



TOWN OF HAMPSTEAD

BUDGET COMMITTEE

MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

April 8, 2015

Approved May 14, 2015

PRESENT: Steve Londrigan, Emily Reschberger, John Skidmore, Jorge Mesa-Tejada

ABSENT: Bill Keating

VISITORS: None

The meeting was called to order by past chairman, Jorge Mesa-Tejada at 7:02 PM in the Selectmen's Office, Hampstead Town Hall.

1. Call to Order; Pledge of Allegiance:

Emily Reschberger led the Pledge of Allegiance

2. Welcome new members:

Jorge welcomed Emily Reschberger . Emily expressed her gratitude to Hampstead voters for electing her and looks forward to enhancing her Library budget experience by learning about the budgetary requirements of the town and school functions.

Jorge indicated that Bill Keating was absent due to a medical requirement and welcomed him to the committee.

3. Election of officers

Chairman

Jorge Mesa-Tejada was nominated on a motion by John Skidmore, seconded by Steve Londrigan.

There were no other nominations.

VOTE: 4 Yes; 0 No

Jorge thanked the members for their vote of confidence by reelecting him. Upon reelection, he continued leading the meeting.

Vice Chairman

Jorge called for nominations for vice-chairman.

Steve Londrigan was nominated on a motion by John Skidmore, seconded by Emily Reschberger

There were no other nominations.

VOTE: 4 Yes; 0 No

SECRETARY: Jorge called for nominations for Secretary

Hearing none, he asked for volunteers. Still no response.

Jorge stated that he would continue being secretary “by acclamation.”

4. Liaison Assignments

LIAISON ASSIGNMENTS					
	John	Bill	Emily	Jorge	Steve
Selectmen	X			X	
School Board			X	X	
Police				X	
Fire/ Rescue	X				
Highway					X
Library	X				
Capital Needs					X
Recreation			X		
Planning Board/ZBA					
Conservation Commission					
Solid Waste			X		

5. Approval of Minutes: January 15 and February 6, 2015

Motion: Steve moved to approve the minutes of January 15, 2015 as written; John seconded.

VOTE YES 3; NO 0; ABSTAIN 1

Motion: John moved to approve the minutes of February 6, 2015 as written; Steve seconded.

VOTE YES 3; NO 0; ABSTAIN 1

6. Discussion: Town and School Warrant results

The members engaged in a lively discussion on the whys and wherefores on the fate of the warrant articles.

Town Warrant:

Article 14 – Road Agent from elected to appointed position—Steve remarked that the Selectmen questioned whether the financial target (savings) would be met—we’ll have to keep an eye on it since the article passed.

Article 11—Shop Pond – Capital Reserve—Emily expressed her concern that with the higher winter and patching costs and the fact that “no means no,” the town missed a good chance to minimize the financial impact in fixing the dam. John opined that instead of \$50K capital reserve this year, it might be \$100K next year. Emily wondered whether there might be another way to incorporate that expenditure into this year’s budget, especially in view of the significant erosion. That seems unlikely.

Emily and John expressed their concern that only 22% out of 6,000 voters participated in the election in spite of the fact that this is when town and school officials are elected and their tax dollars are spent. Steve commented that when he checked the rolls a couple of years ago, he found that the majority of the people listed on his street had moved. Jorge said he would find out when the voter rolls are purged.

Then, Jorge asked the members why so few voters are participating in elections. Several reasons were offered: no “fire in the belly” on the part of town/school officials; very poor attendance at public hearings/deliberative sessions; low voter interest; no social interaction as in the old Town Meeting; etc. In the end, there was general agreement that the main means of communications seems to be impersonal, such as social media, which excludes the face-to-face discussions of years past.

School Warrant:

There were no surprises. John opined that the School did an excellent job publicizing the bond. Steve mentioned that the bond issue received well below number of YES votes. Emily wondered whether the access road was dead because of the “no means no.” Jorge stated that he was pleased that it failed because it was the wrong alignment: it should follow the existing alignment out to Emerson Avenue. As to a possible alternative, the School Board could abandon the petition route and include the road money in next year’s budget under the “safety” mandate.

Regarding Article 5—Capital Reserve, everyone was in agreement that not only was it needed, it was also a pleasant surprise that it passed by such a large margin. In fact, had it been a bond, the 63 percent tally was more than enough to pass.

7. Members comments

John: concerned about low voter turnout

Steve: no comment

Emily: will read all the handouts and try to get up to speed as quickly as possible

Jorge: proposed that instead of waiting till January to voice our opinion, when all has been decided and is, in effect, too late, it would be more productive to share our concerns with the Selectmen and especially, the School Board before summer vacation. After a brief discussion, the members concurred with the idea.

MOTION: Moved by Steve; seconded by John, to authorize the chairman to request that the BudCom be placed on the June 23rd School Board’s agenda.

VOTE: unanimous.

8. Next meeting agenda items

- Meeting with School Board
- Review current and past Teachers’ contracts

9. Schedule next meeting date

May 14th

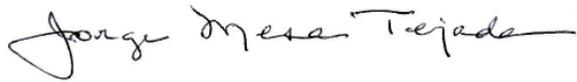
10. Visitors Comments

None

11. Adjournment

On a motion by John Skidmore, seconded by Steve, the meeting adjourned at 7:34 PM

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jorge Mesa-Tejada". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jorge Mesa-Tejada, chairman