

Override Study Committee Municipal Subcommittee
Monday, Jan. 22, 2018, 5:00 PM
Room 103 Town Hall

Members Present: Betsy DeWitt, Harold Petersen,
Arrived at 6pm: Jeff Rudolph, Ben Franco
Public present: Mark Gray, TMM pct. 7, Carol Levin, Neil Wishinsky, Select Board Chair
Guests: Building Commissioner Dan Bennett, Public Buildings Director Charlie Simmons

Meeting Notes:

Without a quorum present, the meeting began at 5:15 pm.
Dan Bennett gave an overview of the Building Department responsibilities: code enforcement and repairs and maintenance of public buildings. He indicated that there have been record numbers of building permits issued over the past two years, mostly for residential renovations. This has generated \$4 million in fees, but has overtaxed the staff charged with making inspections. He would like to be able to add one inspector to be able to meet all building code requirements. He confirmed that the Building Dept. budget carries the expense items for school and town utilities and all repairs and maintenance. He mentioned an ongoing, 5-year dispute with the electrical utility company Eversource, who have not paid the taxes on their poles and wires (oddly classified as "personal property") despite court rulings in favor of the Town. The total owed could be as much as \$3 million plus interest.

He said that they have required all building permit applications since July 1, 2017 to be submitted electronically. For applicants without access to electronic means, staff will scan paper documents. That said, the department is required to keep all documentation associated with a building until it is demolished and needs climate-controlled storage facilities for the existing archive of paper documents. He would not commit to the expected lifetime of electronic storage systems. He said that the repairs and maintenance department has two locations for work-space, plus storage of equipment and supplies: paint shop at Old Lincoln School, electric shop and carpentry shop at Larz Anderson Park. This means staff time is wasted in travel collecting items to carry out work orders at a public building site. Charlie said that they have used a large trailer to move equipment to work-sites in the summer when they have major repair projects. The Building Department could use a single space of at least 20,000 sq.ft to operate at maximum effectiveness.

Ben and Jeff arrived and were given a summary of the department's status. A motion to approve the minutes from Jan. 18, 2018 was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously.

Charlie Simmons said there are currently 82 public buildings. The Town has 772,108 sq.ft. The Schools have twice the area, 1,595,578 sq.ft., without the

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expansion at Devotion or what is proposed for the High School. He provided documentation for his repairs and maintenance budget request (attached). Historically the Town and Schools have shared Tradespersons' salary expenses 25% Town/75% Schools. Final decisions about shared cost amounts are addressed by the Town/School Partnership agreement.

In 2016, outside consultants reviewed operations and made recommendations. The Matrix Report compared Brookline to nine communities and found that Brookline spends less per sq.ft. This was explained because of the increased area to be maintained without increased staffing. The department has tradespersons in house and contracts for additional specialized services.

With the Matrix Report, the department has developed a 5-year plan that requests additional staff based on the increased complexity of systems and safety monitoring as the schools expand. New school buildings have substantially increased testing and monitoring requirements for elevators, alarms, HVAC/air quality and surveillance cameras. The Department has also begun prioritization that focuses on Life Safety and Preventive Maintenance to avoid costly major repairs.

For FY19, the Public Buildings Department proposes an increase of \$962,123, including \$775,000 for contracted services for equipment repair and specialist technicians. Two additional in-house staff are also being requested. The School 75% share would be \$162,123. Because of the high level of energy efficiency at the New Devotion, no additional funds are being requested for utilities. In discussion, committee members observed that without an operating override, the total request was unlikely to be funded, and only partially with an override.

Committee members discussed the need to have an update on overall municipal financial needs with the possibility of several operating override scenarios. On the list of items not yet discussed were a review of parking meter fees and fines and library fines. It was agreed to invite Mel Kleckner and Melissa Goff to the next meeting on Monday, Jan. 29.

SubCommittee adjourned @ 6:55 pm.

Future Meeting Dates:

5 PM Jan. 29, 2018- Confirmed

5 PM Feb. 5, 201