



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

April 9-10-12, 2012 Meeting Minutes

April 9 meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

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

Prior Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from March 5, 12, and 20 were unanimously approved.

Transfer Requests

There were no transfer requests to consider tonight.

GDRSD Stabilization Fund

The Groton Finance Committee voted to support the article for establishing a stabilization account for the school district. Two members abstained, and Ron asked if we could find out why. He clarified that his concern is with how the account is funded in future years; he wants control of funding to be clearly spelled out as the towns' responsibilities, not the state or the school committee. To this end, Ron would like to get more definition and agreement spelled out, as well as buy-in from the DOR. Dan concurred, saying that we can't untangle whatever we get into with this. He also questioned whether the district agreement would need to be modified.

Police Vehicular Supplies

The board discussed the line item budget for police vehicular supplies, in particular the rotation schedule for bringing in new cruisers. Ron suggested that the board consider replacing only one car this year, and asking the chief to use his unmarked car for another year. The Board of Selectmen later clarified that the chief is allowed to use his car for personal travel, because he needs to have reliable transportation back to town if his presence is required.

Shortfalls in Police Fuel, Fire Wages, Fire Chief Salary

Dana suggested that the board fund these anticipated shortfalls in one of two ways: fund all from the Reserve Account now and replace the funds with one article at special town meeting, or fund each with separate articles at special town meeting before the annual. The board generally agreed that they prefer having just one article at special town meeting.

Police Overtime vs Additional Officer

Dana asked the chief if he would like another officer, and the answer was yes if the addition is sustainable. Ron asked what the loaded number is for a new officer; it's about \$52,000 the first year, and closer to \$70,000 after that. Dan reviewed previous overtime budgets – for example, the 2006 overtime budget was \$107,000 - and asked what would be a reasonable amount for that number to grow each year.

Library budget

We confirmed that the library budget does not include the money for a three-year contract with Johnson Controls to improve the HVAC system.

Tree Warden

We asked whether the increase in tree warden expense should be covered by an article, but decided against it.

At 9:30 p.m., we moved for a continuation to Tuesday night.

April 10 meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

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

The board scrubbed the spreadsheet adjusting heading, notes and input to the line item, overview sheet and article sheet. The board voted to reduce the Town subsidy to the Transfer Station by \$10,000.00 and move the amount to the Stabilization article.

The board read through all the warrant articles for the special town meeting and then the Annual town meeting.

The board will meet with the selectmen and police chief on Thursday night at 7:00, to discuss the proposed overtime amount for 2013.

At 8:10 p.m., the board moved to adjourn for tonight and continue the meeting on Thursday, April 12.

Thursday, April 12
Meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

Attending: Dana, Harold, Christine, Selectman Alterisio, Police Chief Downes

The chief provided additional insight into the scheduling situation with the officers currently on the force. The Advisory Board members and the Selectman agreed that the town gets more for its money by hiring an additional officer rather than funding the overtime account; instead of putting \$57,000 into the overtime budget, we could find \$70,000 to hire another officer and get more coverage.

Dana said he would post the public hearing for 8:00 p.m. on Monday, April 23, allowing the board to meet at 7:00 p.m. to discuss funding the additional officer.

We adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

