

MEMORANDUM

To: Representative Town Meeting
From: RTM Finance, Education and Public Protection Committees
Date: February 21, 2013
Re: Appropriation Request of \$100,000 to Fund a Professional Security Audit to Enhance Security in the Westport Public Schools

Three RTM Committees (Finance, Education and Public Protection) met jointly on January 30th to review the Board of Education's ("BOE") request of \$100,000 for a security audit. Presenting for the BOE were Elaine Whitney, Chair and Elliott Landon, Superintendent of Schools. The BOE had originally requested \$50,000 for a security audit which was approved by the Board of Finance ("BOF") at their January 2nd meeting. However, before the RTM Committees considered this request, the BOE realized that \$50,000 was not enough and that they were going back to the BOF on February 6th for an additional \$50,000. While the presentation went forward, the Committees knew that this item would be withdrawn from the RTM's February meeting and only rescheduled if the BOF approved the additional \$50,000 since the BOE stated that the audit could not be conducted without the full amount. The Committees decided beforehand not to vote after the presentation as a vote may unduly influence the BOF before their consideration.

The BOE chose Kroll for the security audit because of their outstanding reputation and track record. The BOE avoided getting competitive bids because they believed that their policy excludes services from the bidding process. The proposed security assessment will look at all eight schools as well as the computer learning center on Riverside Avenue. There was a previous discussion that the audit would include town hall and the library, but this will require a separate funding request. The last security audit by the BOE was done in 2007, but the scope was much less comprehensive than what is proposed now. The BOE expects Kroll to review policies and procedures and security measures currently in place and give their assessment of where there are weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Kroll will offer specific recommendations to improve security and to prioritize them in three categories -- high (those that should be instituted immediately), medium and low. Of course, the cost to implement any recommendation will be part of any consideration.

With three committees involved, there were many diverse comments/concerns such as the high cost of the audit, lack of competitive bidding, whether Kroll had the right expertise for our particular demographics, implementing some security improvements immediately without waiting for the results of an audit, making sure that town personnel (police and fire) are part of the process and whether the BOE or the Town was the ultimate client.

As noted above, no votes were taken by any of the committees.

continued

Respectfully submitted,

RTM Finance Committee

Jeff Wieser, chair (absent)
Allen Bomes, acting chair and reporter
Lee Arthurs
Arthur Ashman
Dick Lowenstein
John McCarthy
Gilbert Nathan (absent)
Lois Schine
Cathy Talmadge

RTM Public Protection Committee

Sean Timmins, chair (absent)
Dick Lowenstein, acting chair
Hope Feller (absent)
Jimmy Izzo
Melissa Kane
Louis Mall
Stephen Rubin
Velma Heller

RTM Education Committee

Velma Heller, chair
Eileen Flug
Paul Lebowitz
Louis Mall
Jack Klinge
William Meyer
Paul Rossi
Stephen Rubin
Paul Lebowitz