

**August 31, 2026, 6pm
Deficit Reduction Committee Meeting
Beverly Public Library**

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Committee Members Present: Kathleen, John, Kaarin, Lydia, Madeline, Christine
Public attendee: State Rep Hannah Bowen

Introduction from Kathleen regarding agenda for tonight: additional new ideas, reports on research, new action items and assignments, framework for guest speakers and schedule community outreach meetings. Next meeting Sept. 14th at city hall at 6pm. Invited Bryant Ayles to answer questions. Between now and that meeting please send questions to me to give to Bryant. We are far enough along to have the internal expert weigh in. Agendas going forward will include any notes sent to me. On to reports!

Lydia: met with Bruce and Jon in Parks to talk about camps and a little about parking. 2 camps: drop off camps and day camps: 750 register for drop off but 280 average daily. Monetizing drop off camps would change it to day camp, which creates staffing obstacles (19 or older) and board of health and lack of bathrooms. Safe place to go in case of weather. Not sure the margin would support the changes. Parks feels the free camps is important for the community.

Kaarin: what about donation? Kathleen: daily drop off fee?

Lydia: looked at Danvers, fee to register. Online registration?

Kathleen: Online registration would be great even for the waiver, most parents would prefer that and likely pay a registration fee as well.

Lydia: Day camp monetized camps possible with bathrooms are: Lynch, O'Bear and Dane Street Currently only Lynch, could add monetized camps to O'Bear and Dane street. Lynch monetization of camps brings in 350,000-400,000/year. 32-42 kids per camp. Always a wait list. There is demand and people will pay. Obstacles to more day camps is really staffing. New camp called endless summer 30 kids in 2025, this year 50 kids and waiting list. For summer childcare. Opportunity to expand that. Time period where only Beverly available then it opens up to surrounding communities.

Camp Paradise - great space, requirements around conservation, no lights allowed. So challenging for programming. Other themed camps, doesn't usually create more revenue because they bring in outside vendors. Usually use in-house talent for programming and then it's more lucrative. Used to be CIT fee, costs \$7,000 to do the CIT program and used to be the fee and it could offset it. We could consider charging more for existing day camps. They increase every year, but try to stay competitive with other local day camps. Kathleen: we have best product of camps with a waitlist so we should be able to charge more.

Committee agrees to explore: raising day camp rates, expanding day camps to O'Bear & Dane street, online waiver and registration fee at beginning of the summer for drop off camp.

O'Bear parking is supposed to be residents only. Lynch Park stick for that as well.

Kathleen: still trying to see what is best for parking at Dane Street too, and wanting to expand the paid parking at all beach parks. Gloucester has app with gate for their beaches sticker.

Survey of Lynn residents and they said Dane Street is their favorite beach because of train to walk - so other communities do use our beaches.

Lydia: talked about parking for evening concerts at Lynch, keeping paid gate staffed extra hour for concert nights. Also, Bev Rec is enterprise fund dependent. Essential to how the parks dept. Functions. John: brings up Veterans, Senior Center don't have that protection of the umbrella, and we need to look at what we would be using programming wise everywhere as nice to haves. Concerts at Lynch wouldn't happen without enterprise fund, but these are nice to haves.

Carriage house would need significant work to be a revenue generator for the city. And there are limitations even with improvements due to location and historic structure. Current rental rates: mid-May to mid-Oct. Rose garden: \$250 photos, \$100 for rehearsals \$1,100 for wedding reception (lower for residents) carriage house: \$5,000/wedding for residents, \$7,000 non-resident. 130 people allowed including vendors and staff. Only beer and wine allowed. Lots of limitations. Down the road investment.

John: municipal electric - met with Marblehead Municipal Light Board. By law munis have the right to buy out grid from National Grid. The City has the right to go through 3rd party to get valuation. The city could bond for buying out or MMWEC. Lots of different resources to use to do a feasibility study. Staffing is cost, but have the option to make a donation back into the city. It's fully funded within the structure, no direct impact with general fund. Should determine community interest, especially if anyone with interest is willing to serve on the board. Wakefield is interesting because only 4 have both gas & electric. MA Light Commissioner Association has monthly meetings, lots of support.
National Grid average bill: \$264
Marblehead: \$148, Peabody is \$183, Reading \$149

Kathleen brought up losing MassSave - John says there is a comparable program through MMWEC. While rates will go down, it wouldn't be as low as Peabody, Danvers right away as it takes time for the utility to do down. LOTS of mutual aid from a municipal network when outages or emergencies. Really good retention rates and job training at the municipal utility level.

Christine: CHARM update - reached out to Julia Long, Chief of Staff and Sustainability. Benchmarking & spreadsheet in the works.

Kathleen: Ideas spreadsheet and a public google drive. Trying to include attachments with agendas. Would love website like Dedham, not a ton of capacity to build one. Tried working on the spreadsheet, happy for Christine to take over spreadsheet.

Madeline: PILOTS/SILOTS meeting with Mark Dirksen, has spreadsheet of tax-exempt. Lahey Burlington does make an annual contribution to the city - so we do have a hospital example. 81 tax-exempt properties. SILOTS would be really helpful though too, especially Landmark if we could get 5 kids places, it's \$250,000, or professional development for the district, or tuition rates for graduate credits. College students staying through summer could work with parks department. New partnership opportunities with Endicott.

Kathleen - John and I are working at the council level to request the recommissioning of the PILOT committee. Last had one in 2008, unsure of why it wasn't active anymore.

Kaarin - planning to meet with Rep. Bowen too re state aid (Hannah in the room!). State Aid and local funding discussion on 09/29 at Farms branch.

Discussion of slideshow/roadshow concept for the public, from the lens of the citizens, not from a policy maker perspective. Lots of ideas within larger "ideas" so presentation broken down into as many individual items as possible to be more specific with the actions we could recommend.

Worked on scheduling the first community outreach meeting - first one October 20th. First one on Bev Cam, just presentation. After that road show includes community questions as well as answering questions via different mediums, BevCam, FB videos, etc. Discussed hoping to have a website where some of the questions and answers could live for the public.

Discussed bussing options and transportation fees. Wondering if we are at capacity and if we could expand in any ways. School committee bringing it up with transportation. Field monetization: communication between the schools and parks & Rec has been challenging, and may be missed opportunities with miscommunication. Need a clearer system to create efficiencies.

We will talk about parking at next meeting, Mark was unable to come and planning to work on it this week. Will also have regional dispatch and harbormaster updates at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:21