

RTM Coordinating Committee January 11, 2010

Present: Walter St. Lawrence (2), Rose Sakach (2), Darryl Sakach (2), Catherine Shuman (3), Shelley Ross (5), Jan Meierdiericks (6) Linda Weston (6), Robert Nerz (7), Joseph Bagarella (8), Charles Beale (9), Tom Richards (9)

Guest: Mark Fisher

Precincts not represented: 1 and 4

Meeting called to order at 7:05 by C. Beale.

Minutes of Dec. meeting accepted.

Town Administrator Mark Fisher distributed and explained handouts showing the macrobudget. Budget meetings with department heads will begin in Feb. Currently it is anticipated that health insurance will constitute 8% of the salary budget. As over 50 personnel were laid off town wide in 2009, he is hoping that layoffs will not occur again. Mr. Fisher has asked department heads to submit their budgets based on what is actually needed so RTM can see where cuts, if any, are being made and how it will affect various departments,

Town Meetings: The concept of holding town meeting more often was discussed. The October meeting is traditionally for use of free cash. Board of Selectmen can call for a meeting whenever they wish but it usually takes about 7 weeks to get one set up. If meetings were held more often it would allow for:

- Shorter agendas
- More focused meetings
- Better quality of debate
- Better planning by departments and more timely action

The Finance Comm. would have the same time constrictions but articles would be more spread out. As certain articles are mandated to be presented only at the Annual Town Meeting, this would put other articles into an earlier or later meeting. It was suggested that we might try 4 meetings a year, adding February or March and maybe September.

Nonbinding questions were discussed and criteria suggested were that (1) question should be very clear, (2) information should be presented that tells exactly what actions will be taken after a vote and (3) an explanation should be included of what a question means and what results will mean to the town.

Pretown Meeting will be held for the annual meeting with Mark Fisher, Jack Janek, Peter Gay and RTM Coordinating Comm. involved. The meeting will be televised and the Coordinating Comm. will set up the plan for it ahead of time. The meeting will not be for debate but only for an explanation of articles.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Next meeting will be February 8, 2010 at the Police Facility.