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Advisory Board  
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March 24, 2014

Present: Ron Mikol, Kevin Walsh, Harold Simmons, Joe Dean, Dana Metzler, Christine Muir

The meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

#### Highway

We need to add funding for an additional 6.5 hours in the Highway Salaries & Wages line item, to fully fund a full-time (40-hour) employee to replace the one who recently resigned. The former employee worked 33.5 hours for Highway and 6.5 for Water; the funding for each block of hours came from the respective department. Since the former employee will retain his hours with the Water Department, the Highway Dept will have to provide for the difference in the new employee's salary.

#### GDRSD Audit

Due to the volume of requests coming into the GDRSD business office, Ron asked that all requests for information on the school budget and process go through him. Groton is doing the same; all chairs (FinCom & BOS) are streamlining the process to ease the load.

We reviewed the audit report as provided by Ron. In general, board members were hoping for more specific information, particularly regarding recommendations to avoid the same situation in the future. Kevin noted that one of the three recommendations listed on page 6 of the audit essentially robs regular education to pay for special education. He maintains that the schools have to get special ed costs under control; he said that it costs GDRSD twice the amount of other towns to meet the state targets.

Dana noted that the audit validates what the school committee and administration has been telling us, and there's value in that. He also asked about the process for validating how the money was spent.

Ron will ask Dr. Bent to provide a copy of the spreadsheet defined in the third recommendation on page 6, which is intended to provide understanding of special education students and needs so we can gain some basis for predicting or estimating future costs.

#### FY15 Budget Review

Joe added \$10,011 to Highway Wages to cover 6.5 hours in Water dept. (He got the number by looking at the Water Dept budget.)

BoS would like to offer a 2% increase to police and all municipal employees.

We reduced the Town Administrator salary from \$64,000 to \$52,000, leaving him or her with an hourly rate of approximately \$50. The BoS would prefer to keep this at \$64,000.

We discussed where to place articles funded by free cash, as Dana thinks current positioning skews overall budget position.

Local receipts includes one-time reimbursement from FEMA.

We questioned whether we can factor in the 1% increase allowed but not used in FY14. (We only grew the budget by 1.5%, not the allowed 2.5%, for FY14. So can we add in that 1% for FY15?) Dana will ask Kim.

BoS has new numbers for Police and all Town employees under their purview. We hope to get those numbers by end of week so we can work with realistic figures next week.

Cemetery

Budget is essentially level-funded although some line items have been adjusted. The overall total remains the same.

Electricity Bills

Just before we adjourned, Brian Rich stepped in to ask if someone could review the Glacial electric bills. They are much higher all of a sudden.

We adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

*Robert Mitchell*  
*Ken Walsh*  
*Joseph P. Lee*  
*Harold K. Quinn*  
*Christine Muir*  
*Dana S. [unclear]*