
Citizens' Taskforce Minutes

Monday, January 18, 2016 6:00PM

Sealing Cove Business Center

Citizens' Taskforce Members: Rob Allen, Maxwell Rule, Lawrence SpottedBird,
Dyan Bessette, Cynthia Gibson, Mary Magnuson, Hugh Bevan
Tristan Guevin (Assembly Liaison)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at approximately 6:01PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Rob Allen, Maxwell Rule, Dyan Bessette, Cynthia Gibson (arrived at 6:04 PM), Hugh Bevan, Lawrence SpottedBird

Absent: Mary Magnuson (excused)

Assembly Liaison: Tristan Guevin

Staff: Municipal Administrator Mark Gorman, Deputy Clerk Melissa Henshaw, Public Works Director Michael Harmon, Assessor Wendy Lawrence, Utility Director Brian Bertacchi, Municipal Engineer Dan Tadic, Maintenance and Operations Superintendent Nick Kepler, T & D System Manager Tony Bird, Library Director Robb Farmer

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M - Rule/S - Bevan moved to approve the January 4, 2016 minutes with the following changes: third sentence of Item C of CBS Expenditures to "Bevan proposed a different approach based on a system wide hiring freeze of vacant positions filled only by Assembly action." Motion carried unanimously.

IV. REPORTS

Chair - Reminded Taskforce of the Assembly work session.

Members - Bessette wondered when the school would be presenting. Bevan met with staff and AC Lakeside and read a public comment he received which would be posted on the website.

City Staff - Deputy Clerk Henshaw told of deadline for materials to be submitted to the Clerk's office for the Assembly work session.

Assembly Liaison - None.

Other(s) - None.

V. PERSONS TO BE HEARD/CORRESPONDENCE

None.

VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. General Fund Recommendations

Chair Allen asked Gibson, SpottedBird and Bessette their input for the reductions. Gibson told of her thought of a 6% cut with staff making the decisions on where the cuts should take place and would like to see actuals rather than the budget. SpottedBird had concerns with the cost of the Union negotiations. Municipal Administrator Gorman spoke that union negotiations will start taking place in March or April and that the three unions are all on the

same calendar. Besette told of her approach of mill increase, exemptions, cuts and infrastructure. Rule mentioned changes over a period of two budget cycles rather than all at once. Chair Allen will combine all responses and thought this was a valuable process.

A discussion occurred around Sitka Community Hospital (SCH). Chair Allen passed around a spreadsheet of SCH Facilities 5-year Capital Improvement Plan.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Public Works 5 Year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Public Works Director Harmon went over a 5 year CIP in four primary areas of General Fund Infrastructure with regards to buildings, the road system, parking lots, and parks and recreation with different funding scenarios of \$1.5, 2, 3 and 4 million budgets. Bevan brought up the Sitka Police Department facility inadequacies. Rule clarified the airport is an enterprise fund, shared thoughts on parks and recreation privatization, and LID's. Public Works Director Harmon told of the infrastructure sinking fund. Bevan told of an approach of a build-to-lease option for the Sitka Police Department. General consensus of the Taskforce was that the \$3 million budget may be the best option.

B. Draft Grand Budget Framework

Municipal Administrator Gorman presented on the framework for a budget grand bargain going over key assumptions, told of a 2 to 3 year implementation, new expenses and adjustments, possible new revenue streams, and reductions to balance the budget. Discussion occurred around adding additional columns for a 2 to 3 year period, different figures, deficit budget, Assessing Department efficiency, unrealized potential of bulk water sales, seniors, low income families, removing sales tax from groceries, and the process of changes.

Chair Allen thought this framework could be helpful for the work session with the Assembly, asked the Commission to input different scenarios, would like to show the recommendations that were passed at the last meeting, and gave his thoughts of approach for the work session stating he would like feedback from the Assembly. Bevan stated that the Taskforce should have an understanding from the Assembly on milestone dates.

VIII. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

Alene Henning thanked the Taskforce and expressed that this process has been eye opening.

Executive Director of SEDA Garry White came forward stating the 2016 SEDA Strategic Plan has been finalized recently which will be emailed out to the Taskforce for comments and told that SEDA continued to work on bulk water.

Lois Rhodes wondered when the public meeting would be.

Kathy Kyle thanked the complex work of the Taskforce, felt encouraged, and brought up her thoughts on giving up the senior sales tax to help all ages of lower income residents especially making food more affordable.

Tim Fulton echoed thanks and told that the Taskforce may be able to use the tool online similar to what the Governor had done with the State budget on the State's website.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A. Agenda items for the next regular meeting of February 1, 2016

Chair Allen told of the idea of a February Town Hall meeting before finalized recommendations go to the Assembly. Discussion occurred of meeting frequency, Sitka School District overview and Sitka Community Hospital presenting.

Seeing no objection the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:12PM.

Attest:
Melissa Henshaw, Deputy Clerk