

Social Service PILOT and Comparative Impact Study Committee
Conference Room 2 7:30 PM Memorial Building Framingham, Ma
Minutes

August 30, 2005

Note: If a word or sentence is blue and underlined click for the link.

Attendance: Bob Berman, Yaakov Cohn , Dawn Harkness, Cynthia Laurora., Laurie Lee, Steve Orr, Jim Palmer, Wes Ritchie, Nick Sanchez arrived late: Kurt Steinberg

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM.

Minutes of 8/23/05 meeting: Minutes discussed and approved as corrected. Vote to approve minutes: 9 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain

Mr. Tom O'Neil requested to address the group. He stressed to the group the importance of our committee's work to the town of Framingham and the need for an exact inventory of what social services we have in Framingham. He highlighted the fact that we are the only group commissioned to find answers as to the exact number and type of social services in our community. He urged us to do a thorough and precise counting of all social service agencies and programs. In addition, he was concerned about media reports and public reaction to a news report that implied that opponents of social service agencies were making threats. He also urged the group to spend as little time as possible on Robert's Rules and other formalities.

The motion to suspend Robert's Rules of Order was taken off the table.

Vote: 8 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstain

Mr. Orr's main motion:

I move we suspend the use of Robert's Rules unless there is a majority vote of a quorum of the committee to resume, for a stated period of time, the use of Robert's Rules. The suspension and/or resumption of the use of these rules may be used as frequently as needed to allow the meetings to be conducted in an orderly fashion.

Ms. Lee's amended motion:

I move that we have the Chair run our committee based on Robert's Rules and that we suspend the rigid use of Robert's Rules unless there is a majority vote of a quorum of the committee to resume, for a stated period of time, the use of Robert's Rules. The suspension and/or resumption of the use of these rules may be used as frequently as needed to allow the meetings to be conducted in an orderly fashion.

Discussion of these motions indicated some concern among several group members regarding how the meeting would run, how minority rights would be protected, would fairness and legitimacy prevail, who would decide when to use the rules and when not to, who would make decisions for the group. In addition, we have accomplished a lot using these rules and we have to have an orderly meeting.

The supporters of the motion stressed that it is a relaxing of the rules, rather than having no rules, that the motion asked for. The subsequent use of Robert's Rules would be decided upon by the entire committee. The rigidity and formality of Robert's Rules works better in a large, often unruly, group and can hinder the group's efficiency and performance. For example the previous meeting included time spent reading and discussing laying on the table versus tabling.

Lloyd Kay from the audience spoke in disagreement to Mr. Tom O'Neil stating we are not overrun with social service agencies, we don't have enough. He stressed our representation of every person in the town and that Robert's Rules are essential for residents to understand what we are doing and that it is credible.

Ms. Lee commented that a less rigid use of Robert's Rules does not mean there will be no structure or credibility, however with the strong sentiment voiced by many members, at this point doing so would likely be a detriment to the committee, and thus withdrew her motion.

Vote on Mr. Orr's main motion:

6 in Favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstain

Draft Rules and Procedures: to provide more information for residents interested in learning about our committee

Clarifications and changes were made to the rules. These included:

- recommended removal of members if 1/3 of meetings over a 6 month period are missed
- Discussing and establishing agendas at the end of meetings including scheduling speakers and tasks once the Action Plans are complete.
- Questions that needed further clarification included the term of the elected positions and removal of such persons.

Acceptance of document postponed until more information is gathered.

Ms. Harkness brought in some information she collected detailing the use of the terms non-profit and not-for-profit. While not-for-profit was often used to describe an activity and non-profit a corporation, there appeared to be no true distinction.

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cor/corpweb/cornp/npfrm.htm>

<http://www.nonprofits.org/npofaq/01/09.html>

Mr. Berman noted that the Town Manager discussed the social service issue and our committee on his newly formed weblog available on the town website.

Mr. Berman highlighted some points from a letter sent to him from Brian Sullivan, a town meeting member.

- He was concerned about the high cost of education and was interested in a total count of school children in all social service agencies.
- Town Meeting supported this committee in part because of a perceived negative impact on the town of some social service agencies. In addition, it was felt that our community is doing more than its fair share of carrying the regional burden.
- Town meeting wanted to have information about the impact of all social service agencies and to be alerted to the distinctions between them and whether some are having negative impacts and others not.
- What money is lost through abatements or tax loss should be determined.
- How many social service agency clients are transported into Framingham?
- The minutes showed considerable amounts of discussion regarding including churches in this investigation. Town Meeting quite clearly slapped this down, however Mr. Sullivan thought that it is relevant to report on general issues that may come up during the investigation, such as AA meetings being held in Churches. What impact that has on the community, such as public safety issues, should be reported to town meeting. This can be revealed through casual study.

Mr. Berman passed out the outline for the Comparative Impact Study Action Plan.

Ms. Lee explained that she put together an outline for the Comparative Impact Study, similar to the one we are currently working on for the PILOT study. This was in response to questions raised at the last meeting.

- Why are we starting with the PILOT study?
- Illustrate how some of the information from the PILOT study can be translated to the Comparative Impact Study, which will also require additional input

The outline for the Impact Study can be used to create an Action Plan for that study and shows that much of the work we did on the PILOT will overlap. However, the impact study will have many more questions added to it, more topics such as intangibles and the consideration of other communities.

Continue developing **PILOT Action Plan**, Section III.d , Tangible costs associated with Social Services to Framingham:

The questions and ideas from each group member as recorded by tape and by notes were used to update the PILOT Action Plan. This plan is followed by comments of clarification and those that were outside of the scope of the Plan.

III. Tangible costs associated with Social Services to Framingham:

d)Public Safety: Fire, Police, Ambulance

1) Ambulance Costs

- How much does ambulance service cost the town of Framingham?
- Can this be broken down to per use?
- How many ambulance calls go out to social service agencies or clients?
- Who pays for these calls?
- What is the mechanism of our contract negotiations with ambulance providers? Do we pay a higher or lower rate for high volume use? Is there a credit scale?
- Do we have high volume use?

2) Police

i) Calls police respond to: general questions. Per year, for how many years?

- What are the total number of calls the department responds to?
- What % or number of these calls are related to social services and clients?
- What % or number of these are not related to social services and clients?
- What % or number of these calls come from apartment complexes?
- What % or number of these calls come from single family homes?
- What % or number of these calls come from 2,3 and 4 family homes?
- What % or number of these calls come from FSC?
- What are the costs associated with police calls inclusive of all overhead and subsequent costs?
- Are there varying rates for such calls? What is the total and individual costs for these calls?
- What is the breakdown of reimbursements from the agencies for these calls? Are these more than or less than the actual costs?
- How much time do officers spend in court on social service related issues? What does that cost the department? Who pays?
- What would be the call rate if there were no social service agencies in Framingham?
- Is there a rate of false alarms or false 911 calls made by social service agencies or responding to SSA's and their clients?
- What is the cost of false alarms and who pays for them?
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ii) Calls: Specific

- What is the total number of calls police receive and/or respond to from all social service agency properties, facilities and programs?
- How much do these calls cost, individually and collectively?
- How many cars do we have overall in the department?
- How many cars typically respond to police calls?
- How many units or officers respond?
- Do more cars or officers respond when a call is from a social service facility, program, address or client versus other calls from the community?

- Is there a policy for responding to social service addresses, multi family homes and apartments that differs from other types of housing?
 - What is the breakdown of reimbursements from the agencies for these calls?
 - Do these fees paid cover all aspects of the cost of the calls or do they “over-pay” i.e. pay more than the actual costs ?
 - How many calls are made for clients of agencies who are not necessarily at the above addresses?
 - How many calls are made as a result of either an agency facility, program or client, including warrants?
 - How many calls are made to the department that are not from social service facilities, programs and clients?
 - Can we determine what % of these calls would have happened anyway?
 - Can we determine how many Framingham residents are utilizing these services temporarily and require police response?
 - Can we determine prior addresses of those who are utilizing these services and require police response?
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- iii) **Out of town use**
- What % of social service related calls are due to people utilizing agencies from out of town?
 - Does the police department know of other town or city police departments that bring people to Framingham social services?
 - What is the breakdown of reimbursements from the agencies for these calls?
- iv) **Sex offenders: Can Police help identify costs**
- Is there a link between sex offenders and social service agencies? If so, what are the general costs associated including registration fees ?
 - What are the costs of monitoring sex offenders?
 - How many sex offenders utilize SSA’s?
 - How many sex offenders are there in Framingham? Is this a stable number?
 - Can we determine if sex offenders come from other towns to utilize Framingham’s social services?
 - Can we track the potential flow from Hyannis to Framingham due to shelter rule changes in Hyannis? [Open Cape Shelter Link](#)
 - Is there a benefit to having sex offenders staying in shelters because they make them register?
 - Is there a monetary effect, positive or negative, of sex offenders using social service facilities?
- v) **Special Programs**
- DMH and Framingham Police in collaboration with Advocates: cost vs. benefits. Genesis and need for this program.
 - Is this grant funded
 - Is there specialized training
 - What are the number of referrals for this program?
 - Do social service facilities require more of these calls than other parts of the community?
- 3) **Fire**
- i) **Calls fire department respond to: general questions. Per year, for how many years?**
- What are the total number of calls the department responds to?
 - What % or number of these calls are related to social services and clients?
 - What % or number of these are not related to social services and clients?

- What % or number of these calls come from apartment complexes?
- What % or number of these calls come from single family homes?
- What % or number of these calls come from 2,3 and 4 family homes?
- What % or number of these calls come from FSC?
- What are the costs associated with fire calls inclusive of all overhead and subsequent costs?
- Are there varying rates for such calls? What is the total and individual costs for these calls?
- What is the breakdown of reimbursements from the agencies for these calls? Are these more than or less than the actual costs?
- What would be the call rate if there were no social service agencies in Framingham?
- What is the rate of false alarms made by social service agencies or responding to SSA's and their clients?
- What is the cost of false alarms and who pays for them?
- How does this compare to other addresses of false alarms?

ii) **Calls: Specific**

- What is the total number of calls fire dept. receives and/or respond to from all social service agency properties, facilities and programs?
- How much do these calls cost, individually and collectively?
- How many fire engines and vehicles do we have overall in the department?
- How many engines and vehicles typically respond to police calls?
- How many units respond?
- How many men/women are in each unit?
- Do more units and firemen respond when a call is from a social service facility, program, address or client versus other calls from the community?
- Is there a policy for responding to social service addresses, multi family homes and apartments that differs from other types of housing?
- What is the breakdown of reimbursements from the agencies for these calls?
- Do these fees paid cover all aspects of the cost of the calls or do they “over-pay” i.e. pay more than the actual costs?
- How many calls are made for clients of agencies who are not necessarily at the above addresses?
- How many calls are made as a result of an agency facility, program or client?
- How many calls are made to the department that are not from social service facilities, programs and clients?
- Can we determine what % of these calls would have happened anyway?
- What % of social service related calls are due to people utilizing agencies from out of town?

Notes:

- What are the privacy issues and what details can we expect?
- We are interested in statistics and numbers, not names
- In general are the fees that agencies “pay” being collected?

Resources:

Town Manager
 Ambulance company Police station reports
 Social Service Agencies
 Fire Chief and designees
 Chief Steven Carl and designees

Officers who are responding, on the street
 Framingham Police Report
 Probation officers
 NOAH shelter in Hyannis
 State legislators, more for comparing to other towns
 Fire/Police Chief other communities, more for comparing to other towns when have specific list. Find incentives, offer summary of information and our report, call State Legislators
 Secretary of Public Safety: State crime statistics
 Federal government statistics: DOJ, FBI, census: local crime statistics
 Wellesley College: Depository for State documents
 U.S. reps (compose letter of introduction and ask for any ideas, info)
[Department of Transitional assistance](#)

e) Additional Municipal Costs

1) DPW

- Trash costs: DO agencies pay a fee for trash collection or have their trash picked up privately?
- If the town picks up the trash, what is the cost to the town?
- Water and Sewer rates: do non profits pay commercial or residential rate, or something else/
- Plowing: parking, sidewalks, driveways

2) Planning and Economic Development

- Is there a relationship between the PED and Social Service Agencies or programs in Framingham?
- What are the interests of the PED with social services in Framingham?
- What social service programs has the PED initiated and what programs are lined up for Framingham?
- How much of the PED resources, employees and funds, are spent working with or facilitating SSA's or programs?
- Does the PED have grant monies that it distributes to SSA's or programs?
- Does the PED help SSA's with their own grants?
- Does the PED help or coordinate low income or affordable housing for clients of SSA's or the agencies directly?
- What is the relationship between the services the agencies provide and the 40B housing stock?
- What role does the PED play in this relationship?
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3) Building Inspector

- How often are properties inspected?
- What types of inspections are done?
- How much time does building inspector spend on SSA facilities? What is the cost of employees?
- Do SSA's pay an inspection fee?
- Do we collect the fees paid?

4) Board of Health

- How often are properties inspected?
- What types of inspections are done?
- How much time does health inspector spend on SSA facilities? What is the cost for employees?
- Do SSA's pay an inspection fee?
- Do we collect the fees paid?

5) FHA: Invite Bill Cassamento to meeting

- What is the relationship between public housing, vouchers and social service agencies?
- Does FHA set up a continuum of care for clients of SSA?
- Are the disabled individuals in Framingham public housing coming out of SSA's facilities and programs?
- What is the ratio of elderly use of public housing to disabled use of housing? Has this ratio changed?
- Is FHA providing transitional housing for SSA?
- How many people are on the waiting list for public housing from Framingham?
- Do SS clients use section 8 vouchers? How are they chosen? Does the State encourage the cooperative use of services and housing?
- How many vouchers are used in Framingham?

6) Other

7)

IV. Tangible benefits associated with Social Services to Framingham:

a) Availability of Experts:

- What services do the social service experts bring to Framingham?
- What savings does this provide the town/ i/e if we do not have to provide these services what is the dollar savings
- What would the town pay if social services were not here to provide these experts?
- How much property is actually taxed and what is the total amount? (see Background)
- What is the opinion of Town Counsel regarding PILOT's
- What is the opinion of the Attorney General regarding PILOT's

b) Misc

- Rehabilitation of buildings.
 - i) How many buildings in the past year?
 - ii) How many buildings in the past 5 - 10 years?
- After clients sober up, they enter the workforce and we have a source of labor
 - i) How many people from SSA programs re-enter the workforce in Framingham? Can we quantify the success rate? i.e. get a %
 - ii) How many parents that re-enter the workforce are able to get their children out of foster care? What is the % rate if this and what are the cost savings to DYS, the State and the community?
- What were the costs to the town in providing services to our residents before social service programs? Such as public safety costs
- How many alcohol related and domestic violence calls occurred before the wet shelter and how many after it opened.
- How many Framingham residents are employed by SSA's?
- How many SSA employees buy lunch and other goods in Framingham?

c) Intangibles

- What is the benefit to the community that people do not have to travel to other towns to get the services provided by SSA'S?
- We need to go through the programs and determine what the service and benefit is
- If Framingham did not have SSA's what would be the social cost to the town to provide for its residents?
- What is the impact on residents, schools and teens in having the Domestic Violence and date rape program? What is the impact of early education?

Resources:

- Studies of benefits and costs to communities of SSA's

- FSC sociology department
Annual reports of social service agencies

Mr. Steinberg commented that when we are doing the comparative impact study, we should be considering what public safety fees are paid by all non profits so we can compare social services to other town non profits, such as FSC.

Mr. Palmer suggested that in trying to determine what effect SSA's have on town departments and town government, we should invite the town manager to our meeting. The basic information we are looking for is an overview of the impact of SSA's on all town departments. This will help us determine the type and depth of questions to be asking.

Mr. Berman suggested we should invite someone from the State to describe to us how social service programs are envisioned, designed and brought to fruition. Rep. Blumer thought we could have some people in who could give us a good overview. Where do the ideas start and what are the options that SSA's have for their programs.

Mr. Palmer wanted to confirm that under II: Background information about SSA's, that we will be determining the total value of all property owned or rented by SSA's , how much of that is taxed and how much is not taxed. He would also like to be sure we determine the dollar amount of property tax not being collected at this time by the town from such agencies.
In addition, we need to develop a fair payment program

Mr. Orr reminded the group that we need to distinguish between the economic costs and benefits and social costs and benefits and be how we are using the information and what information we can actually determine.

Upon completion of the PILOT Action Plan the group discussed strategy. Me. Berman suggested we set up working groups which would meet separately and hammer out the details of the topics, set up speakers to invite in and questions we should ask. The number of people permitted under the open meeting law in such groups was discussed and needs follow up with the DA.

October meeting schedule was discussed, along with the report for the October town meeting.

Town Manager will be invited to our next meeting to discuss how SSA's impact town departments. We will also iron out the working groups and details of size and meeting places. A summary of what the Board of Selectman Social Service task force has been doing will be provided by Mr. Berman. If the town manager cannot make the next meeting we will work on completing the Comparative Impact Action Plan.

Motion to adjourn:
10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain

Laurie Lee
TMM pct1
Clerk