

*Special Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
7:00 p.m., Thursday, May 28, 2009
3rd Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall*

Joint Meeting Board of Finance

Meeting Minutes

Laura Francis called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. and led with the pledge of allegiance.

In attendance

John Szewczyk, James McLaughlin, Fran Korn, Loraine Coe, Rob DeSimone, Martin French, Francis Willett, and John Jenkins. Jay Berardino arrived at 7:40.

Randi Frank and Brian Funk representing Randi Frank Consulting, LLC.

L. Francis opened the meeting explaining the history behind the management review study and her meeting with Fran Korn and Randi Frank to discuss the scope of services. She then turned the meeting over to Randi Frank.

R. Frank stated she and Brian Funk met with the First Selectman and Board of Finance Chair to clarify what issues were of greatest concern to the Town in relation to the Durham Public Works Department. With these questions in mind they met with the Road Foreman and Public Works Maintainers, toured the Town Garage and Town Roads, and interviews were conducted with the Road Foreman, Finance Director, First Selectman and Town Crew.

R. Frank reviewed and explained that the report laid out nineteen services provided by the Public Works Department; snow removal, installation/maintenance of curbing, catch basin cleaning, roadside mowing/brush cutting, garbage pickup, building maintenance, special projects, street signs, record keeping, personnel administration, road repair/paving, street sweeping, brush pickup, drainage improvements, park maintenance, customer service system, vehicle/equipment maintenance, training, and purchasing; a description of the services, observations about the services, and recommendations. Management concerns are addressed in separate sections or through exhibits. Questions raised regarding other ways to restructure public works functions to make them more efficient were offered in four different options for discussion.

Fran Korn stated he felt a detailed cost analysis by service was missing from the report and the consultants should be looking at the department with a clean slate and not a preconceived notion. He stated he felt an obligation to the town to make sure every budget dollar is well spent.

Loraine Coe stated the Board of Finance was looking for hiring out vs paying in house figures.

R. Frank explained that the department is currently working with the Finance Director to contract out services in which they have the information to do a cost analysis. With other services she suggested and provided proper procedures and paperwork be put in place for better record keeping to capture the information needed for a cost analysis. She also stated that there is the possibility of contracting out at the current in house cost but in doing so it would free up staff to do other work.

Brian Funk commented that contractors have a purpose in some situations such as snow plowing, street sweeping, and chip sealing and the town should look at doing so but cautioned that the town would require a Physical Services Director to guide them to make sure they are doing the job as required.

Jay Berardino commented that the genesis of this study was to look at the department with change and to be cost efficient.

The four options regarding ways to restructure functions to make them more efficient were reviewed and discussed. L. Francis expressed her concern about the Building Officials role/job description in option #1 when he retires and questioned R. Frank about developing a points system for when a new inspector would be hired. R. Frank confirmed that a new point system could be developed along with the possibility of a new job description or two new job descriptions that would entail both positions.

F. Willett questioned the physical environment of the public works garage and asked if this was part of the scope of services, making reference to the report recommending an office at this facility. R. Frank stated it was not in the scope of services but felt the Road Foreman should have two offices, one at Town Hall and one at the Garage so he has information available that he needs. There was discussion on the buildings current condition and what changes could be recommended to the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance to implement change and overall benefit the employees who are housed in the building.

J. McLaughlin talked about the idea of a Town Engineer and how this position would provide continuity through administrations.

B. Funk commented that the report recommends looking at many policy changes and this would be an on-going process.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Moncata