

Brookline Fiscal Advisory Committee
Financial Policies and Principles Subcommittee
Minutes
May 20, 2019
5:00-7:00 PM
Town Hall, Room 310

In attendance: Subcommittee members Cliff Brown, Nancy Daly, Peter Bleyleben, Carol Levin, Mike Toffel, Arthur Segel. Also in attendance: Richard Nagle and Mark Gray.

Next Meeting: 6/3/19, 5:00 to 7:00.

Approval of Minutes from 4/1/19 will be postponed until the June 3, 2019 meeting.

Cliff: There has been a request for the subcommittee to focus on the Town-School Partnership Agreement (TSPA). This has been requested by the individual Select Board members in conversations with David Kirshner and was echoed by Mel Kleckner. David has asked that the subcommittee develop a "straw man" which can be used to frame a discussion by the stakeholders of a revised TSPA. The subcommittee is not being asked to draft a new TSPA.

This work is important because:

1. No one understands the current TSPA. As a result, there is confusion as to how it does and should operate.
2. There are questions/perceptions of fairness and equity.
3. The TSPA needs to be better defined if it is to be successful.

Peter: Questions if this is truly part of the subcommittee charge. To do this correctly we must look at all expenses. Concerned about the use of a "formula" to make these decisions. A formula avoids setting priorities. What is really necessary is a strong leader(s) setting priorities. That is not the situation in Brookline.

Nancy: The TSPA was created because historically there were conflicts at Town Meeting over the allocation of revenues. The TSPA depoliticized the process. Brookline was the first town in the Commonwealth to do this, and now many others have followed.

Carol: We should start with a blank slate and not view this as making suggestions for incremental changes. There is no reason the TSAP needs to focus just on marginal revenues, it can be used to allocate all revenues. This will lead to better informed decision making and management.

Discussion about the scope of our charge. Should it be expanded to include all expenses? Given the goal of something being completed by June 30 what is practical?

Mike: We are only talking about incremental revenues of about \$6.0 million, this isn't that

important in the scheme of things.

Arthur: We shouldn't get involved in the minutia of allocating all of the expenses, i.e. a policeman's time at the school. The 50/50 split was pulled out of the air for the original agreement.

Carol: The "Model" being developed is going to be doing a better job of accounting for these allocations, and if not the model, any budgeting software to be purchased will make this less cumbersome. Let's come-up with a framework or guiding principles for a new TSPA.

Consensus:

1. Transparency:

- a. Definitions – clearly stated
 - b. Formulas used: Enrollment Growth (switch to "Enrollment Changes" increases and decreases); SPED.
2. A clear Mission Statement for the TSPA.
3. Look Back to eliminate the "you get it, you keep it" structure.

Carol: We should add a maintenance component in view of the Schools chronic underfunding of maintenance, similar to the free cash and CIP policies. A percentage of the marginal revenues will go directly to school maintenance. This is not in lieu of what is being budgeted by the Schools but in addition to.

Nancy: Will ask about current definitions to bring to the June 3 meeting.

Mike: Let's turn our focus to Revenue.

Arthur: Encouraging new development by zoning changes biggest impact, Beacon Street corridor. Route 9 does not offer a lot of opportunities since retail is dying and the only real commercial opportunity is medical office.

Cliff: Hope all SC members can attend the EDAB June 25 meeting, Pam McKinney, the Town's Development consultant will be speaking.

The 2014 Override Study Committee made many revenue recommendations. Prior to the June 3 meeting Cliff will ask the Town for a scorecard on which ideas were implemented.