

Budget Coordinating Group
Minutes for March 31, 2011 Meeting

First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall

Present: Andy Steinberg, Doug Slaughter, Alisa Brewer, Stephanie O’Keeffe, Rick Hood, Irv Rhodes, Chris Hoffmann, John Musante, Sandy Pooler, Tevis Kimball, Maria Geryk, Rob Detweiler, Kay Moran (JCPC Chair)

Called to order: 9:33 a.m.

Updates:

Musante reported that JCPC had voted its recommendations and had a prioritized list of projects to fund at 6% of the tax levy, up to investments beyond 6.5%. That list was distributed.

Musante reported that the House Ways and Means budget is due to be released April 13th, which will help inform the recommendations the Finance Committee votes on April 14th. Word is that they are trying to get as close to the Governor’s numbers for Chapter 70 and unrestricted local aid as possible. (Governor’s numbers would mean \$1.25M better than original projections.)

Pooler distributed draft revenue and expense projections for FY13, to provide future context for current decisions. For the purpose of estimating, 3% increases for Chapter 70 and local aid revenues and budget growth of 3.8% were used. These and other conservative estimates suggest \$2.4M in budget growth with a revenue shortfall of \$240,000 – considered inconsequential at this level of projection. This is good news.

Status Reports

Each budget area/committee reported on the status of its discussions since the last BCG meeting. O’Keeffe reported that the Select Board is in agreement with the tiered list to date and plans to rank priorities beyond the \$690K projection. Geryk reported that the Amherst School Committee had not met since the last BCG meeting, hence had no additional discussion on BCG plans, but that she had created a new tiered ranking for additional revenue, and handed that out. Kimball said that the Library Trustees had met but had not had much discussion of the BCG summary points, and she also handed out a new tiered ranking for additional Library priorities. Steinberg reported on the Finance Committee’s discussion about impacts on future budgets, with concerns for adequate capital investment, addressing the OPEB liability and assuring adequate reserve levels. Kay Moran, Chair of the JCPC, provided historical perspective on capital spending.

There was discussion about how best to arrange the Town, School and Library priorities above the \$690K projection, under various revenue scenarios, with agreement as detailed below.

The next BCG meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on April 27th.

Summary Points

It was agreed that the following summary points would be conveyed to home boards and committees:

- 1) That we affirmed our support for allocating the first \$690,000 of State aid in excess of original projections as suggested at the 3/17 meeting: Elementary Schools - \$300,000; Town \$200,000; Library \$40,000; Capital \$150,000.
- 2) That we agree that the next level of priority for revenues beyond the \$690,000 estimate would cover:

a) Town Parks/Rec Area Supervisor	\$56,452
b) School One-Time Costs (Co-Teaching, Intervention Models, Curriculum, SW-PBIS)	\$70,000
c) Library Restoration of Professional COLA	\$12,000
d) Capital priorities, boosting investment from 6% to 6.23% (Line painter, Cottage St. drainage, WW courtyard)	<u>\$92,000</u>
Total:	\$230,542
- 3) That John, Maria and Tevis will create a recommendation as to how to distribute revenues if the total were to be in excess of \$690,000, but less than the full \$920,542 (\$690,000 + \$230,542) needed to fund the list above.
- 4) That should additional revenues exceed \$920,542 as detailed in the points above, we support breaking the remaining prioritized requests (Town - \$76,447; Elementary Schools - \$94,188; Library - \$57,212; and Capital - \$107,000 = \$334,847) into line items and having John, Maria and Tevis create a list that alternates the prioritized line items in a fair and practical manner.
- 5) That any revenue in excess of that needed to fund the prioritized requests detailed above would go to reserves.

Adjourned: 11:13 a.m.

List of meeting documents:

- JCPC Recommendation for FY12 – JCPC/Musante
- Preliminary Draft FY13 Revenue and Expense Projections – Pooler
- Updated Tiered Priority List for the Elementary Schools – Geryk/Detweiler
- Updated Tiered Priority List for the Libraries – Kimball

Respectfully submitted by Stephanie O'Keeffe