

# **BOARD OF SELECTMEN & SEWER COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES**

*Faulkner Room 204, Town Hall*

*January 25, 2008*

*7:00 AM*

Present: Chairman Hunter, Selectmen Magee, Knibbe, Temporary Town Manager John Murray, Finance Director Steve Barrett, and Recording Secretary Maryjane Kenney

## **CITIZENS' CONCERNS**

### **PUBLIC HEARINGS AND APPOINTMENTS**

#### **TIMED APPOINTMENT**

None

## **SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS**

### **BUDGET DISCUSSIONS**

Selectwoman Knibbe asked for clarification on the Senior Citizen van service expense. Due to serious illness of the Senior Citizen van driver, the Counsel on Aging will need to supplement \$7500.00 for a substitute driver in this fiscal year. The Town Manager clarified that the expense won't be out of the COA Van Enterprise Fund, it being the only enterprise fund we have that is not self funded. A transfer would need to be authorized at Town Meeting as it is a separate legal line item.

Selectwoman Knibbe moved to speak on to how the board would like to go about the making budget decisions, that item needed to be resolved. The Chairman responded that traditionally the line for capital expenses moves continually until the motion is made for town meeting. She asked, as Chairman, what are the most important items to fund including initiatives? Selectman Magee stated the process differs a bit each year, but let's put our objectives in order. He believes we need to stick to necessary items listed and will not be able to fund initiatives in FY 09. We will need some improvements, but we can't add new initiatives. The two items he would like to see changed are Police and Fire overtime and the monies allotted for the Town's 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Possibly we could have the Celebrations Committee try to get funding through donations.

The Chairman stated that the Temporary Town Manager has made several recommendations; and did not differentiate between hard and soft items to be funded. He made his revised recommendations for the NESWC funds to include the substitute COA van driver previously discussed. Selectwoman Knibbe agrees it is a year of transition and not a year to start funding new items. She would like to concentrate on items outside of the operating budget, and handed out a budget summary as she would like items allocated. She would come up with a net surplus of approximately \$150K. The street light conversion could be added to ESCO, cut out the Community Health Assessment, cut Director of Community Sustainability, cut self composting toilet for NARA and cut out crosswalks and instead add any additional monies to sidewalks. She would fund the ladder truck, the snow blower, and the Hayward and Main design. At some point she would like to see the Hayward/Main study and try to understand the expenses. There are really two different conversations: how do we spend NESWC money and how do we spend \$727K for capital?

The Chairman commented that it might be early to get feed back on crosswalks and know if they have been successful and if they will hold up, so maybe that money should be allocated elsewhere.

Selectwoman Knibbe stated if we can agree to not funding some of the items, money will become available. Therefore, the Senior Center Expansion feasibility study could happen. The committee is not ready, but can we earmark money at this town meeting to be spent in the fall? The Temporary Town Manager stated it would be confusing to ask for money now without being able to fully explain the project. The Chairman stated that usually you don't call a fall meeting for one topic. We used to go for zoning issues, but recently we have not done a fall Town Meeting. The Chairman agreed it might be appropriate to mention the status at Town Meeting, but will be confusing to ask for money. That might just generate questions on financing that would not help in decision making. The Temporary Town Manager stated that we traditionally go for feasibility money. He advised to get a list of questions that you feel will accomplish the tasks, and then staff will answer those questions and help build a time line against which monies can be placed. Selectwoman Knibbe asked the possibility of a place holder and then pull it if we aren't ready. Selectman Magee does not like the idea as the monies might end up in free cash if the feasibility study is pulled. There is good support for the Senior Center. Why not just go to fall meeting? The fear is that fall meeting just doesn't happen. Selectwoman Knibbe stated we can leave it in and then pull it. It will add 100K to budget. Selectman Magee stated we are still making decisions on recreation and self funding, and whether ESCO will be used to help with capital improvements such as street lights, renewable energy and whether that affects having a Director of Sustainability. He also would like to discuss the new police officer and the program on prevention of family violence, which is a soft item. He agrees with cutting the Health Assessment from the Comprehensive Community Plan, but has concerns with cutting the crosswalks as it has worked in other communities. It really adds to character of a Town Center, slows traffic, and goes to safety and sidewalks. You can't provide sidewalks and then have a free-for-all to cross the road; it does not promote safety. NARA has never been fully funded. Not having a bathroom is not good. Changing rooms, storage areas and landscaping need to be lumped together into a NARA improvement program. These are hard capital items and should come from NESWC. The added picnic pavilion area would bring resources to the project as it would greatly enhance the corporate use of the park. He requested staff get portable bathroom fees and maintenance fees as an offset of the compost toilet cost.

Chairman Hunter would like to see GPS systems stay in the budget. He feels it will be a necessary item with a second ambulance and diversion of trucks from place to place it should be pushed as very important. The Temporary Town Manager stated that its efficiencies come from using it for emergency response and mutual aid to help in dispatch, not as some believe strictly for direction. The Chairman stated that staffing of the second ambulance is still in question. He felt the sister city budget item is soft. Where does the number come from and what is required of the Town? The Temporary Town Manager noted that the number is soft; Niger officials will be coming to the United States to talk to Acton. Selectman Magee agrees with the Chairman on this item.

Selectman Magee would like to leave today understanding what a Green Power Aggregator is. The Temporary Town Manager explained the concept very basically. The Town purchases green power and becomes a broker of this energy. We buy directly from the national grid and then can sell the power to citizens, the schools, and anyone else that makes sense. Basically you cut out the middleman. It is the feasibility study we want to fund now.

ESCO, we need to study and see if it makes sense for Acton. The basic principal is we pay them all the energy savings, but they take care of all capital improvements. It will take 6 weeks to go to bid and see if there would be savings for Acton.

Chairman Hunter would like to know more about the prevention of family violence program and how it works. Police have a significant number of family violence calls. But other groups do try to run prevention programs, such as churches, rotary, united way, and counseling departments. The chief will get statistics on family violence to the Board. Selectman Magee is interested in who will be working with these people.

The Temporary Town Manager explained some of the staff line item changes. The Building Commissioner/Zoning were merged it into one department. The group who writes the legislation should enforce it and see how it works. They will implement changes that need to be made as they work with the codes. It is a good fit into planning, which is not a sustainable situation at this point in time. If a Building Commissioner comes on, he will review building plans and determine if they meet code, enforce energy code, and additionally inspect that buildings meet state code. Selectman Magee stated that building inspector is very tough job. Zoning looks at signs, layout, and character. Selectwoman Knibbe asked if the new structure would be typical. Typically zoning has been so complicated that many towns just hire a separate person.

Selectman Magee would like Renewable Energy Certificates off the budget list, add back senior center, add money for sidewalks and not certain about ESCO.

The Temporary Town Manager will send out email of his understanding of the cuts and additions made at today's budget meeting. Please find attached.

The Chairman noted that we actually don't get numbers from state for budget until the fall. He was most disappointed in Acton Forum article in Beacon.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **CONSENT AGENDA**

#### **APPROVAL AND NOTIFICATION OF THE TOWN POLLING LOCATIONS**

Selectman Magee moved to approve the locations and Selectwoman Knibbe seconded. The Chairman so ordered polling locations approved.

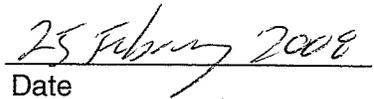
### **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There will be no need for Executive Session.

  
Recording Secretary

  
Andrew D. Magee, Clerk

  
Date

# FY 2009 BUDGET WORKSHOP

January 26, 2008

8:00 AM to 1:30 PM

FAULKNER MEETING ROOM

Meeting called by:

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Present: Chairman Hunter Selectmen Magee, Knibbe, Berry,  
Temporary Town Manager John Murray, Finance Director Steve  
Barrett, KarenK and Recording Secretary Maryjane Kenney

Presiding:

F. DORE'  
HUNTER,  
CHAIRMAN,  
BOARD OF  
SELECTMEN

Please bring: BUDGET BOOKS

## Minutes

### 1. COFFEE

2. Convene Meeting: Chairman Hunter

Dore' Hunter

3. General Overview: Temporary Town Manager John Murray

John Murray

4. NATURAL RESOURCES: [Conservation, Cemetery and Recreation Programs ]; (24) NARA Park Bathroom Improvements {89}, (31) Camp Acton Composting Toilet {99}, (32) NARA Park Shade Structures {91}, (33) Expand NARA Park Snack Bar {90}, NARA Park Changing Room/Storage Area {93}, NARA Landscaping {98}, NARA Picnic Pavillions, to be provided

Tom Tidman

Tom Tidman and Kathy Fochtman presented – The operating budget was touched on quickly. Allen Nitschelm asked about purchased equipment and using non town revenues for storage buildings. NARA capital upgrades are funded through taxes. Our fees schedule is set to cover operating expenses only. Bill Mullin and Herman Kabakoff confirmed that this was the current policy. Selectman Magee asked for details on the changing area, landscaping and storage at NARA. Landscaping would include drainage and improve the slope next to stage. Also, The Picnic Pavilion, please explain. Tom Tidman replied that there is a large use of the area by Corporations and to be able to advance that use would generate additional fees. Steve Noone, questioned the long range plan for playgrounds – where is the plan? Recreation Commission is currently addressing a plan, including a handicap access playground at the Elm St. play ground location. Bill Mullin asked about CPC funds being available for use of play grounds. Tom Tidman replied that for CPC funds to be available “new” needs to be attached to the project; as a new trail in the playground. Bob Evans stated roads in the cemetery need repair.

### 5. MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Marcia Rich

Marcia Rich presented - Areas of significant change are parity and the travel budget, as Marcia will be treasurer of Minuteman Library Network and she will need to travel. Books and periodicals had an increase with a high request for materials exchange and circulation was up 4%. In FY 07 we were 14<sup>th</sup> in the state in circulation per capita. In FY 07 the staff had the 8<sup>th</sup> highest workload in the state. Long range priority is new data base for use in reservations and learning skills software (SAT, MCAS testing study guides). Herman Kabakoff asked if the materials budget equals the 15% factor required by regulators. No, the \$150K request is based on needs. Allen Nitschelm – what is the policy for part-time v full-time staff and benefits – part time with benefits should not be allowed. The Library is not handling budget correctly with 7 part-time benefitted staff. Her full-time people are long range professional and get 4 weeks each off. That is a lot of time to cover. Herman Kabakoff requested please add in the budget the addition of Sundays especially during the school year.

6. HIGHWAY/NESWC: [NESWC Enterprise] (11) Compost Equipment {NA}, (12) Replace Snow Blower {31}, (14) Transfer Station Paving {NA}, (20) Replace Skid Steer Loader {33}, (26) Replace DPW Director Vehicle {32}

David Brown,  
Bruce Stamski

Bruce Stamski presented – The Board of Selectmen took a moment to congratulate and thank Dave Brown for 40Years of service to the Town. Bruce then continued pointing to significant changes in his budget. Moving capital for sidewalks to operating budget, \$34 K increase due to parity, and diesel and gasoline show a major increase in that budget line. Additional snow and ice monies have been added for plowing and road maintenance in the winter. Chairman Hunter asked for a review of snow removal on the Agenda Feb 4. Recycling numbers have been up since

the new station opened. Selectman Magee questioned paving monies being down? Chapter 90 monies have helped as paving costs have doubled. Bruce stated, we need to use some of that money for bridge repairs.

7. ENGINEERING: (13) Bridge Repair {9}, (22) Design Services, Hayward/Main Street {11} (23) Cross Walk Improvements {NA} Bruce Stamski

Bruce Stamski continued presenting – He was asked to explain the policy on life cycle of highways and how is it comparable to other towns. Bruce explained that every 15 to 20 years highways need major maintenance. Acton has 41 miles sidewalks and 108 miles of town owned road. Allen Nitschelm stated that Quarry Rd and Main has a drainage issue and questioned the safety risk. We have band aided it and it needs a major fix. Yes, road flooding can be a safety issue. Bill Mullin asked if Hayward and Main is still in, do the Selectmen have a position. Some thing needs to be done but not \$465K. Some geometric safety changes. Concord and Newtown need the same study. Bruce stated the collection of data to complete the study would cost the same as the original study, about \$40K. Chairman Hunter was in agreement: you are probably right that study should be done. Pat Clifford asked if compost and recycling would come from NESWC for capital. John Murray answered yes.

8. CLERK/ELECTIONS Eva Bowen

Eva Taylor presented - Additional election, and new training for voting machine is the major increase in the Clerk's budget.

9. COUNCIL ON AGING: [COA Van Enterprise] Jean Fleming

Jean Fleming presented - Currently there are approximately 3200 seniors in town. The staff provides a Newsletter for the seniors and it can be found on line. Staff consists of 5 full time and 4 part time people (3 with benefits) and accounts for 90% of the budget. Office supplies and program supplies are the remainder of the budget. Van enterprise staff is 84 % of that budget, with 16% in gas, maintenance and cell phone. Health insurance costs are in there. In terms of request for the FY 08 enterprise budget we need to add monies as gas has gone up and the long term illness of the van driver added \$5-7500. Chairman Hunter asked does the van service meet the need of the senior population? Jean replied that there are transportation needs that are not met. Steve Noone asked how fast is the senior population growing? In 2020 it is estimated to be 4400. Bob Evans questioned the senior center expansion, what is it going to be and what will it cost? No decision had been made yet. Chairman Hunter explained we need to find expansion areas first and then we can have estimates done.

10. BREAK

11. BUILDING/ZBA: [Building Inspection Revolving], (28) Replace Inspection Vehicle {1} Frank Ramsbottom

Frank Ramsbottom presented – The Town has hired a contractual inspector for the Avalon Project. This cost is offset by the standard fee schedule. Herman Kabakoff - no new heads? Frank - that is correct. Bill Mullin asked about the total number of permits: it was lower than 2006.

12. PLANNING: (7) Assistant Planner/Zoning Enforcement Officer {103}, (9) Master Plan Supplement/Community Health Assessment {102}, (19) Community Shuttle {NA} Roland Bartl

Roland presented – He explained his temporary position as zoning commissioner with the task of enforcement. In the budget the major increase is for an assistant planner and zoning enforcement person. Chairman Hunter explained why the zoning enforcement will go to planning and that zoning enforcement will be appointed by the Town Manager. Kent Sharp wanted to clarify that there is one new position; an assistant zoning/planner and the Building Commissioner position. That is correct. Herman Kabakoff stated there was no mention of zoning only planning in the job description, which should be corrected. He disagrees with the need to replace some one and get a new person; could you combine the jobs. With the slow down in housing it might not be altogether necessary. It was noted that the slow down is real and will not turn around this year, affecting maybe only the 40B developments. The 40Bs are very labor intensive. John Murray stated that in the 90's the building department was cut significantly. We are trying to rebuild. Acton has a difficult by-law and it takes at least 2 years in the department to understand and work it. Selectmen Berry asked if the new planner will be attending the zoning hearings. Yes, that is correct. Comprehensive Community Plan funding has been increased as looking for intensive community outreach, becomes more expensive with the extra effort. The \$100K is needed to move into the next phase before momentum is lost. Selectman Magee stated that as outdated as the old plan was, many of the suggested items were implemented with the exception of Kelly's Corner. Allen Nitschelm stated in his opinion it was wrong to hire a company to cajole people to come in and give their opinion in regards to the Comprehensive Community Plan. We did get three proposals and have a vendor that has started to work with us. We have an appropriation from town meeting but will need more. The \$120K is the new number since the RFP has gone out and new numbers have come in. \$20K will be coming off as the Selectmen voted against the community health assessment part of the project. Bill Mullin asked for clarification on 40R as opposed to 40B revenue. Roland stated the concern is that they are looking at very heavy density and as such requires

vote by town meeting.

13. POLICE: (2) Deputy Police Chief {105}, (3) Police Officer {106}, (4) Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Initiative [NA]

Frank  
Widmayer

Frank Widmayer presented – He is the only non-union employee in his department. His goal was to keep as low and close to his budget number as he did last year, as his number one priority is to fill a position. You see some increases due to parity with the clerical staff and uniforms needed and then you see some decreases as they lost an officer and the Quinn bill goes down. With a flat budget (+1% which includes salary parity) the department can get by another year, but he has significant staffing issues addressed. A Deputy chief, patrolman, officers and a domestic family violence program are being requested. Chairman Hunter is prepared to support the Deputy Chief, the other positions are still uncertain. The Chairman is interested in learning more about the domestic violence program. Selectman Magee, how much will the domestic violence program interact with the schools, nursing or other organizations? There is a need for someone to work with families directly. People are moving out from the cities and the kids are having major problems. Approximately 250 calls a year relate to domestic violence. Cameras and difibs are available for the cruisers. Every town around has them in use but Acton is waiting for the unions to respond. Currently we do not have these tools available and police are often the first respondents. The union contends that these devices change working conditions causing a need for increases in compensation. Allen Nitschelm needed clarified how many cruisers we have and how often they get replaced. The department replaces 3 to 5 replaced a year, last year they replaced 4. They can rotate the older ones to be used as unmarked cars. Kent Sharpe asked about the Assistant Deputy, is it in the budget? It was explained that a union person can't be an assistant. Will an additional person help with the overtime? Not really, maybe if 6-8 new officers were hired it would have an affect. Jonathan Chinitz, Chair of the School committee, is this the first year the school police are fully funded. Yes. Chairman Hunter asked the status of the force's hand held communication. The reply was it is analog and needs to be updated to digital.

14. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mark Hald

Mark Hald presented – The largest item of change is moving GIS into the operating budget and out of capital. Chairman Hunter questioned the vacancies in the department? They are going to start interviews as soon as Laura returns from maternity leave and they have their coverage. Herman Kabakoff noticed \$175K in expenses, what's up with that, \$300K is the total from the warrant? On the original request they did not add layers to integrate the GIS to be made useful. Herman asked this is over and above and will this continue each year? After the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the plan it might decrease. The subject is worthy of being isolated and discussed individually. Jonathan Chinitz – This expenditure is not different than putting a roof on a building and that is why you need overlays and it is a help to citizens. Pat Easterly, so to clarify we are at Phase I of the operation of GIS. Bill Mullin, there are heavy expenditures in the front end of the year, is there still monies left? The Munis contract happened in March and that was a large part, CTY in May, it is just how the contracts have been signed at the front end of the year this time. Allen Nitschelm is the status of web site going to improve when the employee on maternity leave comes back in February? What saving can we gain from sharing services with the schools? Mark replied we do share where appropriate, as with the Munis server. Pat Clifford, when can staff efficiencies be seen in the implementation of the GIS. When services such as abutter lists, maps and implementation of kiosk will go on line, including access on web site at home. Mark anticipates the use to be up and running in FY 08.

15. FIRE:[Fire Alarm Revolving]; (5) Aerial Ladder Truck & Pumper {20}, (6) Second Ambulance {NA},(16) MDT/GPS Units for Fire Apparatus {23}

Robert Craig

Bob Craig Presented – The increase in salaries is due to shift over time for absences caused by personnel attending training academy for new firefighters. We have put training off for a year and it cannot be pushed out any further. Capital requests are for a new ambulance and GPS units. Not for directional use, but to help in response for mutual aid calls and calls for directional changes. Selectman Magee – Does the law require training in the first year? There is a contractual requirement to provide training within the first year. When a person, for some reason doesn't take his slot, you lose your spot and need to reapply with a 6/7month wait time. Herman Kabakoff, the second ambulance is funded from the enterprise fund. Bob, yes. The pumpers were discovered to be in disrepair during routine maintenance. They were sidelined. Allen Nitschelm, please explain if they are second line trucks they don't need to be in great shape. Isn't that what mutual aid is for. The pumper would not be used on a regular basis and might not be needed at all if mutual aid is called. The Fire Chief stated that in 2007 we had a total of 13 structure fires. Cost to recondition the ladder truck would run approximately \$200K, under the condition that you need only a few more years of service and no warranty of repairs. Bill Mullin stated that the \$200K is not currently in the budget, and the money should be shown as soft funding. North Acton design committed \$85K and yes it will roll over. The designers need to look at a new location on same site; it appears that now we might get an easement. Bob Evans questioned if financing was the most cost effective means for funding the ladder truck and pumper. John Murray stated that there was an error in the calculation and the cost has been recalculated over a 15 year period. Take it out of NESWC funds and it will not cost long term so much. Pat Easterly, what is the impact of our ice and snow program on new equipment? Will

that affect its lifetime and what about our own vehicles? The reply was absolutely. Maryanne Ashton inquired about the balance in the ambulance fund: it is \$853K. The last time we purchased an ambulance FY 07 it was at approximately the same price \$183K plus equipment. Chief Craig stated it was \$200K when fitted with equipment.

16. WEST ACTON LIBRARY

Jennifer  
Friedman

John Murray presented for Jennifer Friedman - West Acton Library CPC covers the refurbishment that has been requested. Pat Clifford, has technology been added to the updates? No technology is added to the current improvements as technology upgrades are currently being done.

17. BREAK

18. HEALTH/NURSING: [Nursing Enterprise, Septage Enterprise, Sealer of Weights Revolving, Food Service Revolving, Hazardous Materials Revolving.] (18) NPDES compliance{24}, (27) Replace Car 13 {26}, (29) Treatment Plant Lab Data Enhancement {30}, (30) Treatment Plant SCADA Upgrade {29}

Doug Halley,  
Merrily  
Evdokimoff

Doug Halley presented – His new budget items included a water treatment lab data program, Animal Inspector, Capital for GPS for locating storm water locations, new car, and upgrading the treatment plant. Selectwoman Knibbe asked why the Town Health Assessment was part of the Comprehensive Community Plan. It will look at public health concerns in the community. We could then seek additional grants with the study assessment completed. Herman Kabakoff does not think we should profit by our fees on disposable waste (CRTs). Mr. Magee noted that CRTs are legally deemed hazardous materials. Merrily stated in Nursing staffing is the largest problem. Balance on nursing enterprise fund is \$395K

19. FINANCE: accounting , assessors, collector, finance & [sewer enterprise fund] (10) Environmental Investment Trust Fund {NA}

Steve Barrett

Steve Barrett presented - Unexpected salary lines and over extended consulting money that went into retooling MUNIS pursuant to revenue collection account for increases in finance department budget and Vision Appraisal Software, in which the Town had a 9 year revaluation. The collector's office has two thirds of its long-term employees retiring. Trying to fill those spots will be difficult and getting them up to speed will be time consuming in FY09. Labor accounts for 90% of the budget. Payroll is lowered in anticipation of Community Preservation (CPC) funds covering collection and administration costs of the CPC projects. Selectman Magee would like to have the Master Health numbers and the effect of retirees on the budget. Steve Noon, Middlesex Retirement System assessment will it continue to be 10%? Steve Barrett responded the state is holding onto some of the funds. They are continuing meetings with the Inspector General. Pat Clifford questioned how the 9 year evaluation was updated and how it was paid. Acton updates and values annually and we pay through the professional services line. Bob Evans, when can we pay on-line? Mr. Barrett agreed we lag behind in this area. Allen Nitschelm, how many part time employees with benefits? Mr. Barrett replied zero. Bill Mullin asked about teacher pay salary deferral. There are 4 years left. Mr. Mullen also wanted to know the details of the NESWC account. The amount in the fund is \$4.88M, invested at the federal funds rate minus 25 basis points yields 5% and generates 200K a year.

20. MANAGER/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT/CELEBRATIONS/ HR/VETERANS' SERVICES: (1) AB Cultural Council {NA} (8) Improvements in Weatherization of Town Buildings {NA}, (17) Green

John Murray presented - \$50K is needed for contracts and planning for our public celebration in advance of Acton's 275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Selectman Magee feels that this is too high; the manager had already adjusted the budget accordingly to reflect that. The Manager is implementing increases in the training budget that in the past had been held back. It is now time to invest in employee training. \$2000 goes to the Cultural Council and they return it in programs to the community. General maintenance in municipal buildings, boilers and heating system need to be taken care of and the underground fuel tank has to have the appropriate actions taken. We are trying to invest in maintenance before the problems become so overbearing. We are going to ask The Energy Services Company (ESCO) to give a proposal in which maintenance to the systems will be fully funded in exchange for the energy savings which they will keep. ESCO will pick and chose a menu of items, we will look at options. The \$75K is to supplement what they won't pick up. We will get quotes from other vendors as well and expect at least a 2 month process.

21. Power Aggregation Study {NA}, (21) Director of Community Sustainability {NA}, (25) Sister City Relations {NA}

John Murray presented – The Power Aggregate Study is to allow the Town to have the legal ability to become a broker of energy. The money you see in the budget is for a study to see if the program is a match for Acton. Allen Nitschelm, is this a money making proposition for Acton? There are monies for a loosely defined Sister City Relationship with Niger. The relationship would help form a cultural relationship with Niger. The Mayor from China is interested in meeting and making a relationship with a municipal group in the States. Selectman Magee stated it might just be too

big of a project for us now. The Chairman noted it is so early and not well enough defined to place money against.

Selectman Magee, looking at legal fees it is level and seems to be more than enough at \$460K. Bill Mullin, in the legal service line item, who is represented. Should we bring someone in house? The Chairman explained that the expertise differs so vastly that we could not get appropriate representation from one person.

22. MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES: (34) Renewable Energy Certificates {NA}

Dean Charter

23. Streetlight Retro-fit: (15) Street Light Conversion {62}

Bernie Kosicki

Bernie Kosicki presented – Acton’s current lights were installed in 70’s and 80’s. The new optics will be metal halide technology and will focus downward to reduce the glare. Light spill will be reduced and electricity cost will be reduced. The capital expense would be \$165K to replace and yearly savings would be \$35K. Payback period in this program would be 4.6 years. NStar also offers a rebate which would further reduce the payback period. Current maintenance is \$20K a year which we pay to Littleton electric. Acton purchased the lights. We do need to explore what is anticipated for maintenance cost. Bill Mullin asked about the ESCO program and what it would change in the expense of this program. Allen Nitschelm asked if ESCO provides a savings why we give it away.

This ended the FinCom/BOS Budget Meeting

The Board of Selectman remained to meet, 1:15 pm.

Allen Nitschelm wanted to discuss a disturbing aspect of the budget. He does not believe that 20-25 part timer employees should receive benefits. Selectman Magee, we need to investigate this and see if we need a policy. Many of these people are professional and it would be difficult to replace them. The Chairman asked staff to please gather more information on this subject. Mr. Murray stated that the manager does have such a policy and there is no need for the Board to adopt one.

Allen Nitschelm, what will be the cost for the green proposal? He also questioned if the Fire Department does not seem to have a real need for an ambulance

The Board took time to go over the changes in the budget from the Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup> am meeting. The Temporary Town Manager read through the line items and made the changes they had discussed today (See attached to minutes). Discussion stopped on the issue of crosswalks; currently many of the sidewalks leave people at an unsafe place. Selectwomen Knibbe said crosswalks don’t have to be aesthetically pleasing, they just need to cross people safely; lets see how it goes. Selectman Magee would like to see a NARA bundle as was discussed at an earlier meeting. He would fund out of the NESWC monies. He recommends that the picnic pavilion go to CPC for funding and leave the other items as a capital project funded this year. Selectwoman Knibbe added that she feels there should be a flat area for strollers and wheel chairs in front of the theater. Selectman Magee stated that is happening. Mr. Murray, in the design the Town has purchased interlocking plastic grid to facilitate handicapped access.

Selectman Knibbe questioned if the Sister City Funds should actually come from the tax base. Another organization should be in place as support that the town might endorse. Let’s put a relationship together with a declaration and then see what the expectation is. The Chairman agreed it should not be the town but another group who is in support.

All agreed to fund the ladder truck and the pumper with NESWC funds.

Compost for the leaves and the trees, will the compost be a profitable product? No additional staff would be needed, it actually would save time. Selectwoman Knibbe stated that if the savings were sufficient, it should be funded. Chairman Hunter asked what does the equipment look like and what maintenance is required? For \$300K it is a lot of money if there is no savings. Compost is part of the NESWC money for recycle upgrades.

Transfer station paving, maybe try to let the area settle it and fund the paving another year. Dave Brown is afraid of safety issues.

ESCO and street light go as a package \$200K, and if we go ESCO \$125K comes back to budget. The real number is \$165K, but 40K is in energy savings.

Snow blower all approved, bobcat, approved.

EMT communicator for Fire Department the Chairman stated they are in favor \$48K.

Green Power Aggregator, need to get a lot more information and go in a separate warrant article to Town Meeting. Who is interested in buying from the town?

DPW director vehicle, all agreed it was needed.

Shuttle study very important, \$10K.

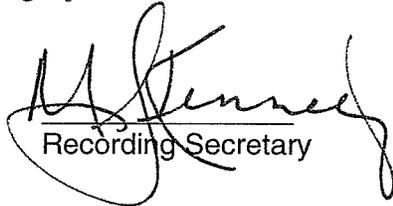
Storm water compliance MDES 25K to show we are moving forward. We can not do it all this year.

Treatment plant for sewers, Selectwoman Knibbe would say no if it comes out of operating budget. Selectman Magee should hold a hearing for the expansion, if a fee is established we pay our share. The Chairman stated we need to advertise and hold public meetings. Selectman Magee, can we not do it this year. We need a system set up for notification and decision process. The Temporary Town Manager should get a recommendation from Health.

Energy certificated delete from the budget.

2<sup>nd</sup> ambulance for the Fire Department, all are in favor.

Meeting adjourned.

  
Recording Secretary

  
Andrew D. Magee, Clerk  
25 February 2008  
Date