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Advisory Board  
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March 23, 2015

Present: Kevin Welsh, Harold Simmons, Ron Mikol, Pam Crocker, Dana Metzler, Christine Muir

Also in attendance: Madonna McKenzie, Selectmen Walter Alterisio and Danny Devlin

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

#### Meeting Minutes

There were no minutes to approve tonight.

#### Transfers

There were no transfers to consider tonight.

#### FY16 Budget Review

Madonna noted that the MS4 stormwater permit process will require an additional \$20,000 this year. Last year's article covered our expenses through this May. The additional expense will be an article on the Town Meeting warrant.

Another article currently listed with financial impact is \$2,000 for TADS (Teen Anxiety and Depression), a Groton-based program that is offered through the schools. The schools had previously been funding this program but asked for assistance from the towns this year. Groton is contributing \$8,000; GDRSD is giving \$2,000; Dunstable has been asked for \$2,000 also. While no one questions the value of the program, several board members did state that it belongs in the school's operating budget, which the towns pay for in their assessments. It may also belong in the Board of Health budget as a separate line item.

We discussed the snow deficit. Dana mentioned that the local receipts anticipated for FY16 is \$20,000 less than FY15 because the previous year included some FEMA reimbursements. The current snow deficit is just under \$79,000 now. New state regulations allow towns to pay deficits over two years, which allows for FEMA reimbursements to arrive before the second half of payment is due. Dana recommended we pay our deficit in full rather than over two years, since the amount is not astronomical.

The Advisory Board asked the Board of Selectmen what their timeline is for sending us their recommendations on the FY16 budget. Walter answered that the current recommendation from Madonna is in good shape and only one department head wants to meet for further discussion.

Walter noted that the BOS wants to carry over the \$30,000 previously raised and appropriated for a Public Safety complex feasibility study. To do that, the Town Accountant needs to be informed to carry this article over to the FY16 budget and not allow the funds to roll over to free cash.

The boards discussed the Transfer Station. The subsidy request is higher for FY16 than it was for FY15 and at some point, we need to decide how feasible it is to keep the station open. Madonna said that if we are seriously considering closing the station, there would be no need to spend the money on roll-offs and a new fence. We should communicate with the Board of Health members to determine the transfer station's future.

Walter noted that the police and school budgets are set.

Madonna said she has noticed two things in the cherry sheet that she hasn't seen before, and those are Chapter 70 money and money for Veterans.

Dana brought up the fact that there are potentially three articles for debt exclusion, and he doubts that all three would pass in the same year. He recommends pushing for the Water Department's infrastructure updates, and waiting to put the Middle School roof and Greater Lowell Technical school renovations up for debt exclusion. Those two costs can be covered by our operating budget for another year.

The Water Department can take out a 40 year loan with a 3.5% interest rate. Dana thinks there would be a betterment fee for users of the water system in addition to a tax increase for all residents. Madonna noted that as more customers come onto the system, their payments can be put towards the loan principle. There is no penalty for paying off the loan early. Kevin asked whether the plan for a new 200,000 gallon storage tank is more than needed, given that the current system contains two 2,500-gallon tanks.

#### New Business

Alan Chaney came in to review the Tully farm APR purchase agreement he presented a couple of weeks ago, when Dana was absent. He reviewed the facts again and asked the board for a vote of support. Ron asked whether the Tullys would continue to pay taxes on the land as they do now, and Alan said yes. Harold voiced his support for spending on the APR purchase rather than see housing developments go in later. Christine asked about the balances across the CPC funds, and they are as follows: \$200,000 in housing; \$150,000 in historical; \$0 in open space/recreation (after this purchase); very limited funds in undesignated account (after this purchase). The accounts usually yield a few hundred thousand dollars annually, so they will replenish fairly quickly. The board voted unanimously to support the purchase.

We adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

*Ken Webb*  
*Dana J. [unclear]*  
*Harold K. [unclear]*  
*Ruby [unclear]*  
*Christine [unclear]*