



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 16, 2015

Present: Kevin Welsh, Harold Simmons, Ron Mikol, Christine Muir
Also in attendance: Madonna McKenzie

The meeting opened at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

The board decided to wait to vote on our last meeting's minutes until Dana and/or Pam arrived.

Transfers

There were no transfers to consider tonight.

GDRSD Stabilization Fund

Business Manager Jared Stanton and Dunstable Representative Steph Cronin sat with the board to review the request to establish a stabilization account for the schools. Jared explained that the purpose is to allow for saving funds in advance of beginning work on capital projects only. The request is simply to establish the account and wait until FY17 to fund it. (Jared estimated that the funding might be around \$100,000.) It would be funded as a line item in the school budget, and funds would be transferred to the account on July 1. The money can only be used for capital projects and not to cover an operating deficit; only DOR can approve withdrawal for non-capital expenses. There is currently \$374,000 in the E&D fund, or 1% of the school budget; the recommendation is to have 3-4% in there. The limit is 5% of the total school budget, which is approximately \$1.5 million. There is no capital plan in place yet, but a sub-committee will begin working on one shortly.

Fire Chief Brian Rich was present and spoke up to note that this is a tough year for the town to support an article like this, since town budgets are looking at potential cuts for the second year in a row.

Ron asked what happens if Groton supports and Dunstable rejects the article, and Jared only responded that the Groton Board of Selectmen support the article. It still must go through the Town Meeting vote.

As part of the discussion, Christine asked that we review the current budget and understand its situation. In the report we saw the other night, the Encumbrances column reflects known costs for the rest of the year. The Remaining Balance column accounts only for those expenses but not for additional spending, including discretionary spending. The Remaining Balance doesn't include the retroactive pay raise for teachers, which is expected to be around \$400,000.

Kevin asked about the Special Education budget, Function Code 9000. It is already \$75,000 over budget. Jared indicated that this doesn't reflect all reimbursements from circuit breaker yet, so will not likely be this far over budget at year end.

FY16 Budget

Ron said he is not in favor of the cuts Dana proposed earlier. He presented a chart of town administrator and similar positions in other towns across the state. Ron suggested that we consider reducing the town administrator salary to \$55,000 to balance the budget.

We adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Handel K. Smith
Paul J. Metro
Dana J. Goff
Christie