

Town of Waitsfield Budget Task Force

Recommendations for 2010-11

Background: The Waitsfield Select Board convened a Budget Committee in September 2009 to provide budget analysis and recommendations to the Select Board. ~~The notes below represent a debrief of this 2009-10 process, and some initial recommendations for 2010-11.~~

Recommended Structure: Convene the Budget group as a Task Force in order to make it open to public expertise and input. One Select Board member will always serve as chair of this task force, and will be responsible for sharing information both ways between the Select Board and the Task Force.

Recommended Membership: As a Task Force, this group will be open to public participation. The Select Board will encourage and seek out specific financial expertise as needed, and will also encourage the Planning Commission to be involved in or at least aware of the process.

Recommended Charge: The Budget Task Force is charged by the Select Board to solicit, review, and analyze departmental inputs to the Town budgeting process in order to provide the Select Board with information and recommendations for the annual budget. The Task Force is not a decision-making body, but rather an advisory group to help the Select Board make the best budget decisions possible. The Task Force is charged to coordinate its work with the Town Clerk and Town Administrator in order to ensure that all necessary financial and budget information is begin accurately collected and appropriately shared. The Task Force is also charged to carry out its work within the context of any Town policies that have bearing on how funds are managed, such as the Procurement Policy.

Recommended Process: The Budget Task Force will create a timeline for meeting with the Select Board and various town departments. This timeline will be focused around the October – January window, and it will include: an initial meeting with the Select Board to identify and agree on base assumptions to inform the current year budget; meetings with town departments and projects that have a role in the budget; anyone else who in a given year may have necessary input for the budget. As appropriate and in coordination with the Town Treasurer and Town Administrator, the Budget Task Force will meet with the accountant for the Town. The Chair of the Task Force will share information between the Budget Task Force and Select Board on a regular basis. The Chair will also ensure that Select Board decisions that have bearing on the budget are communicated to the Task Force as needed and – where possible and appropriate – decisions that require further budget analysis by the Task Force will be delayed until such analysis is completed and communicated back to the Select Board.

Specific 2010 Budget Projects:

- Wait House – ~~develop need a~~ plan for managing maintenance, ~~and~~ structuring leases, etc.

- Library – work with Library representatives to need to sort out budget and town allocations for the future and develop a written agreement for review by the Towns of Waitsfield and Fayston.
- Tax Rate – Ensure need to be sure the Selectboard SB has both proper analysis and historical context for setting rate.
- Infrastructure – Organize proposal for an Infrastructure Summit in early April to bring together businesses, local boards, and the public to consider how we move forward in terms of water, wastewater, and other planning projects. Should be set up in the context of the Town Plan revision. Big Picture.

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