

**ADVISORY BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN OF MADISON
May 21, 2024
MINUTES**

Members Present –Sharon Schilling; Joe Dame; Josh Shackford; Joy Gray, Selectman

Members Excused – Sarah DeMartino, School Board

Others Present – Town Administrator Linda Shackford; MadTV Videographer Amanda Hayford

Where and When Posted – Town Hall upper & lower bulletin boards and Madison & Silver Lake Post Offices on May 8, 2024.

Meeting Called to Order – By Schilling at 6:00 p.m.

Welcome and Introductions were made by Schilling.

Pledge of Allegiance – Dame led those in attendance in reciting the Pledge.

Election of officers for the coming year:

Motion by Gray, seconded by Shackford to appoint Schilling as Chairman. The motion passed **4-0**.

Motion by Gray, seconded by Schilling to appoint Dame as Vice-Chairman. The motion passed **4-0**.

Review the ABC’s past year performance, discussion of expectations and discuss the ABC’s process and any changes the committee would adopt:

Dame commented that last year was a great learning opportunity with Schilling commenting that the budget was peeled back deeper than in the past for better understanding and to be able to rationally state opinions.

Schilling’s expectations for the coming year are for the Committee to act with decorum and professionalism, recognizing that there is hard work put into the budget development by all.

Changes were made to the Budgeting Ordinance at Town Meeting. Schilling explained that one change was to require that appointed members only serve until the next election opportunity, not until the end of the vacant term.

The other change was regarding the organization of the Committee. The change accepted at Town Meeting was read aloud by Schilling “No selectman, town manager, member of the school board, village district commissioner, full-time employee, or part-time department head of the town, school district or village district or associated agency shall serve as an elected member of the Advisory Budget Committee. Every elected member shall be domiciled in the town and shall cease to hold office immediately upon ceasing to be so domiciled.” Schilling noted that J. Shackford was elected the Tuesday prior to this vote that changed the ordinance so that full-time employees and part-time department heads cannot serve on the committee, this exclusion would include J. Shackford as the part-time DPW Director.

Schilling asked J. Shackford to step aside and relinquish his seat on the Committee to avoid any conflicts of interest and to keep the will of the voters that made that change to the ordinance; and cited the unnecessary constraint that the Committee would be under to determine if J. Shackford should recuse himself.

J. Shackford responded that he put in for the position, received 290 votes which was more than voted on the change to the ordinance and would certainly recuse himself from DPW votes if necessary. Gray expects J. Shackford to recuse himself from Town Administration items such as health insurance also. J. Shackford said he will be impartial and recuse himself when he feels it is necessary.

Schilling feels this Committee should be as transparent as possible, as thorough as possible and conflict free as possible.

Schilling stated that former Chairman Fernandes proposed the membership change, but obviously not without this Committee discussing and supporting the change; adding she feels his primary reason was to eliminate conflicts of interest and the possible appearance of them.

L. Shackford asked for clarification on Schilling's statement that Fernandes proposed the change to the ordinance. Gray stated Fernandes made it at Town Meeting, Dame affirmed Gray's statement and that the proposed change was made on the floor at Town Meeting with Gray stating it was discussed at Town Meeting. L. Shackford asked if Schilling stated that the Advisory Budget Committee talked about it at a meeting with Schilling clarifying it was all at Town Meeting.

Schilling would like to see more information about revenues as the Committee sees what goes out, not what comes in. Gray would like to have more information to be able to understand about how the Old Home Week financials and organization is made up, with the same for the Madison Fire and Rescue as they do not seem to be handled the same as how Rec Committee donations are handled. Schilling would like a representative of the Old Home Week to attend the June meeting and to have a report run from QuickBooks for the Town's revenues.

Because of feeling like she is playing catch-up with the budget cycle; Schilling suggested more meetings throughout the year. The following dates were chosen for 6:00 meetings: May 21, 2024, June 18, 2024, July 16, 2024, August 13, 2024, September 9, 2024, October 8, 2024, October 22, 2024, November 4, 2024, November 19, 2024, December 3, 2024, December 17, 2024, January 14, 2025 and January 28, 2025. The increase in the number of meetings can allow the Committee to invite specific department heads to a meeting. The increased workload caused by the extra meetings on L. Shackford was considered with the solution being to approach the Selectmen and ask them to hire a minute taker.

Initial evaluation of the Town CIP – The Committee discussed the CIP in its draft form with talk of what should be on the plan and how does an item make it to the plan. Discussion lead to the current state of the grader and the need for its replacement with J. Shackford offering the history of why we own such an old piece of equipment.

A plan that includes all Town equipment and its life cycle would be a helpful document. Dame offered to work with DPW's Swift to get together a preliminary vehicle inventory and invite him to a meeting to demonstrate how the IWorQ software assists in tracking the life of equipment.

School CIP – Gray and Schilling will work with the CIP for the school.

Other Business – Rick Judkins was in the audience and Schilling asked him to consider being on the Committee. As Chairman, Schilling has the authority to appoint members to the Committee and with Judkin's approval appointed him.

Public Comment – There was none.

7:37 PM – Motion by Gray, seconded by Dame to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2024 at 6:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda Shackford, Town Administrator/Recording Secretary