

## ALG Minutes August 14, 2013

Present: Bart Wendell, facilitator; Janet Adachi, Mike Gowing, BoS; Steve Noone, Dan Clifford, FC; Kim McOsker, SC; Steve Ledoux, Steve Mills & Steve Barrett, Staff. Absent: Dennis Bruce SC & Don Aicardi.

Audience: Brian McMullen, Asst. assessor; Bill Mullin, FC; Charlie Kadlec & Dick Calandrella. Parents in support of the AB track: John Raguin, Maria Cox, Shana Pyun-Brown, Julia Solarte, Joanie Davis, & track coaches Ken Felt, & Mary Price Maddox.

Extra Info: Agenda; minutes; proposed ALG schedule & OPEB valuation comparison

Minutes were accepted

### 2. Update on FY13 & 14 Revenues & expenditures

Steve L: the good news: S&P has retained our 3A rating we will refinance the Twin School debt & expect to save @ \$1.1M. The Governor vetoed some of the state aid which was then overridden by the Legislature.

Steve B: We are closing the books and will apply to the state for the free cash certification by Labor Day & expect to get an answer by Columbus Day. Tax collection is high—nearly 99%; we have 100% of our state aid; there has been an uptick in motor vehicle excise revenues about \$200k more than was budgeted; fees & investment is also up @ \$100k more than budgeted. For **turn-backs**: @ \$200k from APS; the town's is in the \$500k range. There have been significant savings in both the legal & health accounts.

Steve M: From the APS budget of \$27M our turn back is \$240k—better than last year. There has not been a lot of year-end spending. I did spend @ \$150k on safety & security. There was a task force after Newtown and we now have video monitors in all the schools.

For FY 14 we have to get used to the conversation that there will be one budget of K-12. We are still working off Peter Ashton & Xuan Kong's savings projections [somewhere between \$900k to \$1M]. We have a "Wednesday afternoon club" where we review the agreement & look at the savings. It is beginning to get exciting to construct one budget. We want to have a financial oversight with members from the BoS & FC. They will be reporting to the transitional school committee.

Pat: Bob Evans has agreed to participate as the member from the FC.

### 3. Spreadsheet format

Steve N: the look & feel for FY 15 will be different—some want a hard look at the detail on the revenue side---we should look at the expense.

Steve N: in the FC's Long Rang Plan (LPR) we will have the actual numbers on the spreadsheet rather the number for the year; we will do details of the actuals.

Pat: FC LRP will have the actual experience with expenditures. Our projections will be based on real experience rather than budget to budget.

Steve B: the current ALG model has worked for a number of years and there have been lines with detail. We need to have a working session before the next ALG to work on this otherwise with the change over work [for the new region] we will not have time to complete the spreadsheet.

Mike: my concern is we need to be operating with some model. It won't change until the new region. We should maintain what we have now & build a different for the future. We should have two sets of books

Steve N: our concern is transparency with the details that go into the warrant

Janet: I would not foreclose on making changes in the numbers unless the result is a complicated computation. It is good to look at all the options & the FC has suggestions to improve transparency that will help.

Sharon: looking at the warrant as a citizen, the town has many lines ---the schools do not. The budgets are different and can't be compared.

Pat: when we stand on Town Meeting floor and are asked questions we need to have the answers. We need to be able to show where the money comes from & where it is going (Steve Mills nodded in agreement)

Bart: do Don & Steve B have the time for this proposal?

Steve B: said he'd love to work with the FC over the Labor Day holiday.

#### **4. Maintaining spreadsheet**

Steve L: noted that the schools would be extra busy with the building of the new regional budget & offered to have the town maintain the spreadsheet for the ALG year.

His offer was most appreciated & accepted.

#### **5. Calendar**

The calendar sets out the dates of the ALG meetings, the discussions that will happen at that session and the need for a preliminary consensus and then a final consensus

Bart asked if anything were missing from the discussion lists.

Kim noted that the HIT meetings might not be ready for Nov. 21.

Steve L noted that the town would start the meetings on the hill in early October so he would not have a Capital plan ready for the Sept. 12 meeting. The capital plans for Minuteman are not in good shape. He

attends meetings with other Town Managers in the district to share information on the Minuteman budget. He should have the information available for the Oct. 10<sup>th</sup> meeting

Pat: we do not need the specific plans for the capital or the override by Sept. 12—just a general idea.

Steve L: we should know about the big capital items by then

Janet suggested that Pat add the committee meetings of the participating boards as Mary Ann did in the calendar for last session. Pat agreed.

## **6. Update on OPEB**

Steve N went over the Segal actuarial report for OPEB. Such a report is required every two years by the state. He noted that the liability had dropped from a high of \$100M to \$54M for the combined town & schools. There has been an increase in return, medical inflation is down but the biggest reason for the decline has been the costs savings from the sharing and design changes---not legislation, as was expected last year. There is still some hope that the legislature will act on this matter and put in a 25-30% reduction. Meanwhile we will continue to fund the program as designed earlier.

Steve L noted that the APS members would become a part of the school budget OPEB liability rather than the Town's.

Steve N: the taskforce will meet soon & go over all the numbers and projections and will report back to boards & ALG.

Pat noted that the OPEB task force was creature of last year & did the ALG members wish to continue their "contract"

Bart: everyone seems to be in agreement that the task force should continue.

## **7. Leary Track**

Steve M reported that he had a dilemma---a positive one. The lower field's project has been more successful than planned. Last year when J.D. Head—grounds person—spoke about his budget he had two big capital projects. First was the N Star project which has been completed. The second project on the list was the refurbishment of the Leary track. That did not happen due to other needs in the budget for the money. Most notable was the reduction from five sections to four for HS teachers and additional mental counselors.

John Raguin, a parent has organized a fund raising effort to replace the track. Mr. Raguin said the total cost would be around \$600k he feels he can raise around \$4-\$500k. A design has estimated the total cost at \$600k---he would like the schools to put in the rest. Mr. Raguin spoke of the poor condition of the track & that it is used by many in the community. Several track coaches in the Dual County do not like to allow their students on Acton's track.

Bart asked what they wanted the ALG to do

It appears that they want the “blessing” of the ALG for the schools to spend the approximate \$150k to compliment the fund raising efforts.

Steve N noted that since the track was in such poor repair that running on it was a matter of safety---he had no problem with the expenditure. He suggested that J.D. come & talk with the FC

Pat thanked them for bringing the issue to their attention & said that the FC had not voted on this but she thought that it would not be difficult to find the money within the school budget.

Bart: this sets a bit of a precedent for the purpose of the ALG. You have given us a “heads-up” which is good. I don’t know if this is a scheduled train wreck or if others come forward. Nor do I know what the implications in the future will be on ALG budgets or policy

Pat: “This is your problem”---the ALG need not adopt it---it is not far enough along the risk curve

Bart: the consensus is that this project does not rise to the level of an ALG discussion.

## **8. Public Comment**

Mr. Kadlec had a question about the spreadsheets in the warrant: “Does anyone on staff get calls from citizens about the numbers on the spreadsheets.

Pat---the only class come from you.....

CK: the reason is that there is not enough back-up information to explain the numbers & there is not enough interest/understanding by 99% of the Town. Maybe redesigning the format of the spreadsheet so it is more understandable for the readers would be a help.

Adjourned: 8:35

Next meeting Sept 12 at 7:30 AM in room 204

Ann Chang



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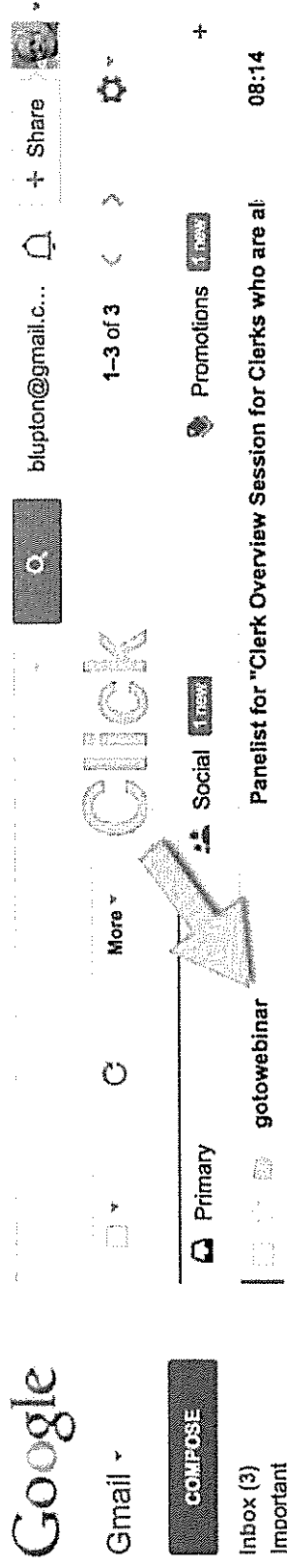
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to Bradshaw

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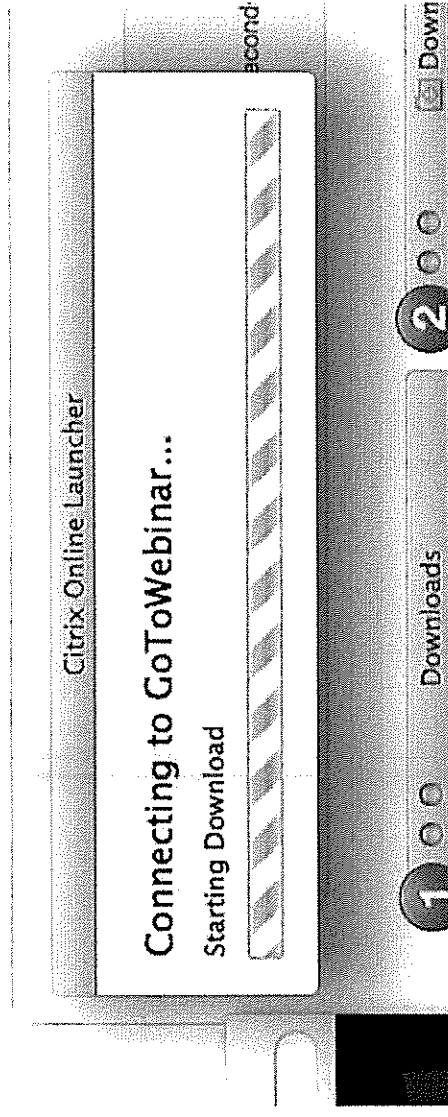
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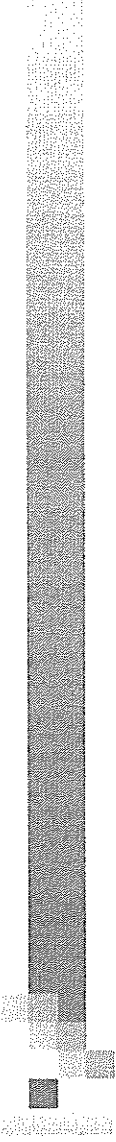
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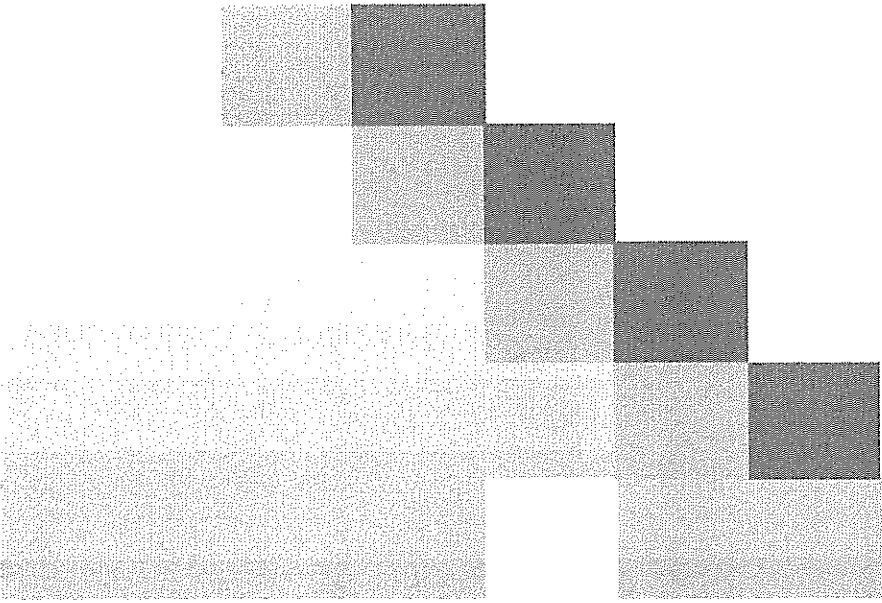


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