Vote: 5-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Submitted by,



Rory Burke, Recording Secretary