

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

Minutes

November 22, 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, Jim Palmer, Wes Ritchie, Nick Sanchez: Steve Orr, John Speranza

Meeting called to order at 7:30 PM

Chair Berman began the meeting with some comments: he told the committee that his leadership style of chairing the committee to be open and foster communication and conversation, has not been working for the past few weeks. He will make some changes started tonight. His new guidelines will include the following:

1. sessions will remain civil at all times
2. individuals are not to speak unless recognized by the chair
3. individuals are not to interrupt other speakers

Ed Noonan, town moderator rose to make a few comments. He came to speak to the group because he is concerned about the direction the committee is taking. He wanted to remind the committee of their charge. The committee has forgotten the motion voted in by town meeting that created the committee and their job as members on the committee. Mr. Noonan said that the job of the members of this committee is to compile a report about social service agencies in this town. The committee needs to work together. He urged the committee to go back and read the motion that brought the committee here. Remember why everyone is here. Know where this committee is going. Know the charge from town meeting.

Mr. Noonan concluded that the committee needs to remember that their mission is even larger than what TM gave. The entire town of Framingham is waiting for the committee's recommendations. And deserves answers. Each member is charged with doing that. He encouraged the group to put away those things that are not productive to the mission.

The chair thanked the Moderator

**Review of minutes:**

November 8 postponed

October 25 postponed

August 2 amendment to the minutes postponed

Chair Berman discussed the details of going into executive session. All parties agreed to waive executive session and discuss the matter in open meeting

Ms. Lee moved that we dismiss entirely the matter of Steve Orr's visit to the wet shelter and all related issues.

Laurie explained that her reason for this motion was based on a review of what has been achieved since the visit to the wet shelter. She thought the group should move on and continue with the work at hand.

- Successfully incorporated a new member into the committee
- Decided to invite representatives from SSA's to meet with us and discuss the survey and issues involved
- Received one survey back with answers!
- Approved the corrected list of communities
- Approved the list of social service addresses
- Received verbal assurance via MWDN that SMOC intends on cooperating with the committee and not being affected by the event
- Received verbal invitation via the chair to tour SMOC facilities
- Personal confirmation to Laurie Lee from Jeanne Ryan of Wayside that Mr. Masi instructed her to do whatever possible to assist the PILOT committee and that she would be thrilled to meet with our committee to discuss the survey
- A recent email from Bill Taylor stating his "desire to cooperate and dialogue with this town committee"

Cynthia seconded the motion.

Jim Palmer made a friendly amendment that we carry out our duties as this committee set up, and in accordance with the Action Plan.

There was some question about whether the committee voted to not be tied to the action plan.

The chair was concluded that there was no motion voting on this for the entire group.

Nick Sanchez thought this motion was in line with what the Moderator suggested: he spoke to strongly support the motion to dismiss. He saw no purpose to have further discussion in or out of executive session or revisit divisive issues.

Jim Palmer agreed with the moderator and thought we were spinning wheels and we should follow our Action Plan.

Dawn Harkness spoke against the motion. She first inquired if the author of an email to the group asking her fellow social service providers to withhold the survey unless Mr. Orr was removed from the committee was included in Laurie's list.

Laurie responded that she has had no contact with that person. Her only personal contact was with representatives of Advocates and Wayside and believed there was good will and good feelings of cooperation from them.

Dawn said that her reasons for not supporting the motion were clear to her from past minutes. She thought that before Mr. Orr harassed a member off the committee we were balanced. Ms. Harkness thought that by having the other person to help balance the committee, and balance the working groups, we were forced to cooperate. That caused a shift in the politics in the room. She continued that the people who now thought they had a majority no longer felt compelled to cooperate and be objective, rather they were only out to prove their social services are bad for Framingham.

Mr. Cohn called a point of order.

He said that Robert's Rules are clear about attacking member's motives:

**Decorum in Debate**, p379.

- **Confining Remarks to the Merits of the Pending Question**
- **Refraining From Attacking A Member's Motives**, top of p 380

When a question is pending, a member can condemn the nature or consequences of the proposed measure in strong terms, but he must avoid personalities and under no circumstances can he attack or question the motives of another member. The measure, not the member, is the subject of the debate. If a member disagrees with a statement by, another in regard to an event that both witnessed, he cannot state in debate that the other's statement "is a lie." But he might say, "I believe there is strong evidence that the member is mistaken." The moment the chair hears such word as "fraud," "liar," or "lie" used about a member in debate, he must act immediately and decisively to correct the matter and prevent its repetition.

The chair thought the previous speaker's comments were getting off topic.

Ms. Harkness summed up by saying that the actions of Mr. Orr and the consequent reactions are a permanent hurdle for the group and we need to deal with it. She thought the community wanted us to deal with it and the social service agencies have felt unfairly attacked and that the incident was unethical. She prefers to deal with the issue.

Mr. Cohn was sympathetic to the motion to dismiss but wanted to say he understood the previous speaker's frustration but encouraged everyone to move on as the moderator advised.

Mr. Sanchez read from Mr. Steinberg's resignation letter:

I will be writing a formal resignation letter to Chair Murphy this coming week. You all have done such a great job. I know you will produce something that everyone in Framingham can be proud of.

Nick said this letter shows he does not castigate anyone.

**Motion: To dismiss entirely the matter of Steve Orr's visit to the wet shelter on the evening of 10/24/05 and all related events, and we follow the action our committee took to develop an action plan and we follow that action plan.**

Point of information from Ms. Harkness regarding the exclusion of Mr. Orr's use of the PILOT email list and a violation of the open meeting law.

The chair said that was outside of the scope of this.

**Vote: 7 in favor 2 opposed 1 abstain motion passed**

Cynthia discussed a motion she wanted to make based on Dawn's suggestion at a previous meeting regarding bringing any issue a member has with another member to the chair and discuss such issues inside the committee before going public should be voted on as committee protocol.

**Motion: Members of the committee having any issues or questions whatsoever (conduct, statement, actions) regarding another member that we bring it to the PILOT committee first before going outside the committee.**

Bob thought this is directly opposed to the motion to move forward and that it is not the place of the committee to regulate speech.

Dawn thought her statement was mis characterized.

Nick moved to table the motion.

**Vote: 4 in favor 5 opposed 1 abstain fail**

More discussion followed, including Laurie's mention of reading such conduct already incorporated in Robert's Rules.

Cynthia withdrew the motion based on this understanding saying all she wanted was some protocol to avoid future conflict.

**Reports from workgroups**

**Additional Municipal**

Jim Palmer brought in his updated questionnaires for the BOH and building department:

**Steve: Motion to accept both questionnaires**

**Vote: 10 in favor 0 opposed 0 abstain passed**

**Jim moved that all correspondence from this committee go through the clerk and a record be kept as when it was sent, as of 11/22/05.**

Nick second

Dawn said for the record that she thought the clerk sent the AMR survey. Laurie thought she did

**Vote: 9 in favor -0 opposed 1- abstain passed**

Laurie asked if she could discuss a summary of reports presented to the committee by the property and income group to clarify any misunderstandings of what the committee has been doing. She was speaking on her own behalf.

#### ***Reports of the Property & Income Committee***

***Report 1: From the minutes of September 20, 2005***

***Property value and Income***

*To analyze property valuations, Nick Sanchez explained that one approach we are exploring is to focus on the change in price of similarly priced homes over time in area communities. The basic idea is to try to calculate a return on the investment in a home across communities. We will take for example, a \$100,000 investment in 1980 and see what has been the return on that investment in different communities over time.*

*One of the resources in the Action Plan is realtors and we would like to conduct a survey of all realtors in Framingham. We will ask questions of perception and valuations. This will be an anonymous survey.*

*We are also going to look for ways to examine changes in prices in localized areas over time. Such as a quarter mile or 4 block area.*

*In addition, academic literature will be examined. Tax rates will be examined. Crime rates and property values. Social service location and property values. We will consider*

*how the income distribution affects property values. We are primarily looking at market values because town or city evaluations are not the same in each community.*

*Dawn questioned the fair measure value of personal opinions of realtors. Nick pointed out that realtor's bias influences the sales that are made and it might be useful to know. Bob mentioned that there are many factors that will affect the price of a property and it was agreed that should be accounted for.*

*In addition, can we look at how easy or hard it is to sell properties in different communities? How many days on the market?*

*But Steve thought that we should account for the fact that the price you would sell a house for in Framingham would be less than another town. So what you are trying to get for it will influence the time on the market.*

*So maybe we should consider this when looking at like communities.*

*Steve did not think the issue is so simple.*

*Dawn wanted to confirm that all questionnaires will be voted on by the whole committee.*

*Bob commented that all questions will be voted on by the entire group.*

### ***Report 2 from the minutes of September 27, 2005***

#### ***Property and Income***

*Nick reported that Cynthia is working on a realtor survey.*

*Nick was working on data collection from the [Warren Group](#). He brought a sample report that he got from the website. The statistics are very detailed Nick discussed some of the information available through this Group. The cost for 150 searches is \$125. It might be worthwhile to purchase this.*

*It was confirmed that this is accessible through the internet*

*He is also assembling a complete list of all the individual realtors in Framingham*

*Nick also brought up the fact that SMOC also describes itself as a community action agency. He was finding a lot of information based on this. Every State has these, and they have very specific requirements. He found a directory of CAA, a serial publication in Massachusetts. This publication is available in only one library. It is a library that is available to our State Representatives. The State library of MA.*

*It might also have information about grants.*

*Deb Blumer offered to look into this and find the publication.*

*Dawn emphasized that we should all ask open ended questions without implying that we know the answers.*

### ***Report 3 from the minutes of October 11, 2005***

#### ***No report just discussion of other communities:***

*Bob ended the discussion and asked if the group want to consider other communities, which the property and income group is waiting for, or continue with the social service survey. Dawn suggested we continue with the survey. Bob asked Nick if his property group is OK with that. Nick said they would like to get on with the study but if it is the next thing we do it is OK.*

### ***Report 4 from the Draft Minutes of October 25, 2005***

#### ***Property & Income Group suggestion for:***

#### ***Communities to study***

*Laurie said she prepared to speak for the property and income group.*

*They spent a lot of time considering what communities we should consider.*

*Laurie passed out information relating to the HUD median income districts. This included the metropolitan areas: [PMSA](#): A PMSA consists of a large urbanized county or a cluster of counties (cities and towns in New England) that demonstrate strong internal economic and social links in addition to close ties with the central core of the larger area. These areas are used to draw districts which fit into a similar economic base.*

*What area is Framingham in: The Boston PMSA. (The list is on the last page) The income district that Framingham is in includes communities from different Counties, such as Middlesex, Bristol, Essex and Suffolk. What the Property and Income committee considered were those communities with populations between approximately 40,000-100,000 people that are within our PMSA district.*

*We also considered two not in our HUD district. We have a large list that we are recommending to the group and everything is up for discussion. The list follows:*

<b>In HUD Region</b>	<b>population ( from Realtor.com)</b>
<i>Beverly</i>	40,709
<i>Salem</i>	41,753
<i>Arlington</i>	42,719
<i>Revere</i>	47,154
<i>Brookline</i>	52,110
<i>Plymouth</i>	54,149
<i>Weymouth</i>	54,469
<i>Malden</i>	57,601
<i>Medford</i>	57,838
<i>Waltham</i>	60,250
<i>Framingham</i>	67,307
<i>Somerville</i>	76,493
<i>Newton</i>	83,829
<i>Quincy</i>	89,883
<i>Lynn</i>	90,694
<i>Cambridge</i>	102,662
<i>Lowell</i>	105,374
<b>Not in HUD region</b>	
<i>Lawrence</i>	73,844
<i>Brockton</i>	97,162

### ***Real Estate Survey***

*The P&I group presented to the committee a survey to be sent to every realtor in Framingham. The point of the survey was to determine how our town is presented to other people and how perception compares with fact and to try to understand the impact of realtor's perception on price values.*

*The committee was not in agreement with the survey and did not see a place for opinions in the report. The group tabled the survey. A full report of this discussion will appear when the minutes are approved.*

**Report 5 from the minutes of November 1, 2005**

**Communities Update:**

*Laurie explained the methodology. There were two points: Income connection and population. For the economic selection we took the HUD median income district which includes Framingham. For population we decided upon populations approximately 40,000-100,000. We devised this simple methodology instead of hand selecting communities. The two outside communities were thrown in outside of the methodology to include hubs outside our zone.*

*The communities were reconsidered and approved with the elimination of Lawrence and Brockton*

**Real Estate Survey Update**

**Motion** to take off the table

*Vote: 7 in favor 3 opposed 0 abstain*

*Nick spoke to the survey. He put a great deal of thought into the arguments presented by Mr. Palmer regarding the issues of anonymity. He is conflicted because he agrees with the need to know the sources of answers, but an anonymous survey allows people to speak their point of view. Of course the survey has to be asked of everybody. Every realtor. So we need more time to figure out if there is a way to compromise. Nick could not support some of the other criticisms, such as the questions were out of bounds. Mr. Palmer's thoughts should be discussed in the agenda item regarding methods for data collection. This issue has to be addressed.*

*Nick moves that the survey be tabled once again.*

*Bob said he has a lot of research background and experience with surveys and he would like to share some ideas if we decide to consider the survey. The anonymity piece in general does not have an impact on how people respond to a survey. Bob asked how many realtors we had. Cynthia said about 300. Bob said there are a couple of ways to do it. One is to ask everybody and get very viable data. The other possibility is to alphabetize the list and pick every third entry and you will get extremely valuable data.*

*Nick said that the work group is willing to do the work to ask everybody. But the group also wants to consider the financial repercussions and the implication that the realtors might not speak their minds.*

*Dawn said that her objection to the study is based on the Action Plan. The title is tangible costs associated with social service agencies to Framingham. The important part is tangible costs. That is what we were trying to measure. One of the resources used was real estate agents. But this survey is so far beyond the bounds of measuring tangible costs: it doesn't even remotely try to measure tangible costs. There is no where in the Study outline that we should get the feelings, or perceptions or biases of real estate agents. I don't think you need to waste any more time. If everybody puts their name on it this is beyond the bounds of what we were going to do. Real estate agents as a resource meant to Dawn, access to MLS data, trends in cost, what property is assessed for, what*

they are asked for, what they refuse. This needs to be thrown out. Tabling to discuss at a later time is a waste of time, just throw it out.

Laurie added that a piece is missing from the reasons for the survey. In order to determine the impact on property values by social services, one needs to subtract out as many other known impacts as one can. Basically we were trying to determine how the opinions of the realtors affect the values of the properties that they sell. Laurie personally voted not to take it off the table because she has similar concerns with using professional opinions and would like to have the property group continue with the data analysis and see if there is a hole in the information that might be filled by the information obtainable through the survey. If so we could bring this back.

Steve Orr wanted to find out what the people who sell real estate know about why the property values in Framingham seem lower than other communities. If we get answers from all realtors it is good statistical data.

Jim thought that for every seller is a buyer and that Steve's argument makes no sense.

**Motion to table**

**Vote 8 in favor 0 against 2 abstain**

**Report 6 from the Draft Minutes of November 8, 2005**

Laurie discussed the corrections to the list of communities. She reviewed the email she sent out which listed all the communities in the HUD district and their 2000 population, and the changes that need to be made to the list. She passed around another copy of the original HUD list of communities and suggested the group continue to double check the lists.

**Corrected Communities:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>Population 2000 census</b>	<b>Median Household Income 2000 Census</b>
Beverly	39,862	\$53,984
Salem	40,407	\$44,033
Arlington	42,389	\$63,344
Revere	47,283	\$37,067
Peabody	48,129	\$54,829
Plymouth	51,701	\$54,677
Weymouth	53,988	\$51,665
Medford	55,765	\$52,476
Taunton	55,976	\$42,932
Malden	56,340	\$45,654
Brookline	57,107	\$66,711
Waltham	59,226	\$54,010
Framingham	66,910	\$54,288
Somerville	77,478	\$46,315
Newton	83,829	\$86,052
Quincy	88,025	\$47,121
Lynn	89,050	\$37,364
Cambridge	101,355	\$47,979

*Note:*

*The list of Social Services in Framingham has been accepted and the property and income group will begin studying property values in areas neighboring and adjacent to a selection of these. The group will map out these properties. More details will be reported at the upcoming meeting.*

Mr. Sanchez reported that the group had a large map of Framingham with the locations of the social service addresses mapped out but he regrettably did not bring it.

He wanted to discuss the type of data sources we use. He wanted to use data that was provided by the federal or state governments or “official” data or has a seal of approval and he wanted to make a motion.

This would include responses from the social services, the town departments, school, police, assessors, sales price of homes, or bodies officially recognized.

**Nick moved that in terms of direction we try to gather data that is provided by official parties such as government, plus data provided by social service agencies.**

Laurie seconded.

The discussion of using realtor information concluded that only real data would be used, not opinions.

Peter Adams from the audience asked why academic studies were being excluded.

Mr. Sanchez said that the group has had some disagreement about what academic studies would be acceptable and that the compromise would be to exclude all studies and just consider data.

Laurie asked if the Warren group would fit into this ?

Nick said his understanding is it would because they use official data from sales or state sources.

Bob had the profile from the Warren group and the data was sourced and came from government sources and would by and large qualify.

**Nick moved that in terms of direction we try to gather data that is provided by official parties such as government, plus data provided by social service agencies.**

**Vote 10 in favor 0 opposed 1 abstain passed**

Laurie summarized the report she compiled to illustrate that the P&I group did come to the committee from the very beginning with their understanding of the issues and the group supported their efforts.

She also said that they had a report planned that included a “first draft” map of about half the social service agencies in Framingham and Nick had some calculations to present but they would do it next time.

## **Education**

The first draft of the school questionnaire was discussed; changes and additional suggestions were noted for example: special education, referrals for outplacement, special programs, sports fees, school and bus fees, adult education, costs, reimbursements for the State, “source” community funding.

It was agreed that the list of addresses would be included; foster children are not being considered among the corrections.

A revised draft will be brought back to the committee at the next meeting.

Questions for Framingham Public Schools  
PILOT Schools Committee  
11/14/05

- 1 How many, if any, students who live in a group home, shelter or other social service agency located in Framingham go to school in any of the Framingham Public Schools?
- 2 How many, if any, students who live in a group home, shelter or other social service agency located outside of Framingham go to school in any of the Framingham Public Schools?
- 3 How many, if any, students who live in a group home, shelter or other social service agency located in Framingham go to school in another school district?
- 4 How many, if any, students who live in a group home, shelter or other social service agency in Framingham do not go to school?
- 5 Question by question, how many of the students mentioned in Questions 1-4 live in properties that are taxed?
- 6 Question by question, how many of the students mentioned in Questions 1-4 live in properties that are tax exempt?
- 7 Question by question, how many of the students mentioned in Questions 1-4 use special education classes/programs?
  - a. If any, would these special education classes/programs exist if said students were not involved in the programs?
- 8 How many, if any, students are brought to the Framingham Public Schools from other municipalities because of social service programs for them or for their families?
- 9 By your definition, when does a Framingham student become a Framingham resident?

### **Legal Group**

They are waiting for Chris Petrini's report which is expected soon.

There was a short discussion about questions to Chris Petrini; information regarding PILOT program research and a meeting with the BOS and Mr. Petrini.

## Background

The group is focusing on two issues:

1. Assemble a list of all programs in Framingham, separate from the addresses. The agencies have been divided among the group.
2. Start researching the contiguous communities' social service agencies and compile a list for each one similar to the list for Framingham. The resources will be the assessor, the internet, the agencies and other public information. We have divided up the towns

Laurie previously emailed an updated set of addresses to be considered for the living list, information on the Salvation Army and a detailed description of the SIC codes: [http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic\\_manual.display?id=70&tab=group](http://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.display?id=70&tab=group)

The Salvation Army has about 11% government funding and thus hiring for the social service programs must be based on non secular reasons. So those delivering services do not do it for religious beliefs. Major Triston confirmed this.

Laurie recommended including the SA Corp Community Center under the first SIC code 8322 for community center.

There was discussion about social service groups using church facilities and some concerns remained about how to categorize such things.

One scenario of church involvement was described as independent groups using Churches for location but the actual agency and program is independent of the Church. The other scenario that seems to be the case of the SA is that on the one hand they are a Church but on the other hand they are running these social service programs, and this is a problem.

Head start presents similar dilemmas; what is that impact? It is positive to the town.

Some religious organizations receive town money from federal grants. Is there impact to the town from this?

We suggested that we include the cases that do not fit easily in the report with explanations regarding their consideration.

Catholic Charities and Jewish Family Services are considered a social service. Doesn't the SA has 3 arms: a religious, community corps and the thrift store? Wouldn't the community service center be similar to Catholic Charities?

Would it make sense to ask Churches directly if they host or run social service programs?

Does the community center section of the SA, that is used to provide social services, does not conflict with what we are doing?

Is it legal to ask the questions we are asking?

Didn't TM insist that we should not be looking at churches and religious organizations?

The SA may have different arms but it is housed in one building: how can we justify including the SA and not other religious organizations involved in social service work?

There is a religious component to the SA. It falls under religious and TM instructed us not to include religious organizations.

Everyone in town knows the SA delivers social services and will expect to see them on our list.

When the BoS asked social service organizations to come meet with them, they included the SA.

How does Jewish Family Services fit in?

They are a separate organization not associated with a religious organization. They provide social services and happen to have the name Jewish.

It is non-sectarian.

Government funding makes it complicated: the funds go towards social services and thus the providers are not based on religion and are non-sectarian.

Dawn moved that based on the information that Laurie provided that demonstrates clearly that the SA is a religious organization that it is exempt as TM defined.

Jim second

Cynthia asked to table this motion so we can have more time to consider.

Dawn withdrew the motion.

**Laurie moved that the PILOT committee prepare a report to deliver to town meeting on 12/7/05 including all the factual information approved by 12/6/05, including the status of our legal report by town counsel and a summary of the survey and questionnaires that have been approved and sent out.**

Second

The group discussed the form that this report might be: it could be a document for the back table. Would this include the list of communities and data, details about the topics.

Jim spoke against the motion. He thought special town meetings are not the appropriate time to give a special report and we shouldn't report each time.

Bob thought that the motion to create us indicated TM wanted us to report at all meetings and that it was better to err on the side of more reports.

Bob proposed that he would put together a draft update from this committee to report to town meeting which can be voted on at the next meeting.

**Vote: 9 in favor 1 opposed 0 abstain passed**

Calendar issues were discussed.

11/29, 12/6, 12/13, have been scheduled

An extra meeting on 12/15 could be considered if needed. Let's schedule.

**Motion to adjourn**

**Vote: 9 in favor 1 opposed 0 abstain**