



OFFICE OF THE
Advisory Board
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April 14, 2016

Present: Dana Metzler, Harold Simmons, Christine Muir, Pam Crocker, Ron Mikol
Absent: Amie Stevens

Meeting opened at 7:30 p.m., when we achieved a quorum.

Override Information Sheet

Christine shared an information sheet, FAQ-style, that she created to inform the public of the facts surrounding the FY17 budget, deficit and associated override ballot question. There was some discussion around how the sheet can be legally distributed and how the content might be repurposed in a presentation for the public hearing and town meeting. Ron will share with the Board of Selectmen and discuss.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

We continued our review of the articles on the Town Meeting Warrant, beginning with the one numbered 26 (on the document dated April 6, 2016). (Numbers have changed as articles have been added or removed.)

Articles 26, 27 and 28 have been tabled until a full board is present. These articles relate to Conservation Commission recommendations and purchases, as well as use of Timber Funds. Tracey provided copies of a map of Dunstable showing all lands with some kind of restriction, either open space, rural land trust, conservation or agricultural. The total acreage under some restriction or protection is just over 3,100 acres. Alan Chaney was present and informed the board that the town of Dunstable covers 10,500 acres, so the protected lands are approximately one-third of the total town area.

Speaking as an abutter to the Westford Street property under consideration for purchase, and not as a member or representative of the Conservation Commission, Mr. Chaney refuted comments made by Christine. He stated that the adoption of CPA by additional towns, including the city of Boston, would only solidify the state's commitment to matching funds, not reduce it, and make the program stronger. Mr. Chaney negated the recent housing study that showed that communities with room in the schools do not show a loss in revenue with new families moving in, by stating that statistics can be manipulated to serve whatever purpose the author hopes to achieve. He also noted that the town currently has several developments underway.

Ron suggested that the board table consideration of these articles until all board members could be present.

The board voted unanimously to support articles 29 and 30, accepting open space at Alexander Estates and accepting a gift of land off Swallow Lane.

The board voted to support article 31, the transfer of free cash to use to establish the tax rate, and noted that the motion at Town Meeting will be to take no action, as we are moving away from the use of free cash to balance the budget.

The board did not vote on article 32, to amend the process by which town reports are distributed to residents. Dana voiced concern that five days' notice is inadequate, and Christine thought additional locations, with more accessible hours, should be considered.

The board also had questions on articles 33, 34, 35 and 36. Article 33 provides for changes to the delinquent licenses and fees bylaw. Ron wondered what licenses and permits are covered by this bylaw, specifically asking about building, plumbing and electrical. The board also wondered about the background on this article, and who was bringing it forward.

Article 34 establishes the Capital Planning Committee. The term expiration dates need to be corrected to reflect a three-member committee, rather than one with five members. Christine noted that Section 2's definition of a "useful life of at least five (5) years and a cost of at least \$10,000" doesn't conform to the current capital plan as proposed. Section 3 brings the School Committee into the process, which is probably not necessary as they have their own Capital Planning committee.

Article 35 deals with the stormwater management and erosion control bylaw. Christine wondered who enforces the bylaw after the consultant wraps up his/her initial obligation with the town.

Article 36 provides for a Marijuana Dispensary bylaw. Dana expressed concern that the town has so few areas that fit the zoning requirement (B-1, B-2 and B-3 districts).

We adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Handwritten signatures:
David J. [unclear]
Christine [unclear]