

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
BUDGET TASK FORCE MINUTES
Wednesday, June 7, 2023**

Attendees:

Dan O'Donnell, Erika Kohl, Tom Clay, Kristen Las, Kristina Greene, Chris Chew, Shana Farnsworth, Valery Young

Administrative actions:

Clay called meeting to order at 12:33

Clay moved to approve minutes of May 31. Motion seconded by Farnsworth. Unanimous approval.

O'Donnell noted that Kohl (alternate) would be acting as a voting member.

Budget Overview

O'Donnell provided a budget overview comprised of two presentations; one to review the town's expenditures and another to review its revenues. O'Donnell recognized the density of information in the presentations and offered to meet with any of the Task Force members individually to review further, if desired.

Farnsworth and Chew expressed the importance of clearly representing to the public the difference between total available funds and the total budget.

Greene noted that the health care line item doesn't include teacher health care funds, which could be confusing if the viewer is unaware of this.

Chew pointed out the need to be clear about the content of department budgets. When we compare our municipal budget to that of other towns, we'll need to ensure we compare apples to apples.

O'Donnell noted some of the features of Westford's recent budgets including:

- Westford has become partially self-insured this year
- Westford has a rooms and meals local tax to contribute to revenue
- Westford's Chapter 70 funds from the state are at their minimum, since enrollment has been declining

Other Business

The task force members discussed the spreadsheet "Analysis of Town Operational Costs", representing Westford town budgets for the last 10 years.

The task force members discussed the draft outline for the Task Force's deliverable document. Kohl volunteered to incorporate her suggested modifications to the outline for review at the next meeting.

Officer Election

Chair: Chew nominated Clay and Young seconded. Unanimous approval.

Vice Chair: Clay nominated Young and Chew seconded. Unanimous approval.

Clerk: Farnsworth volunteered, but asked to share note taking responsibilities either with staff or another task force member. Her nomination was seconded by Young. Unanimous approval.

Future Activities

The task force members agreed to meet again on Friday, June 16.

Kohl suggested the need to create a schedule and a plan since October will be here quickly. She noted the benefits of dividing and conquering, in order to complete the tasks by October.

Young moved to adjourn and was seconded by Farnsworth. Unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned at 1:36pm.

A full recording of the meeting is available online.



Tom Clay, Budget Task Force Chair