

ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES FOR JANUARY 28, 2008

In attendance, Bill Johnson, Leo Janssens, Dottie Munroe, Maggie Whitney, Marie Zbikowski, Frank Lombardo and Jamie Piedrafite. Also in attendance Board of Selectmen member Chris Gagnon, Town Administrator Paul Boushell and DPW Director Don Ouellette.

Meeting commenced at 7:05 p.m.

RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS

Town Hall renovations project.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and received answers to a number of questions the Advisory Board had regarding the requests of funds of five items from the Reserve Fund which totaled \$80,000. The requests included the following; \$30,000 for fire and water services on the Town Hall renovations, \$6500 for a tub grinder at the land fill, \$17,000 for a steel plate replacement on Ashby Road, \$20,000 for repairs on Westminster Street bridge, and \$12,000 for paving at Pages' Beach.

Don Ouellette gave each member of the Advisory Board a copy of a summarized break down of all receipts for Town Hall fire and water line services project which was done by the Ashburnham DPW. Don Ouellette fully explained the report which included the cost of materials, and did not include DPW labor costs, but did include police work. A question, "was the money available in the contract to do this work"? The answer was "yes" the cost was in the contract, but the town took it back out because the Town could do the work a lot cheaper than the contractor. Paul Boushelle said the town is keeping a running tally on the Town Hall renovations when we get to the end of the contract we will see a spreadsheet and it will show what we pulled out and what was left for the contractor to keep. Come Spring is to look at the pavement work, and we know the DPW can do it cheaper, and the contractor may be willing to say he just wants out, and if the town wants to paved it he (the contractor) he will give us a credit. This project is being done on a 5% contingency fee, virtually unheard of in public construction.

Tub Grinder at the Land Fill

The \$6500 for this was never in the budget. It was necessary to get a permit from the State to construct a recycling center, as this tub grinder creates chips to spread to spread about to make a lawn and the Town was not in compliance. There is no funding set aside for this and needs to be addressed, perhaps go to the Town Meeting to see if we can get the \$6500. To add to the dilemma of the land fill there is a bill for \$3200 from Santec to complete the permit process by the end of February, and we do not have the money.

Ashby Road and Westminster Street Bridge

Steel plate on Ashby Road for \$17,000 and \$20,000 for repairs on Westminster Street Bridge the Advisory Board had no issues.

Paving on Page's Beach for \$12,000

Money made available from the Montachusett Regional Planning. \$17,000 going to be release to the Town this Fall, the Town went ahead and paved the road for \$12,000. We

should have received the \$17,000 by now. The DPW needs the Advisory Board to approve to transfer the money because the DPW paid for it out of the budget and any money that comes in must go through the budget.

Differential in the Total of the Transfer Requests

As the total of the requests totaled \$85,500 and the request only totaled \$80,000 where do we cut the \$5500? We took the \$5500 for the Town Hall renovations of \$30,000 which makes the transfer for the Town Hall work \$24,500

Leo moved the transfer of \$80,000 to cover the Reserve Fund transfers, and second by Marie. Motion passed of 6 in favor and 1 abstention.

EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT

Bill questioned exempt debts and non-exempt debts, and as to when they expire?

Paul said within two weeks he will give us a spread sheets.

We have no budget as yet and will get one in 3 weeks, as they do not have all costs info.

COA NEW VAN

We were allowed to discuss this item.

DPW HYDRAULIC STUDY

The DPW did a hydraulic study of our town water system, which specified what needed replacement and/or repair in the Town's hydraulic system. This includes, replace water tank on High Street, replacement of water pipes, repair and paint inside of tank on the Gardner road. Still looking for a way to finance these projects, would like to re-apply for a grant/loan, all is contingent on the voters to approved borrowing the money.

CAPITAL PLANS

Long discussion on Capital plans concerning the numbers and process of where we are.

Leo reported we have a capital plan from the DPW. We need one from the Library.

Leo to speak with Chief Zbikowski next week about the operating budget and the capital plan. Board of Selectmen to zero in on "capital plans" and will give several talks to explain them and give the public an opportunity to ask questions. We need to get this information on paper. Paul to meet with department on January 29, 2008 on capital plans.

DPW ROAD PLANS

Long discussion with Don on the problems with our Town roads and the urgency to repair them. If the Town does not get this process of dealing with our road repair underway, which will cost "between" 7 to 8 ½ million dollars, as the cost will increase substantially each year.

QUESTION FOR PAUL BOUSHELL

The Advisory Board would like the separate heating costs for the Town Hall and VMS, broken down by the number of gallons of heating oil and the cost for electricity for the past four years. Next years expenses are a concern on VMS, and how much the cost for

utilities will be next year? Also the utility expense for the Public Safety Building next year? We would like a simple spreadsheet on these expenses.

What is our Bond rating? Paul said he called Southwest and we are so far ahead of the curve, do not worry about it.

The \$92,000 from the school will go into the budget.

Excise tax for the school buses cannot be realized until after the first of the calendar year, and it will be about \$30,000. Inventory will be taken on the buses.

Piano Museum. Ask Paul about this in two weeks. The Town is receiving \$3500 per year in rent and we have about \$2000 in lawyer's fees!

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

DOROTHY J. MUNROE, Secretary