



TOWN OF GROTON

173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

Sustainable Budget Study Committee

Kevin Forsmo, Chairman
Mark Haddad
Jack Petropoulos
Bud Robertson
Art Prest
Patricia DuFresne
Michael Hartnett
Kevin Brogan
Alison Manugian

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Thursday, June 16, 2016
Time: 7:00 AM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
Members Present: Mark Haddad, Art Prest, Patricia DuFresne, Alison Manugian, Jack Petropoulos, Michael Hartnett, Kevin Forsmo, Kevin Brogan, Bud Robertson
Absent Members:
Others Present: Robin Eibye, Ellen Baxendale

Chairman, Kevin Forsmo called the meeting to order at 7:03 a.m. The agenda was reviewed.

BENCHMARKING DISCUSSION

Mark Haddad provided attendees with a Demographic Study Committee Comparable Towns model and noted that Dawn Dunbar did an outstanding job in gathering and preparing the information for the meeting. Mr. Forsmo questioned why the Town of Dunstable was excluded from the model. Mr. Haddad answered that there were several reasons why, some of which were population, residential vs. commercial, and the size of their municipal government. He stated that they just are not a good comparison to Groton. Mr. Haddad went on to state that although Pepperell should have been excluded for a variety of reasons, it was decided the Town be included due to its proximity to Groton. Mr. Haddad called attention to the fact that the study confirmed the Town of Groton's Municipal Spending and Per Student Spending is reasonable and not out-of-control.

After reviewing the model, Mr. Forsmo said that because wages, salaries and capital expenditures are important, they should be included in the report. Mr. Petropoulos asked the Committee if they agreed that the communities included in the model are the most appropriate Towns to compare with Groton. Ms. Manugian clarified that Duxbury, Littleton, Lynnfield, Medfield, Wrentham and Norwell are the towns the school district uses in comparison reports. A brief discussion ensued about what towns should be included in the report. Mr. Brogan thought that including the average family home value would also add value to the report. Mr. Haddad replied it would be more beneficial to include the average family tax bill rather than including average family home value. A discussion ensued about average taxes paid vs. taxable income.

Mr. Haddad provided attendees with the most up-to-date Town of Groton Fixed Cost Study packet and pointed out that the Annualized Growth column was added per Mr. Forsmo's request. Mr. Forsmo clarified the formula used in calculating the Annualized Growth numbers.

Bud Robertson joined the meeting at 7:40 a.m.

The Town of Groton Fixed Cost Study packet was reviewed and a discussion followed about expenses. It was decided that a cover sheet be added to the packet moving forward. Mr. Forsmo and Mr. Petropoulos thought that including Hourly Employee Compensation Growth amounts would be beneficial.

REVENUE ANALYSIS

Mr. Haddad thanked Patricia DuFresne for her hard work in providing the Revenue Study FY 2011 Through FY 2017 model. Meeting attendees looked over the data and a discussion followed about Economic Development and revenue growth. Mr. Haddad provided an update on the taxes that the Town has no control over increasing such as Motor Vehicle taxes. A brief conversation resulted about creating a Room Tax.

Mr. Haddad illuminated possible opportunities to increase revenue. He specifically mentioned DPW fees, Town Clerk office fees, and Planning and Land Use fees. A discussion ensued about the Transfer Station's operating costs of \$358,000 and the possibility of eliminating expenses. Mr. Haddad suspected that License and Permit fees could grow as much as \$6,000-\$20,000 over the next several years. A discussion followed about Interest Income, Benefit Reimbursement, Reimbursements from Municipalities and Miscellaneous Non-Recurring.

Patricia DuFresne provide attendees with copies of the Town of Groton Property Values by Land and Building FY2016 report and a discussion followed.

MINUTES

Draft minutes from June 9, 2016, were reviewed.

Mr. Haddad moved to accept the June 9, 2016, minutes as written. Ms. Forsmo seconded and the motion carried 8:0. (Jack Petropoulos, abstained)

Mr. Haddad moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 a.m. Mr. Forsmo seconded and the motion carried 9:0.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Eibye, Executive Assistant

APPROVED: June 23, 2016
