

North Yarmouth
&
Cumberland
Joint Standing Committee

Pam Ames

Steve Moriarty

Steve Palmer

Bill Stiles

Andy Walsh

George Turner

MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, October 19, 2011
North Yarmouth Town Hall
4:30 p.m.

Cumberland Representatives Present: Councilors Steve Moriarty (Chairman), Bill Stiles, and Town Manager, Bill Shane.

Excused: Councilor George Turner

North Yarmouth Representatives Present: Selectmen Steve Palmer (Co-Chairman) and Andy Walsh. Budget Committee Member, Pam Ames, and Administrative Assistant, Marnie Diffin.

Co-chair Palmer called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

I. Review and approval of October 5, 2011 meeting minutes.

Motion by Mr. Stiles, seconded by Mr. Walsh to accept the October 5, 2011 minutes with one amendment

VOTE: 5-0 UNANIMIOUS

II. Report from North Yarmouth re: Selectmen meeting

Co-chair Palmer explained that this meeting will mainly focus on the results of the North Yarmouth Selectmen meeting last evening.

Ms. Ames asked if the Library or Friends of the Library had ever pursued or considered fundraising efforts.

Mr. Shane said that the Friends of the Library hold the annual book sale. The proceeds of that sale go toward adding to the collection. Surrounding libraries have boards of directors and are quasi-municipal libraries, partially funded from the town (such as Yarmouth). The model is different when a library is completely funded by the town.

Mr. Moriarty said that approximately 10 years ago, there was a fundraiser for the young adult wing at the library (this was a private fundraiser). Other than that, fundraising is not something that the library pursues.

Ms. Ames asked if there is simply no appetite for fundraising or is it due to the structure of the library.

Mr. Shane said that people tend to feel pulled in so many direction to donate to various organizations, that the two communities are saturated with charitable contribution requests. The library is a town entity and soliciting donations may be viewed as problematic to the taxpayers.

Mr. Palmer said it would behoove North Yarmouth to be part of a fundraising campaign to offset costs. Perhaps the Library Advisory Board could consider it.

Mr. Palmer reviewed the report that the North Yarmouth Representatives presented to the Selectmen, explaining that this report is strictly a result of what has been discussed and learned in these Joint Standing Committee meetings.

Cumberland/North Yarmouth Joint Standing Committee Members

- **Cumberland:** Councilors Steve Moriarty (chairman), William Stiles, George Turner; Town Manager Bill Shane and Committee Secretary Brenda Moore
- **North Yarmouth:** Selectmen Steven Palmer (co-chairman) and Andy Walsh; Budget Committee Member Pamela Ames; Administrative Assistant Marnie Diffin

We held a series of meetings over three months, alternating between the two towns' municipal offices.

Cumberland provided the group with agendas, a secretary, and updated minutes and was responsive to all questions asked by the committee or those in attendance from the public.

Presentations that detailed the organization and budgets of the Prince Memorial Library, Recreation, Adult Education (aka Community Education), and Twin Brook maintenance were given by:

- Thomas Bennett, Prince Memorial Library Director
- Brian Bickford, Recreation Director
- Peter Bingham, Asst. Recreation Director
- Sarah Davis, Adult Education Director
- Bill Shane, Town Manager

Also, the miscellaneous budgets for the Animal Control Officer (ACO), Cable TV (Channel 2), and Sidewalk Snow Plowing were reviewed.

The meetings' tenor was open, thoughtful and, at all times, constructive and positive. Our members of the JSC felt fully informed, and we appreciated the detailed work that encompassed each presentation. We left the meetings with plenty of pertinent information.

One of the aspects that struck us during the meetings was the scope of services we receive for the cost. Combining with Cumberland allows both communities to enjoy more services available in terms of numbers of books, periodicals, computers, programs, etc. The same principle is true of Recreation, Adult Ed., and the other joint services. We believe that this model of providing services to North Yarmouth is a very cost effective system.

Overall, Cumberland does a good job managing these various entities and North Yarmouth certainly benefits from access to these services without the debt and with a minimal management cost associated with them. Cumberland JSC members consistently spoke to cost saving strategies.

Bill Shane has drafted a proposal for Library and Recreation assessments for the next two fiscal years in which NY should see a drop in fees from the current \$213k (which includes \$10,952 for Twin Brook that will be removed next year) to \$184k and \$194k respectively.

Prince Memorial Library:

The committee members feel the library remains a concern, although recently steps have been taken to collaborate with the school system such as displaying books at the PML that are on the school's summer reading list and to avoid duplication of book purchases.

Most of the circulation growth is coming from NY youth, who comprised 34% of 2010's Summer Reading Program participants. In general, North Yarmouth residents comprise approximately 28% of the active PML users. Now that most capital improvements have been made, Bill Shane wants to increase library resources over the next five years, beginning in fiscal year 2013, so they can increase circulation rates.

In recent years the library's expenses have dropped as they've had opportunities to replace full-time employees with part-timers. They've creatively staffed the library, so they can be open on Saturdays without impacting the wage account. PML processed 250 passports last year, which generated \$7,000 in revenue that went toward direct costs and capital improvements. As books are donated to the Friends of the Library's Annual Book Sale, the library staff pulls out books that are able to be put into circulation.

Unfortunately there is little potential for improving revenue to offset the expenses, making the library an expensive program. We did believe that a stronger NY presence on the Library Advisory Board might be of help to foster improved marketing of services to the community and to perhaps find other means to increase community use of the library and to devise ways to improve the expense to revenue ratios. Additionally with 2 advisory members serving, there may be an improved opportunity to insure that our residents' interests are well represented.

It is worth noting that library use among residents of both communities is based on the swiping of their library card, which only occurs when material is being signed out. Use of the computers, the reading room, review of the periodicals and newspapers, and checking out movies are some examples of activities not reflected in the real number of people using the facility. The actual number of people using the library in either community remains elusive.

The Joint Standing Committee process used to review the library did not involve the results and recommendations of the earlier committee that surveyed use and attitude for these services among our residents.

Community Education and Recreation:

We were encouraged by the degree of analysis completed on the recreation and adult education programs. It was agreed that much progress has been made in isolating cost centers and improving the basis upon which programs remain in the list of offerings. Bill Shane credited Brian Bickford's financial background for cleaning up the budget.

Our committee members were also encouraged to learn that the introduction of the After School program has been very positive, has shown a positive revenue to cost ratio, and might be expanded to meet current and anticipated demand. The success of this specific program may in fact be one reason to expect Recreation assessments in the next few years to decline. It's also important to point out that private day care organizations expressed encouragement to the

recreation staff about the program, which relieves the burden on daycares to hold open all-day slots for children who only attend after school.

Twin Brook: has been undergoing an extensive review by the town council and the manager. They have been pursuing numerous ways to improve revenue. Through their analysis of user data, they now recognize that there are opportunities to capitalize on fees to help reduce expenses. As such, it is expected that our town will experience a complete elimination of a Twin Brook assessment for fiscal year 2013. *This is exciting news!* Cumberland has certainly made an impressive and successful effort in looking at Twin Brook through a different lens. It is to their credit that they came to the JSC with such an earnest effort to control costs - for both communities.

Animal Control Officer: could be an issue for fiscal year 2013, because Chuck Burnie is semi-retired, and it is not certain how much longer he will serve as ACO. When the ACO is not on duty, Cumberland PD responds to NY's ACO calls. North Yarmouth may want to consider another ACO arrangement for the future.

Cable TV (Channel 2): looks good at this point and looks fine for as long as we are willing to pay.

Sidewalk Snow Plowing: looks good for fiscal year 2013, but could be in jeopardy for fiscal year 2014 due to the new Drowne Road development which will add 2 more miles of sidewalks, straining Cumberland's plowing time and resources. Cumberland may not get to NY's sidewalk in a timely manner.

JSC Members from North Yarmouth conclude:

- Community Education and Recreation: remains a strong and viable program and should continue.
- Prince Memorial Library: at this time we are satisfied that use among North Yarmouth residents (around 28% actual users as documented in data collected this year) should continue. At this time we see no effective option to providing library services for the town.
- Cumberland will not separate the library from recreation & adult education so North Yarmouth truly has no option before it if the community wishes to have a strong and vibrant recreation program for its residents. Although North Yarmouth has expressed an interest in pursuing the library and recreation as an a la carte menu, this is clearly not an option. Cumberland would simply remove "Revenues" from the budget leaving the cost of the recreation program to North Yarmouth very high., ie. economies of scale allow both programs to be offered at a much reduced cost when tied together.

Our recommendation to the BOS:

We, members of the JSC from North Yarmouth, recommend North Yarmouth seek a 2 or up to a 3 year contract with Cumberland for recreation/adult education and library services and that this multi year agreement be based on an end of year adjustment from the budgeted amounts to the actual dollars spent as determined by the annual audit.. We realize this number may go up or down in any given year, but given the working relationship between the two communities as experienced through this committee process, we feel confident in the value this recommendation has, first and foremost to North Yarmouth, but also in its inherent value to Cumberland as they continue to make plans for the future of these programs.

We further recommend there continues to be a standing committee to meet with Cumberland officials on an annual (or maybe even quarterly) basis to review the programs. In fact, Bill Stiles, chair of Cumberland's Finance Committee (a subset of the Town Council), invited us to attend any of their budget meetings as they go through their budget deliberations line by line. The committee found the process created a trusting relationship among officials of the towns. We have concluded that our involvement has brought about clarity to our understandings of the programs and has been the impetus for a most meaningful, trusting and enlightened dialogue between the two communities.

Respectfully submitted,
Pam Ames
Steven Palmer
Andy Walsh

Mr. Palmer said that after the North Yarmouth Town Meeting, it was requested that the North Yarmouth Joint Standing Committee members explore other options for services from surrounding communities. They hope to have this done by the end of November so that there is no delay in letting Cumberland know if other options will be pursued or not. Mr. Palmer said that it is important that all the options are explored and due diligence is done for the residents of North Yarmouth.

Mr. Shane said the Cumberland budget meetings will begin on February 20th from 9:00 a.m. to noon, starting with the Library and Recreation budgets. He invited the North Yarmouth Joint Standing or Budget Committee member to attend.

Mr. Palmer thanked all the committee members. These meetings have proven how well the two communities can and have worked together.

Jean Chadbourne asked the committee to explain, in simple terms, why the two big services cannot be separated, so that North Yarmouth can choose which services they want.

Mr. Walsh explained that from Cumberland's point of view, there is a much larger investment in Parks and Recreation compared to the Library, which is mostly cost and not much revenue. There is a lot more investment in Parks & Recreation, yet North Yarmouth is not sharing in the cost. It makes sense to pool resources and make it a package.

Mr. Shane said that if the services are split, Cumberland would not share the revenues. If they are connected, the revenues will be shared. If the services are split, the cost sharing will be based on 38% of \$500,000, instead of 38% of \$140,000.

III. Next meeting date & location

- **Wednesday, December 14th @ 4:30 p.m. at Cumberland Town Hall.**

IV. Other Business

None

V. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Moriarty, seconded by Mr. Walsh, to adjourn.

VOTE: 5-0

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Brenda Moore
Committee Secretary