



OFFICE OF THE
Advisory Board
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April 28, 2014

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

At 7:15 p.m., Ron convened the Public Hearing, in which the general public is given its first look at the recommended budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year.

More than a dozen residents and interested parties were in attendance, including town counsel Rich Larkin, GDRSD School Committee representative Jim Frey, Library Director Mary Beth Pallis, Police Chief James Downes, Lt. Dow, Town Clerk Carol Skerrett, Fire Chief Brian Rich, Road Commissioner Mike Martin, Selectmen Ken Leva and Danny Devlin, Town Moderator Bob Nelson, and Town Accountant Kim Fales.

Ron introduced the Advisory Board and reviewed its charter, which is to review and make recommendations on all warrant articles prior to town meeting. The town budget is addressed in one of these articles. We began with that article, taking it out of order.

Dana Metzler provided an overview of the budget, beginning with the identification of our revenue sources and projections. It was noted that Town Meeting will be voting on a contingent budget, meaning that the budget is not balanced if the override fails. In that case, the Advisory Board and Board of Selectmen would need to meet to discuss alternatives.

Joe Dean read through the department totals, salaries and operations as he will do at Town Meeting. The following questions were asked and answered:

- The Selectmen's budget has a significant increase; this is due to the addition of a Town Administrator with a salary of \$50,000.
- Some salaries are 1.9% increase; others are 2%. Joe said this appears because of the rounding up or down in Excel. All employees are getting a 2% increase in the recommended budget.
- Stipends and salaries are treated differently in that stipends do not go up by the COLA increase but salaries do.
- All budget items are open to reconsideration if the override fails at the ballots the week after town meeting. (Some costs are mandated by the state or fixed and cannot be adjusted, but all others are open to change.)
- Article 19 offers the opportunity to show support for the override, without obligation.
- Items paid for by articles, instead of accounted for in the budget line items, are still open to discussion if the override fails and the budget needs to be reconsidered.
- There is not enough discretionary, or unfixed/non-mandated, spending in the budget to cover the amount of the override should it fail at the ballot.

The Public Hearing adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

The Advisory Board continued its meeting, noting that the full \$18,000 subsidy intended for the Transfer Station may not be in the line items and may not be counting towards the Overview tab. We may only have \$11,000 in the line item.

Dana provided the numbers that had been missing for Articles 23 and 24. Article 23 provides for a total budget of \$86,296 for the transfer station, with \$15,696 for salaries and \$70,600 for operations; and revenue of \$67,635 from stickers, \$0 retained earnings, and \$18,661 in town subsidy. Article 24 provides for a total budget of \$49,825 for the water department, earmarked as \$17,086 for salaries, \$24,742 for operations, \$2773 into emergency reserve funds, and \$5224 into the general fund.

We adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Dave Smith
Rell J. Mitchell
Keri Weber
Haudd L. Linares
Christine Murr