

**Town of Mansfield
Board of Selectmen
Minutes of March 10, 2010**

Present: Chairman Baldwin, Vice Chairman Moran, Clerk Jess Aptowitz, Selectman Dentino, Selectman Sandra Levine, William Ross, Town Manager

Absent:

Storm readiness presentation

MEMA Director Red Button introduced some of the MEMA employees and volunteers that attended. Deputy Director Ken Thompson, Deputy Director Rick Cantin, Lt. Paul Pierce, Lt. David Cramer, Lt. Allan Cox, Jr., Lt. Thayer Wheeler, Brandon Prinzo, Alissa Allen, Valerie Allen, Mike Allen, Robert Allen, Brian Mack and Liz McKinley were in the audience.

The Town of Mansfield is the 10th community recognized as StormReady in the State of Massachusetts.

MEMA has purchased several NOAA radios and placed them in schools and other strategic places through out town. Two hand held lightning detectors for public events have been purchased in addition to a river gage to be placed on the Rumford River. Signs for the entrance to town will be placed and discounts on home owner insurance are available due to this rating.

SRPEDD hazard mitigation plan was addressed by Mr. Button as well. (Listed under correspondence).

Mr. Button has been involved since the beginning of the group and would like to be designated by the Board of Selectmen as the point person with Rick Alves, Town Engineer and Shawn Burke, Town Planner to be on the SRPEDD group as well.

Motion: To appoint Robert Button as a contact person for SRPEDD (Moran/Dentino)

5:0 passes

Bio Tech Council Award

Peter Abair, Mass Bio Tech Council. He is present tonight to present Mansfield with a Gold Rating for all their efforts in bringing Bio Tech business into town.

Having Mansfield rated in this category is one more thing that will encourage business to settle here instead of a comparable town.

Selectman Levine accepted the award for the Board of Selectmen as she and Selectman Moran led the effort in getting Mansfield the rating it deserves.

Q & C

Mary Barton Rau. Shawmut Ave. Member of Stand for Children (citizen group in town).

Stand for Children is a volunteer advocate group that wants to ensure that the little people get the education that they need. The group is made of parents, educators, and citizens who prioritize the children of Mansfield education.

One Mansfield resident who is a teacher from Franklin also spoke. She is personally advocating for an over ride. The schools are in decline and we must stop it now to preserve services. She then stated the Board of Selectmen need to work smarter to cut costs.

FY11 Budget discussion

A budget statement was read by Chairman Baldwin. The Board of Selectmen and Town Manager Ross are united in their stand that the town has and will continue to work together for the benefit of the town, as a whole.

Building Inspector (and former Interim Town Manager) Nicholas Riccio and Town Accountant John Stanbrook are present for discussion.

Mr. Riccio read an additional budget message from his time as TM. Highlights include the fact that revenues from state aid or grants are not likely to increase leading to structural deficits combined with larger than expected increases in expenses. The town manager has asked all depts. to submit a 5% reduction budget on the town side representing a savings of \$606K; however that is obviously not enough to close the gap.

Mr. Stanbrook also updated the board on the newest financial numbers from FinComm. The good news is the town budget gap has shrunk to 200-300 thousand. The bad news is that the governor has released preliminary local aid numbers with a 5% reduction.

Selectman Aptowitz would like to look at capturing money from the commuter parking enterprise accounts for development in that area that could provide potential revenue.

Andy Gazzolo, FinComm Chairman and Jim Lazzara, FinComm member came to the podium to discuss health insurance options the town has. The latest numbers show our health insurance will only rise 7% as we recently converted to a self funded group.

Selectman Levine asked if these are the final numbers. Mr. Lazzara stated no, it is still in the formative stages.

The numbers for the SE regional school has also gone up in addition to our own school shortfalls to cover. An over ride will not help in this situation. We need to find a fix for the structural deficit not just tax the community every year when the revenue isn't there.

Selectman Moran gave an impassioned speech about not having any more resources to give. He doesn't know where and how the town will meet its present budget numbers.

Selectman Aptowitz briefly explained to the audience that they are having difficulty with the union negotiations. The school unions did not vote for health insurance changes last year that would have saved 2 million dollars. And he takes exception to Freddy's comment on working smarter. We have many volunteer committees who put a lot of hard and smart work into bringing in a balance budget.

Selectman Dentino also gave a rousing speech about working together. The town side and the school side are in this together and have to act as such. The facts are the facts; there will be many working with concessions or few with many concessions.

Chairman Baldwin stated that the schools have a long way to go in closing their gap and it shouldn't be just with teaching positions.

Town Manager Ross also stated that we are facing a structural problem, one over ride or any other quick fixes will not fix our issues. We need to restructure how we operate and spend limited resources.

Kudos to Jim Lazzara for all his assistance with the health insurance work he has provided.

Weekly Business

Warrant No. 10035T in the amount of \$1,324,398.43

Motion: To approve. (Moran/Levine) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10035E in the amount of \$20,646.86

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10035S in the amount of \$315,704.75

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10035PT in the amount of \$274,621.04

Motion: To approve. (Moran/Levine) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10035TV in the amount of \$78,649.04

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 10035PS in the amount of \$1,274,976.39

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 10035SV in the amount of \$395,469.37

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 5:0 passes

Warrant No. 10036T in the amount of \$79,158.14

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10036E in the amount of \$1,959,606.03

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10036PT in the amount of \$253,106.89

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10036TV in the amount of \$73,920.88

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10036PS in the amount of \$1,570.96

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

Warrant No. 10036SV in the amount of \$252.79

Motion: To approve. (Levine/Moran) 4:0:1 passes (Dentino)

- Application to serve on the Board of Registrars from Mary Barton - Rau (renewal)
Motion: To appoint Mary Barton-Rau to the Board. (Aptowitz/Levine) 5:0 passes

- Board of Selectmen meeting minutes of December 16, 2009
Motion: To approve. (Aptowitz/Moran) 5:0 passes

Correspondence

- Email from Marshall Ave residents regarding a requested stop sign at the corner of Marshall and Smiley Ave. Officer Lawson has stated in the past that a three way stop sign is not warranted however, the residents would like the bos to reconsider.

Mr. Ross will speak with Office Lawson to discuss this further.

- Recommendation that the annual town meeting be postponed from April 13th to May 4th. FinComm has recommended this date to meet school deadlines. However, Selectman Dentino stated that town meeting has always been after the elections and he feels it is premature.
- Letter from SPREDD regarding the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The bos needed to appoint a staff person to the committee for the town to be involved. Red Button would like to continue. (Addressed earlier in the meeting).

Town Manager Report

- Recap of auto insurance letter from Mr. Ross to Board of Selectmen. The board wanted Mr. Ross to add the town as an additional insured. However, the town's policy already covers personal use of employee vehicles for town business. Mr. Ross then asked if he could have Atty. Mangiaratti adjust his contract to reflect this change. The Board of Selectmen agreed.
Motion: To approve the agreement amendment between Mr. Ross and the town. (Levine/Moran) 5:0 passes
- Update on possible overnight parking in the down town area. Mr. Ross has spoken with Chief O'Neill and the DPW to possibly allow parking in some areas.
- Review of water dept regarding that our water wells are ranked very highly with the state and that will assist us in applying for state grants.
- Plans for the MMED sub station are going forward.

Board of Selectmen old and new business

- Old business from Selectman Levine: Mrs. Levine is still upset that the Torres Report was leaked to the public. The bos were the only individuals that had it.

She is also still disturbed that a front page report was done by the Sun Chronicle on the clothing allowance issues the town has faced. It gives an appearance that town employees have done something wrong. Selectman Dentino and Aptowitz stated they have not been happy with the contract provisions themselves but did not write the article or dictate who was interviewed for the article.
- Old business from Selectman Dentino: Does not appreciate the comments from Mrs. Levine. The newspaper called him, he gave a comment. He has never named employees; his concerns have always been about expenditures.

Questions on update on town policies. We need to be consistent with our policies through out municipal government.

He is also still concerned about employees accruing comp and sick time. We need to monitor this better so it does not become excessive.

He would still like to go forward with a pre town meeting "meeting" with the school, FinComm and residents. Mr. Ross will speak with the schools.

- Old business from Selectman Aptowitz: Has there been any updates on the MBTA parking and paying system? Mr. Ross has looked at the contract (while is quite old) and will be discussing it with the MBTA soon.
- Old business from Selectman Moran: None
- Old business from Chairman Baldwin: None
- New business from Chairman Baldwin: None
- New business from Selectman Aptowitz: None
- New business from Selectman Dentino: None
- New business from Selectman Moran: The forecasted figures from the governor are quite gloomy. State aid to the town is a large portion of our budget and one time revenues will not help us in the long run. We need to re structure now, this is not a one year problem, and it will take many years for revenue to grow to an appreciable number.

We are still also facing real structural problems, such as the Canoe River Dam. DPW has written many grants to fund several projects in town, however we have not been awarded any to date.

- New business from Selectman Levine: She has noticed that the work on the railroad underpasses still has water ponding in some areas. Mr. Ross stated that they are not done with the project and the ponding should go away.

Adjournment

Motion: Adjourn at 9:29pm (Aptowitz) 5-0 Passes

Jess Aptowitz

Signature of Clerk

April 7, 2010

Date of Approval