

## **MARCH 10, 2008 ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

**In attendance, Bill Johnson, Maggie Whitney, Dottie Munroe, Leo Janssens, Frank Lombardo, and Jamie Piedrafite. Also present Board of Selectmen members, Mark Carlisle, Jon Dennehy, and Chris Gagnon, Town Administrator Paul Boushell, Treasurer Anne Cervantes, Tax Collector Carla Clifford, and from the Town Assessors office, Dick Coswell, Donna Burton, and Paul Chute.**

**The primary reason for this meeting was to hear from the financial departments of the Town**

### **TAX COLLECTOR**

**Carla Clifford reported this office is pretty much on target for the projected total for fiscal '09. She went over each account number. Old tax money is doing well, have collected \$82,000 of the principle and \$25,000 in interest. The revenue from the collection of old taxes goes into the general fund. There are costs involved in collecting these old taxes such as, attorney fees, land court fees, advertising, etc. Suggested the possibility of this money be put into the Stabilization Fund, as this is not an on going source of revenue; however it is needed for the general fund at this time. The AB would like to receive a breakdown and supported documents on these accounts. Jonathan Dennehy called to our attention a communication he received from Senator Brewer regarding a "local aid resolution" informing us the Massachusetts House and Senate have agreed to**

**increase state aid to cities and town in the Fiscal Year FY '09 by \$223, and increase of 4.435 OF FY '08.**

### **TREASURER**

**Anne Cervantes reported the Salaries and Wages are level funded for FY '09. Anne went over thoroughly the figures in each account in her department. She will send each member of the AB a copy of, “dates of final payment on long term debt”, “properties in land court”, and “estimated issuance cost for the Town Hall and Public Safety Building permanent debt”.**

**Anne also went over the Debt Service accounts. As far as the Town’s bond rating, have not begun working on this, will be working on this shortly.**

### **ASSESSORS**

**Dick Coswell reported for the Assessors Office, and said we are in the 9th year of a 10 year cycle inspecting mandate for all property buildings in the Town. Started in 1998, and they to need finish up in a hurry. Will cost around \$30,000. Also, need a new survey, last survey of the town was done in 1970. Will need a new set of maps, very expensive probably around \$5000, and every year need to be updated. They are two years behind in this area. The annual Warrant Article for \$15,000, which is an appropriation at each Annual Town Meeting for a tri-annual expense for re-evaluation?**

### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

**Fiscal ‘09 budget is 3% over last year budget. Not in final form at this at this point. Paul reported he meets with department heads regularly. Health and pensions**

**are uncontrollable. Possible raises are collective bargaining issues with the union contracts.**

**What is before us at this time is a balanced budget.**

**Mark said police officers and fire fighters are top priorities in the event of extra/more revenue.**

**Chris reported on the collection of ambulance service fees. This money, when collected goes in the general fund. Chris suggested perhaps in future these collections should be a revolving account, we need to know how to handle the ambulance revenue and expenditures to get a clear picture of how much ambulance service costs and how to fund it in the future.**

**Paul reporting no layoffs, no cutting of Town Hall hours. On health insurance, the 2 1/2 % barely covers health insurance.**

**Chris brought up that the Focus Group has a warrant Article to purchase land for the Highway Dept.**

**Also discussed at this meeting the future use of VMS, have not seen the results of the \$20,000 study of this building which was done last year. Also, there is money being raised for the Bresnahan fund by a local citizens group to renovate/rebuild the scout house on River Street. Many questions on these projects. Bill suggested that these types of things should come back and be reported to the Advisory Board and the Planning Board with a 5 to 10 year projection, instead of having these special interest groups fighting for their particular cause to the benefit Town. We need to have someplace where all this information comes together.**

## **INFORMATIONAL PACKET FOR VOTERS**

**How are going to get informational packet to the voters? Want it printed on both sides of the paper to save money and paper. Have until the end of March or first week in April to get Sylvia. This project is one of the Advisory Boards goals, and big step forward for the AB and the Town.**

**Question: How many cell phones does the Town have? Is it a package deal? Need information on this.**

**Bill to work on the two warrant articles on the citizens petitions.**

**Meeting adjourned at 10 p.m.**

**Respectfully submitted  
Dorothy J. Munroe**