



OFFICE OF THE  
Advisory Board  
TOWN HALL  
511 MAIN STREET  
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313  
(978) 649-4514 x222 FAX (978) 649-4371  
finance@dunstable-ma.gov

### February 13, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Attending: Ron Mikol, Harold Simmons, Christine Muir, Dan St Jean  
Absent: Joe Dean, Dana Metzler

Meeting opened at 7:30 p.m.

#### Library Budget

Library Director Mary Beth Pallis presented the library's budget request for FY2013. Office supply expenses are higher than last year's based on actual spending amounts. Otherwise, the budget is fairly flat.

Ron suggested that Mary Beth add about \$7500 to her request to cover two additional items: \$6000 for changing the HVAC control system, and \$1500 for removing mold from the exterior of the building.

Last year, the library worked on obtaining a grant for a new control system but that grant account hasn't been funded by the state for two years now. Harold asked if there was any guarantee that the new system would work correctly. Ron said yes because the company (Johnson Controls) would be held responsible for the system's performance by contract. Dan asked how soon the new contract could be put in place, and Ron said it can be done quickly because there is an existing contract, written last year, that just needs updating to reflect the new timing. Dan raised the question of choosing between a one-time expense of something like \$60,000 for a completely new system versus the ongoing \$6000 contract with renewals every three years. It is possible that after one three-year contract, the system will work correctly and not require a renewed contract.

#### Town Clerk's Budget

Town Clerk Carol Skerrett presented her budget request for FY2013. She began by saying that she thinks her salary is comparable to those of other Town Clerks in the area, but what is not equal is the lack of an assistant. Many towns have an assistant who works up to 15 hours a week and can provide services when the Town Clerk is unavailable (ie vacation, illness, etc). Carol spoke to the new Town Accountant about the possibility of sharing an assistant. She noted that the hours when she needs extra hands are quite variable depending on the time of year.

Ron asked if Carol included a budget item for an assistant and she said no. The board recommended that Carol estimate the average number of weekly hours an assistant would work, multiply that by an average hourly wage (\$18 was suggested), and put that amount in her budget request. The only way the Advisory Board can make a recommendation is if there are numbers in the budget to consider.

#### Treasurer's Budget

Town Treasurer Bonnie Ricardelli presented her budget request for FY2013. It is essentially level-funded. Harold asked if Bonnie was continuing to print tax bills just twice a year instead of quarterly.

Bonnie said that she has gone back to printing the bills quarterly because it was requested. Soon, residents will be able to sign up for electronic bills and she expects to see a reduction in the number of bills she actually prints and mails.

Harold asked about paying off the fire truck loan early. Bonnie said that if that debt was paid early, the long term debt number in our budget would go down from \$299,300 to \$246,737. The interest would remain the same, at \$66,280.53. The board recommended not paying this off early, and suggested changing the payment from \$111,510 (the total amount still due) to \$60,000 instead.

Bonnie also noted that another full-time employee may sign up for the family health care plan, which we did budget for last year. The board recommended researching the costs of other towns' health care plans because this could become a big expense for the town, and could eat at other pieces of our budget.

Bonnie noted that there is no medical insurance offered for retirees right now. She also recalled that MPPA (Mass. Municipal Personnel Association) recently conducted a survey, and she would find out whether she can access the health care expenses via that survey.

#### Transfers

There were no transfers to consider tonight.

#### Minutes

The board unanimously approved the minutes from January 3, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Harold K. Spring  
Paul J. Mitchell  
Samuel Jean  
Christine Nunez