

# **Dover Warrant Committee**

**October 15, 2008**

Members in attendance: Caroline White, Chair; David Stapleton, Vice Chair; Peter Smith, Secretary; James Dawley; James Kinder; Scott Seidman; Nancy Weinstein

Others in attendance: Carol Lisbon, Selectmen Liaison

*Dr. White called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM*

## **1. Review of the minutes of October 1, 2008**

Mrs. Weinstein moved that the minutes be approved, seconded by Mr. Stapleton. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Mr. Seidman was not yet present).

## **2. Current Economic Crisis – Is there anything that the Town should be doing now?**

There was a general discussion of the budget outlook for the coming fiscal year, specifically in light of Governor Patrick's announcement earlier in the day of major state cuts. Mr. Stapleton noted that historically, tax delinquency is very low in Dover, even in difficult years. Mrs. Weinstein asked that the committee be updated on town receipts for the year to date compared with the previous two years. Dr. White noted that she discussed matters that afternoon with Town Administrator David Ramsey: he was waiting to hear the specifics of the Governor's cuts before he could determine the possible impact on the Town. Dr. White mentioned that the last time 9c cuts were implemented, state grants were cut. Lacking details on state cuts for the current fiscal year, it was agreed to watch and wait.

## **3. Budget Template FY 2010 (draft 2)**

The committee discussed how many budget scenarios ought to be included on the template. Possibilities included: a fixed percentage reduction; level-dollar; level-service; additional-program; non-override. Several members suggested that asking departments to prepare five different budgets is unnecessarily burdensome. The fixed percentage reduction was discarded, as too little is known yet about next year's economic outlook and state aid levels, and due to rising costs (especially energy) level-dollar funding amounts to a challenge to find savings. The non-override case was likewise discarded because a level funded budget would provide comparable information. While there was some sentiment to remain optimistic until more concrete data is available, the majority of the committee wanted the departments to consider a pessimistic case in the template. Mrs. Weinstein moved that the committee accept a template requesting level-dollar, level-service, and additional-program cases, seconded by Mr. Dawley. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-2-0.

## **4. Fiscal 2010 Budget Guidelines and Review Procedures Draft**

Mrs. Weinstein asked that in addition to the budget, any supporting materials be sent to the committee at least seven days before the scheduled review. She also questioned what guidance

should be provided for anticipated fuel and energy costs. Since prices remain in flux, no change was made.

## 5. Liaison Updates

Mr. Smith (Fire): The new UHF radio tower is up and is expected to be operational before the end of the year. The department was able to cover most of the \$45,104 through federal grants and the net cost to the town will be \$2,550. Federal grant authorities conducted a mini-audit which turned up no issues. Capital budget requests for the coming year will include \$42,000 to replace the command vehicle and \$8,000 for Scott (oxygen) bottles.

Mr. Smith (Roads): One of the 10-wheel dump/plow trucks needs to be replaced, at a cost of \$165,000. Mrs. Lisbon added, based on the last Selectmen's meeting, that the truck is so far gone as to be undrivable, requiring lease of a replacement.

Mr. Stapleton (Zoning Board of Appeals): no significant activity.

Mr. Stapleton (Historical Commission): The Dover Historical Commission is reviewing a request from a joint Massachusetts DPW/Massachusetts Historical Commission to determine if the Corcoran Dam bridge (identified as a historically significant bridge by the Commonwealth) at Willow St. in Dover is in safe and usable condition. That status will be reviewed by Dover's Town Engineer, Needham's Engineering Dept and the Commonwealth team in the coming weeks

Mrs. Weinstein (Library): The trustees have requested a meeting with the liaisons to discuss moving the building's utilities out of the library budget to simplify meeting state allocation guidelines. She also noted that income from the Hovey Fund is down.

Dr. White (Sherborn Advisory): Sudbury and Walpole were recently able to borrow at reasonable rates, so debt funding is not as badly frozen as some news reports might have indicated, at least for towns with good credit ratings. Mrs. Lisbon added that Town Administrator David Ramsey has been in contact with Dover's principal banks (Citizens and Sovereign) to ensure that access remains open. Mr. Ramsey suggested that the town ask its bond counsel perform a quick investment review.

*Mr. Smith moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Stapleton;  
the motion was agreed by consensus at 8:00 PM.*

*the next meeting will be October 20, 2008 at 7:15 AM*

Respectfully submitted,  
Peter Smith, Secretary

*approved October 29, 2008*