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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
3/15/11**

The Board of Selectmen met in the Town Hall, Joseph F. Bilotta Meeting Room as scheduled with Steven M. deBettencourt, Ernie Sund, Tom Alonzo, Dave Matthews and Town Manager Kerry Speidel present, Paula Bertram absent. Meeting opened at 7:01 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ernie would like to "say an extra prayer" for those individuals in Japan as a result of the recent tsunami that has struck the country.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Town Caucus, Monday, March 21, 2011 @ THMS Cafeteria, 7:00 PM Vice Chair deBettencourt announced the positions that are open for the next election: two Selectman positions for 3 years, one Sewer Commissioner for 3 years, two Board of Health members for 3 years, Assessor for 3 years, two School Committee members for 3 years, Park Commissioner for 3 years, Commissioner of Trust Funds for 3 years, Cemetery Commissioner for 3 years, Library Trustee for 3 years, Planning Board member for 5 years, and Housing Authority member for 5 years.

APPOINTMENTS

CURRENT BUSINESS

- 1. Minutes** – Board of Selectmen Regular session for 2/17/11, 3/8/11 and Executive Session for 3/8/11 reviewed and signed.
Warrants - #19P 11, 3/17/11- \$669,755.33 and #50 11, 3/16/11 - \$532,851.33 reviewed and signed.
Action File Issues – Board signed Proclamations for Eagle Scout Awards; Daniel Paquette and Benjamin Grossman.
- 2. Committee Updates -**
 - Dave - School Committee Meeting last week; discussions on the budget and an override proposal to fill the gap between the Superintendants proposal and the Town Managers. They decided that an override was not appropriate at this time, also discussed options of charging for busing and other activities. The issue of the High School roof is still out there and this is still with the MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority).
 - Ernie - Cable Committee met this week and discussed personnel issues/staff and video quality; noted that the programs that have been put forward have been of much better quality. Presentation on Boston Post Cane was on Facebook and the video was of a top quality. Tom noted that the personnel and the equipment is now able to go off site and be utilized on the social media as well.
 - Tom - Finance Committee met last Thursday, heard from DPW, COA and the Town Manager on the General Government. The Finance Committee Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for this Thursday @ 7:00 PM.
- 3. Department Updates - none**
- 4. Town Manager Updates** – Kerry presented the attached information on the snow and ice deficit that was prepared last week. Hoping that we will be able to fund by re-allocating funds within the existing budgets, will do the best we can to cover within the current appropriations. She noted that within the budget document on page 13 there is a graph that shows the 10 year history of expenditures for snow and ice removal.
Steve noted that to make a comparison from year to year would be more beneficial and he would like to see it done by vendors; salt, sand, vehicle repairs, vendors etc.
Kerry will provide this level of detail as our system will allow us to pull the detail from over the past three years.
 - DPW Facilities Committee – pre-bid conference is scheduled for 10:00 AM tomorrow at the site, 520 Chase Road.
 - Kerry will be attending a meeting at the Department of Energy Resources with representatives of Colonial Power tomorrow as one of the steps in the process is we have to have a letter of approval from DOER and as such they (DOER) have requested a face to face meeting to ensure that we know what we're doing.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Request for Proposals: Solar Farm – School Facilities Director (also advisory member of Green Community Task Force) John Londa & DPW Director Jack Rodriquez were present. John discussed the Young's Road Landfill site and noted that he has met with DPW Director regarding utilizing the old Landfill site and the composting area (northern part of area). Reviewed the attached diagram

with the board that identifies those areas within the site. The area that they are currently looking at for the solar array is the landfill and an area adjacent to the catch basin/road sweepings area and future development to the rear of the site, abutting the conservation area. Second issue was in regards to the rate payer cost for the solar farm and the issue of whether the potential cost savings will be assessed to the rate payers.

Ernie questioned that this is a Request for Proposal only and what we're looking at is looking for proposals for installing a solar farm and that this is not a done deal until we receive proposals back to evaluate, correct.

John confirmed, the timeline proposed send out on March 24, pre-bid meeting scheduled for April 7, responses back by 5/5/11 and evaluation of proposals up until 5/19/11, with anticipated award the 25th of May. The original RFP went out to the Board of Health, Department of Public Works and Board of Selectmen office. He has sent an initial draft to Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and there is still more work to be done on the RFP before it is out on the street. As of today, only the Board of Selectmen has responded, but he will also contact the Conservation Commission.

Tom questioned if it would make sense to go for the whole 1.5 megawatts?

John provided the following information regarding the rate payer cost for Solar Farm that the town is proposing to create a 1.5 MW Solar farm at the Youngs Road Landfill. This project is being developed as a power purchasing agreement with 3rd party ownership of the solar array for 20 years. The solar farm would be setup to be "net metered" The estimated production for the farm would be 1,800,000 KWH annually. Town of Lunenburg municipal accounts used 2,122,000 KWH in FYI 0. The cost for electricity supply was \$204,896 and distribution cost was roughly \$180,000. The town of Lunenburg is currently installing 102 KW solar arrays at the Turkey Hill Middle School which will generate 100,000KWH per year. Net Metering will generate a credit for default service, distribution, transmission, and transition charge per kilowatt hour for power added to the distribution grid. Municipalities under Massachusetts Law receive credit for distribution which non-governmental entities do not. Until, the town energy Distribution Company, is allowed to recoup the loss for distribution to it Massachusetts rate payers. The provision for municipalities to receive distribution credit is intended to act as an incentive for municipalities to develop solar and wind projects. Until has roughly 28,000 rate payers in the North Central Massachusetts service area which would share the cost for the estimated \$180,000 in distribution revenue lost by Unutil, This works out to roughly \$6.42 per year per ratepayer. Each utility has a maximum number of MW that is allowed for residents and for municipality related projects. The maximum load is 1% of Unutil's historic output (102 MW) for their non-governmental customers for all the communities that they serve. For municipality related projects that limit for Unutil's entire territory is 2% of our maximum output or 2 MW. It is currently not known when Unutil will reach the cap but there would seem to be adequate incentive for the development of governmental solar facilities to ensure that the cap is reached. The incentive by design is based upon rater payer underwriting the cost. Kerry commented that many municipalities are looking at this type of development and Unutil isn't ready to tie up an amount until they know what exactly we'll be generating.

Steve asked Jack if this will allow for the future needs of the DPW. Jack added an area on the plan showing the broken line, the whole area to the center right is for the catch basin cleanings and street sweeping and with the legislation on the storm-water, noted that we are one of the only towns to be in compliance with the regulations and believes that the area identified should serve their needs in perpetuity. They were not to leave a ledge abutting the conservation area and have a lot of area to build. If there is a phase 2, we may be able to use that area for that, but will have to look at this down the road. He wants to make absolutely sure that DEP is ok with this on the landfill site and to ensure that the grading or that the needs of the contractor doesn't cost the town; referred to the crushed stone which is a valuable material that is piled on the site and would like to ensure that some open space still exists down there (noted that we needed the area for staging as a result of the 2008 ice storm).

Dave questioned the materials that are valuable and what would our best return be on this. Per Jack the crushed stone would have to be washed in order to be used for septic systems. He has spoken with contractors on this, but didn't get a great deal, this material won't go bad and we may have a future use for it, as such wouldn't want to bury it. At some point we could do a small RFP on our own, but we can utilize the material as well. Wants to identify these issues in the RFP and how the contractor would be responsible for dealing with it.

Dave commented that with the events occurring with regards to oil spills, nuclear meltdowns etc., if we don't start making a move more to renewable energy nationwide we're going to be in trouble farther down the road.

Kerry noted that the cost is going to be transferred to everybody, not just the Lunenburg residents; it's an issue of who's going to make that happen.

Tom move to accept the proposal moving forward for the solar farm, Ernie seconded, voted unanimously.

2. Request for Proposals: Solid Waste & Recycling – Kerry informed the board that our current contract for Solid Waste & Recycling services expires June 30th. This is one of the few services that are exempt from MGL Chapter 30B, but we still go through the process in developing an RFP. Looking to have ready to go out to bid end of March and anticipate an award after Town Meeting. Hope to be issuing a contract to one vendor for both programs. We have placed a "place holder" warrant article on for town meeting as we may realize a more beneficial bid with and award beyond three years and as such hoping to get a longer year contract. Not looking to add in anything that would artificially increase the cost of the contract, i.e. containers etc. We are looking to continue with the same type of program but tighter controls on the expenses.

Ernie questioned what happens with the containers and how were the originally obtained. Laura informed the board that the recycling bins were originally obtained through a state grant and the roll off containers and dumpsters are the property of Waste Management.

Kerry noted that we no longer have any recycling bins available and many people are just utilizing the stickers and placing in on their own roll out containers.

Steve questioned the possibility of having some containers available that we can sell to residents.

Tom noted that he is glad that there is a separate price proposal for the various trailer parks and condominium entity's.

Kerry noted that we need to send them a letter informing them that we're doing this.

Dave commented that splitting the operations out is not cost savings and is troubled by the language.

Tom noted that we clearly stated that we are looking to award to a single vendor and noted awarding for each service. Kerry noted that we're looking for the best deal for the Town of Lunenburg, if we were to get a better deal by leaving them separate we would like to be able to award. It is the intention of the town to award a single contract.

Steve also commented on section 2.10 that states truck will be marked for recyclables, and this language makes it seem that it will only be utilized for recycling.

Suggestion was made for a pre-bid conference and may have to adjust the RFP due date to push out at least another week so that bidders will have enough time to gather the information in order to submit a bid.

3. Request for Proposals: Jones House – tabled as Kerry is still awaiting a response from Kopelman & Paige and as our attorney with the firm no longer with K&P and this issue had been overlooked. She spoke with our current attorney and advised him that we need to expedite the answers to questions on the bid document as we would like to go out to bid in April.

4. Summer Street Alternatives Analysis - Kerry provided the Alternative Analysis proposal that was submitted by Trish Domigan of VHB and noted that Lunenburg's portion of that was \$56,000 which was approved at the Special Town Meeting. What we're looking at is more the street scape. In the original proposal the field survey was going to be very extensive, they've decided to use more of our GIS to put together the street scape analysis. They've also reduced the number of project meetings down to two as well as a reduction on other meetings. Kerry would like to move forward with the Alternative Analysis, as it would make it easier for us to sell the project. The state doesn't have the ability to extend the timetable out in order to the communities to meet the December 31st grant opportunity deadline for \$50,000 funding. There are a number of other programs coming out and once we've completed the Alternatives Analysis we should have more opportunities for funding. They have also met with Senator Flanagan and she is willing to back the funding requests on the state side. The \$50,000 for the Alternatives Analysis will be funded out of the \$56,000 that was approved at Town Meeting. Before final design we will have to do a field survey to ensure that everything is accurate.

Tom questioned in the larger scope of the project, is this an overlap of what we would do anyway. Per Kerry, they should be able to use the data that we have, but not sure that the level of data is sufficient for their needs, but it is sufficient for the street scape analysis.

Steve questioned how the project will flow, are they doing street scape for Leominster & Fitchburg. Noted that Leominster recently installed sidewalks all the way down North Street, and wants to ensure that one flows into the other within the two communities. Kerry noted that Fitchburg is currently going through a very similar process and pointed out that the work that we are doing with MRPC, they will also be coordinating with all three communities which will help in the coordination the projects as well.

5. Budget Update – Kerry met with Senator Flanagan and she expects a resolution from the State which we anticipate we'll receive by the end of this month. Only other adjustment is the Monty Tech Assessment which has been certified; noted that we do have a decrease in enrollment of one student. She had projected an increase, will actually see a decrease of \$20,899.

Tom commented on the assumptions that Kerry had presented in her budget proposal and would like to know which assumptions are included in her budget and which aren't. At some point need to understand what we should be doing and what we're not doing, what level of services are being affected from year to year.

According to Kerry, under the special expenditure assumptions, General Government HR position is not within the budget. There is currently a vacancy and we will be doing things differently and hope that a staff person would be able to coordinate this position. She has had discussions with the School Superintendant on this position. Legal expenses has decreased in part to the smaller number of cases and seeing a benefit with having the "not to exceed" for general legal services. Increase in the Town Clerk's salary, has proposed increasing by 10% in FY12 and 2.5% per year thereafter, the Clerk has asked that the increase be to the Assistant Clerk appropriation in order to have increased coverage. The one Patrol Officer in 2012 is included. Phasing in 24 hour shift for Fire Department; also proposing some hours for Saturday and Sunday coverage and the chief is putting together a proposal on how he would use additional hours, is included. The increase in Building Inspection to cover vacation, leave time and extra number of inspections that need to be done and the need to call in the Assistant Building Inspector. There will also be changes to the Emergency Management Position, increasing hours. MontyTech, decreasing by the \$20k. There is also \$50,000 for crack sealing which is included within the budget. Also adding labor/equipment operator position has been included, perhaps a mini second shift from 3 to 6 or 7 to 10, to cover the times when typically call backs have occurred.

Steve's concern with the additional coverage at the DPW is that ideally there will be two people assigned as you should never put just one person out on the road by themselves, doesn't believe this is a good practice. Kerry has discussed with the Superintendant and she has also expressed a concern; noted that the night custodial is here without supervision. The snow & ice increase by 5% is not included as she level funded the snow and ice request. Fleet Mtc. & Fuel increase by 5% included. Solid waste 5% increase per year included. Additional outreach hours for COA included. Library has been addressed, CWMARS included 50% of the costs.

Dave questioned the status of the Pavement Management Plan and per Kerry the roads are not included at all, the Pavement Management Plan is estimated at about \$750,000/year and is not in this budget. When the time is right, whether and override or a debt exclusion, hoping around fall town meeting time that we could pick this up. It's difficult as there are so many issues going on with the school. We are so understaffed within the departments and so far behind that we need to catch up with these issues.

Ernie believes that the roads really need to be addressed and would like to see that line item increased by about \$100,000 for the next 10 years but realizes that we can't do this all at once.

Kerry presented the attached information on the health insurance increases for 2012. Her preliminary budget has 10% increase and they have come in with at 13% increase. The Federal Health Care reform changes will result in a 12.7% increase. We can apply to be granted "grandfather" status which would result in a 12.2% increase.

Total of 429 enrollments in health insurance plan, renewal does not cover the senior HMO Blue program as this is renewed on a calendar basis. Of this number 241 are town employees and retirees and 188 are school employees. Reviewed the cost savings by shifting from 77.5% to 75% which assumes the 13.24% increase, the cost shift will save about \$129,277 savings for the town.

Kerry also provided information on the GIC (State program) and noted that she is not sure as to how they came up with an increase of 2.4% knowing the increases that they've seen in premium costs. Steve questioned if perhaps some of the increases that we're seeing from MIIA is due to the migration of other municipalities into the GIS Group.

Kerry believes that the MIIA pool is enormous and we would have to see a large migration in order for this to be related to a cost impact. She is considering holding on the number that was presented for the preliminary budget proposal.

Next week the board would like to discuss cost increases, 2½ levy limit increase.

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS/REAPPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

EXECUTIVE SESSION

1. M.G.L. Chapter 39, §23B to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the government's bargaining or litigation position.

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

April 5, 2011

April 12, 2011

April 19, 2011

Adjourned Regular Session at 8:23 P.M. and opened Executive Session by roll call vote; Steve aye, Tom aye, Paula aye, Ernie aye and Dave aye, in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 39, §23B(6) to consider the purchase, exchanged, lease or value of real estate, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body. Chairman announced that the Board would not be returning to Regular Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Williams, Chief Administrative Assistant
Board of Selectmen

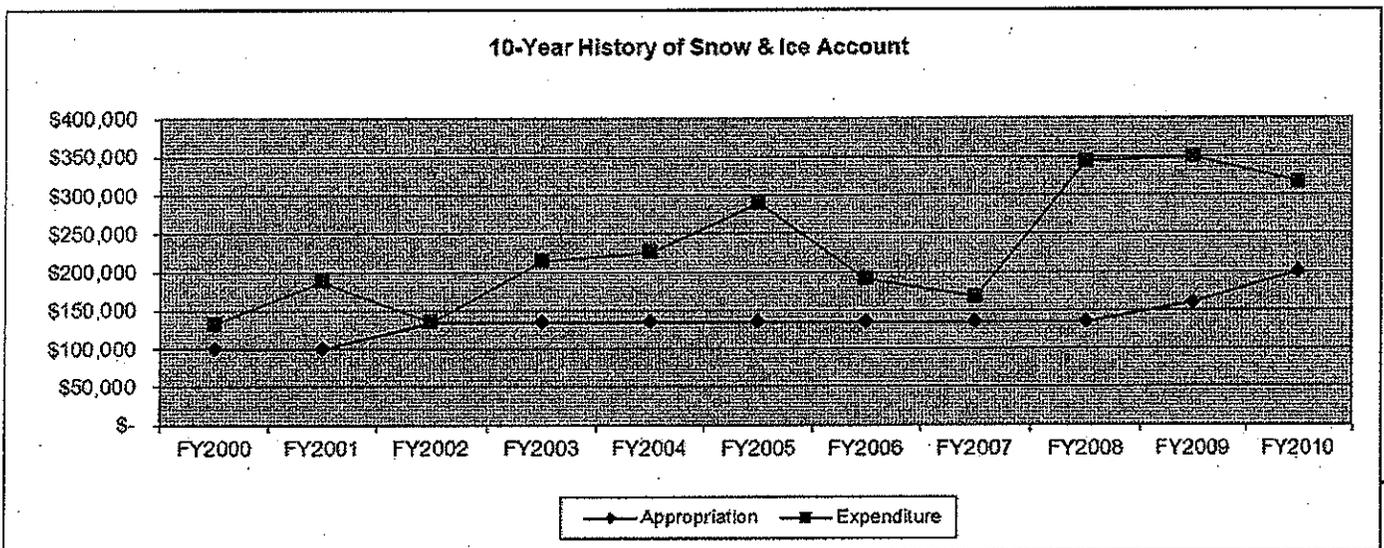
SNOW EXPENDITURES TO DATE (3/10/11)					
	SUPPLIES	CONTRACTED SERVICE	HIRED EQUIPMENT	OVERTIME	TOTALS
APPROPRIATION:	\$ 170,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 17,500.00	\$ 250,000.00
EXPENDED:	\$ 127,215.07	\$ 122,890.55	\$ 5,922.00	\$ 40,550.32	\$ 296,577.94
BALANCE:	\$ 42,784.93	\$ (67,890.55)	\$ 1,578.00	\$ (23,050.32)	\$ (46,577.94)

The Public Buildings & Grounds Division is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the following municipal facilities: DPW Garage, Park Building, Cemetery Building, Ritter Building, Old Primary School, Public Safety Complex, Town Hall, Eagle House, Library, Teen Center, Jones House, as well as the Town Common, Town Beach and all athletic fields and playgrounds excluding School properties. The division is managed by a Facilities Director, with the assistance of a janitor responsible for Town Hall, Eagle House and the DPW Garage and contract janitorial services for all other buildings. The HVAC systems at the Library, Public Safety Complex and Town Hall are maintained by a contract service. The age of many of the buildings being maintained creates a tremendous amount of work.

Both the Parks and Cemetery Divisions are staffed with one- (1) person each. Each division, though a part of the entire department, is overseen by a Board of Commissioners.

Total spending for the Department of Public Works is recommended at \$1,429,700, which represents an increase of \$88,043, or a 6.56% over the current fiscal year.

The chart below shows the 10-year history of the Snow & Ice Account. The average expenditure over 10 years is \$223,672, while the average expenditure over 5 years is \$268,230. One major contributor to the increase in expenditure is the large increase in Salt- 44%- in the past 5 years, and Sand- 25%- in the past 5 years. Additionally, the Town only began purchasing Sand in FY2007.



I have chosen to continue to recommend a Snow & Ice Budget of \$250,000. Although this does leave us with some level of exposure, it is far more realistic than what the Town was budgeting just a few years ago. There are a number of other priorities and one new mandate which needed to be factored in to the overall expenditures. In FY 12 and beyond, the Town will be faced with a new federal mandate regarding roadway signage. All signage must now comply with the (federal) Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Compliance with this mandate is anticipated to cost \$15,000 in year 1. In addition, we will be looking to do additional line painting on roadways to get us back on a regular schedule.

Funding has also been included to partially restore a position that was not filled in FY2009 after a retirement. The vacant position was a full-time position within the Highway Division. I have included funding for a part-time, 19 hr/wk, position within the Department, with the intent of restoring this to full-time in FY2013. It is likely that this position will be scheduled for a "mini" second shift, primarily as a more cost effective way to respond to call-backs that occur shortly after the end of the regular business day.

Although the Department recently completed a detailed Pavement Management System plan, no additional funding is included in this recommendation to begin funding that plan. The plan identified the needs of the Town to be about \$800,000 per year to properly maintain all roadways. While this needs to be a top priority, there is no way that this level of spending can be supported in the Operating Budget. The Town needs to consider a funding source outside of the Operating Budget.

FY2012 - 2016 Financial Forecast

Revenue Assumptions:

1. Property Tax increases 2.5% per year, plus whatever amount is necessary to cover Exempt Debt.
2. New Growth increases in FY12 & FY13 to account for Emerald Place and Tri-Town Landing Developments.
3. All State Aid accounts decrease by 10% in FY12, but increase by 2.5% each year thereafter.
4. No growth in FY12 Local Receipts over adjusted FY11 projections; 2.5% increase each year thereafter.
5. No change in Available Funds
6. No draw on Stabilization Fund.

General Expenditure Assumptions:

1. All utilities, except telephone, are projected to increase 5% per year
2. Telephone expenses are projected to increase 2.5% per year
3. All other expenses, except where noted below, are projected to increase 2%
4. All personnel expenses, except where noted below, will increase in accordance with approved contracts.
5. All dues, memberships, training, mileage reimbursement accounts have been restored

Special Expenditure Assumptions:

1. General Government: create PT HR Coordinator position; transitioning to FY in FY2015.
2. General Government: increase Legal Expenses by 3% per year.
3. General Government: increase Town Clerk's Salary by 10% in FY12; 2.5% per year thereafter.
4. Police: Add 1 Patrol Officer per year FY11, 12 & 13; add 1 Sargent in FY15
5. Fire: Phase in 2nd shift, 2 person coverage, 50% of week in FY12; 100% of week by FY13.
6. Fire: Assume in-house dispatch
7. Building Inspection: additional hours for PT Assistant Building Inspector
8. Emergency Management: increase stipend from \$2,500 to \$5,000
9. School Department: use Superintendent's projections
10. Monty Tech: assume increase of 3.5% per year
11. DPW: \$50K per year for Crack Sealing Program
12. DPW: Add one laborer/equipment operator position per year
13. DPW: increase Snow & Ice Supplies by 5% each year; others by 2%
14. DPW: Fleet Maintenance & Fuel, increase all accounts by 5% per year
15. DPW: Facilities, one additional maintenance worker
16. Solid Waste: 5% per year
17. COA: add additional PT hours for Outreach
18. Library: Increase hours to restore cuts made in FY10
19. Library: Pay CWMARS membership out of operating budget
20. Retirement Assessment: increase 10% per year
21. Workers Compensation: increase 5% per year

Health Insurance

	Town Departments & Retirees [7.5%]				Town Departments & Retirees [7.5%]			
	Count	Town Share	Cost to Town	Annual Cost to Town	Count	Town Share	Cost to Town	Annual Cost to Town
			Monthly				Monthly	
Active								
HMO Blue, Single	59	\$ 459.16	\$ 27,090.69	\$ 325,088.29	59	\$ 444.35	\$ 26,216.80	\$ 314,601.57
HMO Blue, Family	63	\$ 1,207.58	\$ 76,077.65	\$ 912,931.80	63	\$ 1,168.63	\$ 73,623.53	\$ 893,482.39
Blue Care Elect Preferred, Single	3	\$ 547.76	\$ 1,643.27	\$ 19,719.18	3	\$ 547.76	\$ 1,643.27	\$ 19,719.18
Blue Care Elect Preferred, Family	3	\$ 1,440.56	\$ 4,321.69	\$ 51,860.25	3	\$ 1,440.56	\$ 4,321.69	\$ 51,860.25
Retired								
Medex 3 w/ OBRA 90	7	\$ 354.39	\$ 2,480.70	\$ 29,768.34	7	\$ 354.39	\$ 2,480.70	\$ 29,768.34
Medicare HMO	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Managed Blue for Seniors	106	\$ 367.92	\$ 38,999.89	\$ 467,988.69	106	\$ 356.06	\$ 37,741.83	\$ 452,901.96
Medicare, Part B	113	\$ 85.64	\$ 9,677.04	\$ 116,124.45	113	\$ 82.88	\$ 9,364.88	\$ 112,378.50
Medicare Penalty				\$ 50,000.00				\$ 50,000.00
total count:	241		\$ 150,613.88	\$ 1,973,491.00	241		\$ 146,027.81	\$ 1,914,712.19
				total:				\$ 1,914,712.19
							savings=	\$ 58,778.81

Health Insurance

Active	School [77.5%]			School [75%]		
	Count	School Share	Monthly Cost to School	Count	School Share	Monthly Cost to School
HMO Blue, Single	62	\$ 459.16	\$ 28,468.18	62	\$ 444.35	\$ 27,549.86
HMO Blue, Family	126	\$ 1,207.58	\$ 152,155.30	126	\$ 1,168.63	\$ 147,247.07
Blue Care Elect Preferred, Single	0	\$ 547.76	\$ -	0	\$ 547.76	\$ -
Blue Care Elect Preferred, Family	0	\$ 1,440.56	\$ -	0	\$ 1,440.56	\$ -
total count:	188	\$ -	\$ 180,623.48	188	\$ -	\$ 174,796.92
			\$ 2,167,481.81			\$ 2,097,563.04
			total: \$ 2,167,481.81			total: \$ 2,097,563.04
						savings= \$ 69,918.77

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Administration and Finance

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GIC's Rates to Increase 2.40% for FY12 - Lowest Increase in Three Years

For Immediate Release March 3, 2011

Boston, MA- The Group Insurance Commission approved rates for Fiscal 2012 at its meeting yesterday averaging a 2.4% increase, the lowest increase in three years.

Dolores Mitchell, Executive Director of the GIC told Commissioners at the annual rate setting meeting that the very favorable rates were attributable to a two-part cost containment strategy to control growth in rates charged by insurers and to incent employees to move to lower cost plans. In addition, the rates reflect lowered rates of medical services utilization, and vigorous rate negotiations.

"There are a lot of moving parts in our predictions for next year, but we've put all the pieces in place, and we're very pleased to present these rates." The new rates become effective on July first and compare very favorably with national trends of a 6.4% for 2011 for employer-sponsored health benefits.

"Governor Patrick has made it clear that controlling health care costs is a top priority," said Secretary of Administration and Finance Jay Gonzalez. "The fact that we are seeing the lowest rate increase in three years is due in large part to the aggressive steps the GIC is taking to contain costs for employees' health care by successfully negotiating lower rates."

All state employees are required to re-enroll in their health plans during this years' annual enrollment, with a goal of incenting state employees to join limited networks and thereby save the Commonwealth tens of millions of dollars in health care costs. Employees who switch to the less costly plans will get a premium holiday for three months as well as the savings from the lower premiums for the rest of the year. The GIC offers six limited network plans whose average premiums are 20% lower than the broad network plans. The limited network plans include Fallon Community Health Plan Direct, Harvard Pilgrim Primary Choice, Health New England, NHP-Neighborhood Health Plan, Tufts Spirit Plan, and UniCare's Community Choice Plan. Employees who fail to re-enroll will be assigned to Community Choice, the least costly state-wide plan.

This information provided by the [Group Insurance Commission](#).

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Youngs Road Landfill Site

Conservation Area

Solar Farm Proposed Area

Composting/Recycling

Catch Basin/Road Sweepings

