

Name of Committee: Override Study Committee Municipal Subcommittee

Meeting Date: March 27, 2014 Time: 7:30 a.m.

Meeting Location: Town Hall – Room 310

Members Present: Alberto Chang, Janet Gelbart, Michael Glover, Ann Connolly Tolhoff

Others Present: Sean Cronin, Deputy Town Administrator

Topic: Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes was deferred.

Topic: Discussion of further research, investigations, and analysis

Michael Glover has not yet delved deeply into the Town's leave policies. Sean Cronin indicated that between vacation, holidays, sick leave, and personal days, Town employees only work 75% of the time they are paid for. This is typical of government employees in the past who were underpaid and over benefitted. However, pay has come up to comparability with the private sector, but benefits are still very generous. The Town has begun to address leave time in successive contract negotiations. Reducing leave time reduces the need to backfill and pay overtime.

Town employees used to receive up to five weeks vacation. New employees can earn up to four weeks with increments stretched out over longer tenure. There are four personal days, plus up to three more if sick leave is not used. There are 15 sick days which can be rolled over. Up to \$5,000 in sick benefits can be paid out on retirement.

DPW is in the process of negotiating new solid waste contracts and anticipates approximately 200K in savings. Under review are outsourcing curbside collection, reducing tipping fees, automating curbside collection, and changing to a four-day collection schedule. Further reductions in street sweeping would violate the consent decree. Additional outsourcing of parks maintenance is looked at as contracts are renewed.

The Committee will drill down further on police details. Potentially, the Town bylaw can be revised to leave more to the discretion of the Chief. The cost of details for Town projects is \$2-\$3 million per year. Some percentage of this may not be necessary. If the Town hires an outside contractor for something like tree maintenance, the cost of the details billed to the contractor is passed on to the Town. Most of the details are paid at overtime rates. It would be helpful to know how much of overtime is due to details.

Another area to review is the amount of revenue lost when ticketers function as school crossing guards instead of ticketing for parking violations. Adding part time staff to serve as crossing guards should allow more time for ticketing.

Jim Stergios may know of other topics to consider.

No further work is needed for the fire department. There are potential savings from 3-person manning or reducing a fire company. These must be weighed against the increased risk and the potential impact of Hancock Village on the existing coverage configuration.

Potential savings from the library range between \$50,000 from reducing the materials budget to \$250,000 if Putterham were closed. Savings from reducing staff hours lie somewhere in between. Potential overtime savings from requiring Sunday coverage and closing on a weekday need to be reviewed with regard to contract and/or Blue Law constraints.

Potential savings in public health services are small. The impact of reducing or eliminating the contract with Brookline Community Mental Health needs to be explored.

Topic: Advisory Committee update and report to full OSC

Alberto Chang will work on some draft slides for a presentation to the full OSC. Michael will circulate a draft of the outline he will send to the OSC co-chairs for their presentation to the Advisory Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30.