



VISION 2020 FISCAL RESOURCES TASK GROUP
Meeting Minutes 7:30 PM 2/15/18

Senior Center First Floor Conference Room

ATTENDEES: Gordon Jamieson (Co-Chair), Heather Remoff, Brian Hasbrouck, Pete Howard (Secretary), Dean Carman, Treasurer

The group welcomed the Town Treasurer & introduced themselves.

Using his laptop as a display device for his previously emailed charts, Dean described his responsibilities and his efforts to reform the relationship of the department with the other Town departments that deal with fiscal matters. Currently the Treasurer is elected to a 3 yr term and is responsible for cash management, debt issuance and tax collection. Starting w/ an affirmative vote in last year's Town Meeting, Dean is seeking to convert the Treasurer's position to an appointed job. Another vote is in this year's warrant to be followed by a town wide ballot question to approve a change to the Town Manager Act. Dean would have the position appointed by the Town Manager. In the mean time, he has signed a memo of understanding with the Deputy Town Manager that makes the Deputy Treasurer responsible to the Deputy Town Manager. He has also renamed the department an office called the Office of Treasury & Tax Collection and made it part of an informal Consolidated Finance Department directed by the Deputy Town Manager. This group has been meeting monthly and includes the Comptroller, the Director of Assessments, and the school's CFO. Dean enthusiastically described the advantages already being realized. He had high praise for the town leaders that he has worked with.

Creation of a Finance Department is a reorganization the FRTG studied and reported on in 1999 after visiting several communities that had set up a finance department.

Dean described the conversion of most computerized functions to be run on MUNIS, the Town's main administrative software system. Water & Sewer and Parking are being converted to MUNIS support. Dean will soon begin a campaign to register the public to receive real estate taxes by computer.

Dean has at least 5 other innovations "in the pipeline". Refer to Ref 1. Throughout the meeting Dean handled interruptions patiently and answered questions enthusiastically. The Task Group thanked him sincerely.

Next mtg March 15, 2018

Meetings monthly - 3rd Thursdays 7:30 PM - Usually in Senior Center

Ref 1 Conversation with the Town Treasurer

Conversation with the Town Treasurer

Fiscal Resources Task Group

February 15, 2018

Overview of Treasurer's Role

- Politically elected office.
- Three year term.
- Last election was April 2017.
- Next scheduled election is April 2020*
- Responsible for cash management, debt issuance and tax / fee collection.

* Subject to result of ballot question in April 2018.

Agenda

- Department Reorganization
 - Memorandum of Understanding
 - Ballot Question
 - Warrant Articles
- Modernization Efforts
 - MUNIS / Invoice Cloud
- Projects in Pipeline

Department Reorganization

- April 2017 Memorandum of Understanding between Treasurer and Town Manager
- Ballot question to make position appointed in April 2018.
- Town Meeting warrant article to create a Consolidated Finance Department.
- Town Meeting warrant article to make the Comptroller part of the Consolidated Finance Department, with safeguards.

Department Reorganization

- April 2017 - Deputy Town Manager and Treasurer enter into MOU that gives the Deputy Town Manager “dotted line” authority over the Treasurer’s office and makes the Deputy Treasurer the day to day department head.
- April 2017 – agreement to reorganize personnel in Treasury & Tax Collection Office endorsed by respective unions.
- May 2017 - Office of Treasury & Tax Collection begins to work as a member of a Consolidated Finance Department under the direction of Deputy Town Manager.
- June 2017 – begin calling the department, Office of Treasury & Tax Collection. Discontinue use of, “Office of the Town Treasurer”.

Five awesome people at Town Hall



April 2018 Ballot Question

“Shall the town vote to have its elected Town Treasurer and Collector of Taxes become an appointed Town Treasurer and Collector of Taxes of the town? Yes _____ No _____”

ARTICLE ____ HOME RULE/ MUNICIPAL FINANCE DEPARTMENT

To see if the Town will vote to authorize and request the Board of Selectmen to file Home Rule Legislation that would allow the creation of a consolidated department of municipal finance, or take any action related thereto. (Inserted at the request of the Town Treasurer)

MOTION: Article ____: VOTED: That the Town hereby amends the Town Manager Act as follows:

Insert after Section 28 the following:

SECTION 29. Finance Department. There shall be established, by the Board of Selectmen, a Finance Department as herein provided. The Town Manager shall appoint a suitably qualified person to the position of Finance Director. The Finance Director shall be eligible to also hold the position of Comptroller, Treasurer and Collector, Deputy Town Manager or Assistant Town Manager. The Finance Director shall be sworn to the faithful performance of her/his duties by the Town Clerk or by a Justice of the Peace. The Town Manager shall establish such divisions and subordinate offices within the Finance Department as s/he deems necessary and shall prescribe the powers, rights, duties and liabilities of the same.

ARTICLE ____ HOME RULE/COMPTROLLER

To see if the Town will vote to implement the recommendations of the 2012 Massachusetts Department of Revenue "Town and School Finance Analysis" report to make the Comptroller an appointment of the Town Manager; or take any action related thereto. (Inserted at the request of the Town Treasurer)

MOTION: Article ____: VOTED: That the Town hereby amends the Town Manager Act, Section 15. Powers and Duties of Manager, subsection (a) as follows:

Remove from paragraph one the word "Comptroller"

Insert after paragraph two the following:

While the Town Manager shall supervise and direct the administration of the Comptroller's Office, the Selectmen shall have sole authority to appoint or remove the Comptroller. The Comptroller and all other Comptroller Office personnel, employed or in office when this act takes effect shall continue in their respective positions subject to Chapter 31 or 150E of the General Laws, or both such chapters, if applicable, but otherwise subject to removal by the Board of Selectmen as provided in this section.

MUNIS / Invoice Cloud

Under the direction of Patti Brennan Sawtelle, the town is upgrading its tax and fee collection software.

- July 2017 - MUNIS real estate and excise went live.
- July 2017 – Invoice Cloud front end went live.
- November 2017 – paperless billing for real estate taxes went live (and we didn't tell anyone)
- Parking tickets are being converted to MUNIS.
- W&S will be converted to MUNIS.
- Payment processing in departments on road map.

Paperless Billing

In the upcoming weeks we will begin a marketing campaign to drive registration for paperless real estate tax billing.

- Cost savings.
- Environmental savings.
- Consistent with how people receive bills.

Projects in Pipeline

- Late Spring 2018 - New Investment Policy is almost complete that will (hopefully) be endorsed by Board of Selecthumans.
- Fall 2018 - Debt Policy will be written and (hopefully) endorsed by Selecthumans and Capital Planning Committee.
- Fall 2018 - Reorganize Dollars for Scholars Committee to make it more transparent.
- Fall 2018 - Reorganize Parking Clerk function to drive efficiency.
- Fall 2018 – Submit Parking Clerk Policies and Procedures to Selecthumans for approval.

Question and Discussion