

**BARNSTABLE COUNTY ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES**  
**Standing Committee on Finance**  
**Minutes**  
**March 25, 2015**

The Standing Committee on Finance met with the Chairs of each Standing Committee to review each County department and discuss its recommendations for the FY16 proposed budget (Proposed Ordinance 15-02) on March 25, 2015, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Finance Committee Members present (3): Chairman John Ohman, Suzanne McAuliffe, and Deborah McCutcheon.

Standing Committee Chairs present (4): Ned Hitchcock (Natural Resources); James Killion (Telecommunications & Energy); Marcia King (Public Services); Suzanne McAuliffe (Economic Affairs); Patrick Princi (Health & Human Services).

Summary of Committee Reports as follows.....

**Standing Committee on Telecommunication & Energy:** Committee Chairman James Killion presented the recommendations of the committee.

***Information Technology Department:*** The committee recommend the proposed budget but with exception to the addition of 3.5 staff positions. On the revenue side, revenues reflected a substantial increase over FY15 but the committee could not find evidence to support the increase. Removing the 3.5 staff positions would result in a budget decrease of \$266,203.85 but also a reduction in revenue of 409,000.

The department should obtain some professional assistance for its billing and contracts in order to insure that reimbursements are adequately covering costs. If and when requests for regional services materialize, letters of intent supported by contracts will provide a basis of support for a supplemental funding request through the Assembly.

**Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and was seconded, to reduce the IT proposed budget for FY16 by 3.5 new staff positions equaling \$266,203.85 and thereby decreasing revenues by \$409,000. 3-0-0. Motion carried.**

**Standing Committee on Economic Affairs:** Committee Chairman Suzanne McAuliffe presented the recommendations of the committee.

***Arts Foundation:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget of \$5,000 by a vote of 3-1-0. A reduction in funding may jeopardize grant status for the Arts Foundation in some instances. The committee recommended the Arts Foundation return to the Commissioners for additional funding support. There were questions surrounding the support of non-profits within the fiscal structure of the County but the \$5,000 funding level will allow them to keep their official designation as the County Arts Foundation.

***Economic Development Council:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget but recognizes there is no oversight by the Assembly over this section of the Cape Cod Commissions budget.

**Standing Committee on Natural Resources:** Committee Chairman Ned Hitchcock presented the recommendations of the committee.

***Cape Cod Commission:*** The committee recommended this budget 3-0-1 recognizing that its budget was flat with no increase.

**Health & Environment:** The committee recommended the proposed budget and its increase largely due to the addition of 1 FTE for the lab. The fees collected will generate revenue to cover wages and benefits for the position. A request for a .5 FTE coordinator position for the Medical Reserve Core is tied to a grant that will also generate revenue. There are no benefits associated with this position.

**Cooperative Extension:** The committee recommended the proposed budget and its increase largely due to the addition of 1 FTE. A Community Rating System (CRS) Coordinator will be hired to work on flood plain mapping that will help reduce the cost of flood insurance to homeowners cape-wide. Salary and benefits will be offset by grant funding for two years after which the County may be responsible for the entire cost.

The committee also recognized the \$250,000 capital expense item (proposed as a bonded expense) for the ARC project.

**Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative:** The committee recommended the proposed budget increase that will use funding as a match and to leverage grant money from the State. This will enable water testing and create a baseline for water monitoring purposes on all sides of Cape Cod and is seen as a positive move for the 208 Plan.

**Standing Committee on Health & Human Services:** Committee Chairman Patrick Princi presented the recommendations of the committee.

**Children's Cove:** The committee recommended the proposed budget but expressed some interest in considering cuts but no action was taken.

**Human Services:** The committee recommended the proposed budget by a vote of 3-0-1 and its increase largely due to the addition of a 1.5 FTE for the Affordable Housing Program. The program cost is approximately \$126,000 for wages and benefits. This program is shifting from the Cape Cod Commission. However, a staff position will remain at the CCC and will be filled by a planner. There is some revenue associated with this program by way of a block grant. Exception was taken to the level of salary and questions regarding the duties associated with the jobs.

**Elder Services:** The committee did not support the \$40,000 proposed budget. The vote to recommend was 1-3-0. The vote reflects interest in increasing this budget line but no direct vote was taken to do so. This was cited as a direct service that could have an impact on many individuals. Representatives from Elder Services indicated that the program would continue and if necessary money would be found elsewhere. The committee stated if revenues are better than anticipated a request could be made for supplemental funding later in the fiscal year.

**Human Rights Commission:** The committee discussed the proposed budget and noted that a sub-committee has been formed by the Commissioners to review the ordinance that established the Human Rights Commission. It was brought to the attention of the committee that the County had to re-evaluate how it identifies and classifies consultants versus employees. This created the need to budget the HRC Coordinator's position as an employee which generated additional cost within the proposed budget in addition to the salary which was previously classified as a consultant fee.

The Coordinator's position was added in 2008 by Ordinance 08-12 and has increased over the past several years. Questions were asked regarding the expansion of the position and participation by the HR Commission. Several committee members felt it may be advisable to leave the position as it currently exists and wait for the recommendations from the sub-committee before making changes to the budget.

**Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and was seconded, to reduce the Human Rights Commission proposed budget for FY16 funding for the Coordinator and associated benefits totaling \$53,482.80**

and increase the proposed budget for Elder Services Meals on Wheels Program. 2-1-0. Motion carried. John Ohman voted “no”.

**Standing Committee on Public Services:** Committee Chairman Marcia King presented the recommendations of the committee.

***County Dredge:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget and recognizes that the Dredge funds itself – it is an enterprise fund. There are an additional 2 FTE positions in the proposed budget that will staff a second dredge that will be purchased in FY16.

***Facilities:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget including projects for bonding. Several bonded projects will have associated revenues coming from the State. It is anticipated that an amendment may need to come forward from the Assembly to adjust the bonding request downward based on revised figures from Interim Finance Director. This will affect the revenue side of the budget.

***Registry of Deeds:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget and recognized that revenues were adjusted and decreased from FY15. The Register of Deeds is comfortable with the revenue projections for FY16.

***Fire Training Academy:*** The committee recommended the proposed budget. Revenues are stable but the Director and Deputy Director will be reviewing contracts and fees in the upcoming year. A contract with the Massachusetts Maritime Academy might be renegotiated due to the cost of expendables associated with training. There is interest in receiving a list of Fire Training Academy priorities for budgeting purposes. Revenues do not equal expenses but it was not set-up to do so. Several towns expressed satisfaction in the services received and the money saved by providing training on the Cape versus going to Stowe, Massachusetts. Some towns use Stowe versus the Fire Training Academy. It was debated as to whether or not attending Stowe was a contractual item or discretionary as determined by each individual Fire Chief.

There were concerns expressed regarding the proposed budget related capital items given the problems associated with the current location of the Fire Training Academy.

**Standing Committee on Finance:** Committee Chairman John Ohman, Suzanne McAuliffe, and Deborah McCutcheon reviewed the recommendations of its committee.

***Regional Commissioners:*** The committee noted a change for FY16 proposed budget that represents a part-time Human Resources Coordinator and a full-time Administrative Assistant. The Administrative Assistant position has been vacant and the Human Resources Coordinator position will be filled by an incumbent staff member who will assume new duties. The new County Administrator will fill the vacant position. Changes were attributed to the staffing shift associated with the transition made by Maggie Downey to the Cape Light Compact.

The committee discussed and questioned the need to include funding for a holiday party within the budget. Arguments were made that public funds should not be used for these types of purposes.

**Suzanne McAuliffe motioned, and was seconded, to reduce the Regional Commissioners proposed budget for FY16 by \$4,000 from food supplies associated with the holiday party. 3-0-0. Motion carried.**

***Finance and Shared Costs:*** The committee noted a part-time position in Finance that is vacant. The Finance Director will fill the position to cover the loss in that position associated with the transition of staff.

The committee noted that employees receive a combination of various benefits such as steps (8), merit (0-4%), and cost of living adjustment (COLA budgeted at 2% for FY16). These increases also

affect other payroll related expense lines. It was noted that most employees receive between 5 & 6 % increases and are considered excessive by current standards. Various proposals and suggestions were made to address this issue noting there are two unions under the County: one in Facilities and another at the Registry of Deeds. One suggestion was to propose a general budget reduction to the Commissioners and have them direct this to Finance following the adoption of the budget. This could represent a fair approach and would take into consideration union contracts and non-union staff but the Commissioners have the bargaining authority and the Assembly does not. A wage freeze was also discussed but it was noted that the County has also proposed new positions in the FY16 budget. In FY16 the 2% COLA represents about \$215,000, merit represents about \$56,000, and the total value of all steps have not yet been calculated by Finance. The consensus of the committee was to either grant a COLA, step or merit or consider removing new positions proposed for FY16.

**Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and was seconded, to freeze salaries by suspending steps, merit and COLA for FY16. Motion was withdrawn.**

**Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and was seconded, to suspend steps and merit, except where required by for union contracts, and reduce the COLA to 1% for FY16. Motion was withdrawn.**

**Deborah McCutcheon motioned, and was seconded, to suspend steps and merit, except where required by union contracts, and retain a 2% COLA for FY16. 3-0-0. Motion carried.**

*Resource Development Office/AmeriCorps:* The committee recommended the proposed budget and noted the addition of a .5 FTE position for grant writing. The benefit outweighs the cost and will be re-visited next year to insure the position is bring in more than it is costing the County.

*Assembly of Delegates:* The committee recommended the proposed budget and noted that clarification was provided by the Clerk regarding the salary account line and accounted for the difference from FY15 to proposed FY16. There were no remaining issues.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by:  
Janice O'Connell, Secretary/Clerk  
Assembly of Delegates