



TOWN OF GROTON

173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450

SUSTAINABLE BUDGET STUDY COMMITTEE

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

MEETING MINUTES

Date: Thursday, October 6, 2016
Time: 7:00 AM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall
Members Present: Mark Haddad, Kevin Forsmo, Kevin Brogan, Bud Robertson, Art Prest, Patricia DuFresne, Michael Hartnett, Alison Manugian, Jack Petropoulos
Absent Members:
Others Present: Robin Eibye, Ellen Baxendale (Resident), Ana Eliot (BOS)

Chairman, Kevin Forsmo called the meeting to order at 7:03 a.m. The Committee recapped the in joint session meeting with the Board of Selectmen BOS and Finance Committee that was held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016. A discussion ensued about the FY2018 budget and a 2.3% increase for wages and salaries, and communicating with the school district about budget expectations.

REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee reviewed the Charge and discussed including the following in the final report under the Committee's work:

1. Identify specific budget growth areas that are increasing in a non-sustainable manner. The Committee discussed including wages, salaries, benefits, and school assessment growth.
2. Analyze non-sustainable budget growth areas to determine underlying causes. The Committee discussed including wages, salaries and benefit growth, which is driven by contractual increases, headcount/hours growth, benefits costs including retiree costs, and insufficient fact-based cost/benefit analyses for key expenditures. It was decided to also include school assessment growth, salaries and benefits growth and the fact that lack of Chapter 70 state aid growth has a major impact on growth.
3. Benchmark municipal budget growth against comparable Towns. Mark Haddad said the Town is in the process of gathering information from all departments and expects to have the study completed within the next few weeks. A benchmarking section will be included in the Committee's final report.
4. Develop a list of potential actions prioritized on size and duration of the financial impact, ability of Town to adopt and any potential risks to successful implementation.
5. Deliver a final report to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee outlining findings and recommendations.

Ana Eliot asked the Committee if it would make sense to consider the benefits of a one-time override that would sustain budgetary levels for a specified time projection over multiple years.

Kevin Brogan asked for clarification on whether or not the Sustainable Budget Committee should be a part of the annual budget planning process or continue as a standing committee, and if this information should be included in the Committee's final report to the BOS. Mr. Forsmo confirmed that the information would be included in the final report.

MINUTES

Draft minutes from Tuesday, September 27, 2016, were reviewed.

Mark Haddad moved to accept the September 27, 2016, minutes as written. Mr. Brogan seconded and the motion carried 9:0.

Alison Manugian, Kevin Brogan and Bud Robertson left the meeting.

Mr. Forsmo asked if there was anything else he should consider when finalizing the report. A discussion ensued about whether or not the Committee should continue meeting after the final report is presented. Mr. Haddad suggested that after the final report is presented to the BOS, the Committee should seek the BOS's input.

The Committee discussed and agreed to present the final report to both Town employees as well as the public.

Mr. Forsmo moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Haddad seconded and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by Robin Eibye, Executive Assistant

APPROVED: OCTOBER 13, 2016
