



**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 6, 2017

Present: Amie Stevens, Harold Simmons, Christine Muir, Dana Metzler, Pam Crocker, Ron Mikol  
Also present: Tracey Hutton

Christine opened the meeting at 7:08.

- Christine reported about the fiscal school budget. \$90K Savings on school budget. \$20K is Dunstable portion. This leaves us about \$54K out of balance. Christine opened discussion about using free cash to close the gap. Ron asked about CBA. Use \$114K in free cash to balance the budget and articles approved by the board.
- Ron spoke about the personnel board issue.
  - Harold and Pam spoke on the need to continue the personnel board funding.
  - Pam also spoke to use free cash.
  - The Board will have a future meeting to vet the personnel board issue for 2019.
- There was a question from the audience if we were using the Superintendent budget or the School committee budget.. Christine confirmed that we are working with a number that is slightly higher than the Superintendent budget but much lower than the proposed SC budget. It's about \$7K more than the original Superintendent budget.
- Christine is confident we are working with a number we can handle.
- Christine noted that we are looking to vote on a budget tonight and take \$114K out of free cash to balance the budget.
  - Ron is concerned that CBA funds will drain free cash further.
  - Ron asked about the current burn rate. We are at about 70% spend. Tracking to budget.
  - Dana made a motion to accept the balanced budget on the 6th of April using free cash of \$114K. Dana, Pam, Amie, Christine and Harold approved, Ron dissented.
- Discussion moved to the warrant articles identified as debt exclusions. We are discussing articles 13-16.
  - Article 13 is water system engineering. It's approximately \$200,000. Dana moved we support the water engineering article. Ron seconded. All approved. Dana also moved that we make this a first priority out of the debt exclusions at town meeting. Ron seconded, all approved.
    - The average cost to the taxpayer will be \$34 per year over 5 years.
  - Article 14 is for a new fire truck, replaces a truck that is over 30 years old. Dana made a motion to approve, Ron seconded.
    - The capital planning committee voted 2 to 1 in favor of supporting this.

- The average cost to the taxpayer will be \$75 a year for the next 5 years.
  - Dana, Ron, Amie, , Pam and Christine approved, Harold abstained.
- Article 15 is to purchase a new highway plow/sander truck.
  - The average cost to the taxpayer will be \$34 per year for 5 years.
  - The total purchase price is expected to be \$164K.
  - A member of the highway department stated that it would cost \$60K to bring the existing truck to be usable for next winter.
  - Ron asked if this would be a MACK truck or Freight liner, it will most likely be a Freight liner.
  - Ron moved that we support article 15 to fund the acquisition of the truck of \$164K. Dana seconded. all approved but Pam.
- Article 16 is to fund the High St. to Highland engineering cost.
  - This is the engineering cost to look at adding sidewalks.
  - Tracy confirmed that once the engineering is done, the state could pay the full cost of constructing the walkway through a DOT grant.
  - This would have an impact of \$15 per year on the average tax bill for 5 years.
  - Dana asked if this sidewalk project is in the right of ways for all the properties that it will cover. Dana stated that we should let the voters decide this article.
  - Dana moved that we support this article. Ron seconded. All approved.
- Christine motioned that we prioritize the debt exclusions for town meeting.
  - Dana stated that he thinks the water article is the most important.
  - Christine asked Tracey to ensure we have a summary slide of these at the beginning of the town meeting presentation.
- Christine moved to Article 24, the acquisition of Kendall Cranberry Bog Property.
  - Alan Cheney was in attendance to discuss this acquisition.
  - The land is owned by the Henrys. The town already owns much of the land around the bog. The Bog encompasses 11.47 acres. The price is \$200K.
  - Christine stated that the article didn't mention that the short term borrowing in the article is contingent on the state refunding the purchase of \$120K. Tracey said this would be in the motion. \$80K would come from the Timber funds.
  - Dana asked why we would borrow money toward the purchase if the state is going to reimburse. Tracey confirmed this is a timing issue and that the town will be reimbursed.
    - We have done this for other CPC purchases.
  - Christine asked what the balances of the CPC accounts currently are. Tracey could not provide because she did not have access to Vadar all day.
  - Dana mentioned that we received a report 5 years ago that Shaw pond conservation dam needed to be repaired.
    - Alan claims that this was not a big issue and was refuted.
    - Ron claimed that an engineering firm was hired that stated it was disrepair.
    - Alan is confident this is not an issue.
  - This article will not have financial impact on the budget.
  - Ron moves that we move to support article 24, Pam seconded, all approved.
- Christine moved to all other articles

- Article 3 is already factored into the budget. Dana asked why the funds need to go to the summer concert series. Summer concerts has a balance of nearly \$10,000. There are likely more needy candidates to receive the donation, or it could roll into general fund.
  - Ron motioned that we recommend no action on article #3, Dana seconded, all approved.
- Article 4-Pending review to see if there is a need to move any funds.
- Article 5-Take no action.
- Article 6-Take no action
- Article 7-Pending review to see if there are any needs.
- Article 8-Ron moved we support, Amie second, all approved.
- Article 9- Will likely be “take no action” as Tracey does not expect negotiations to end in time.
- Article 10- Operating budget, already voted to support (5:1)
- Article 11- Dana motioned to approved, pam seconded, all approved
- Article 12-No action as we don’t have funds to put into Stabilization
- Article 13-16-voted to support
- Article 17-Engineering revolving fund. Dana motioned we support, Harold seconded, all approved.
- Article 18-Defines the spending on cemetery, council of aging etc. Dana motioned we support, Ron seconded, all approved.
- Article 19-Pending review
- Article 20-Dana motioned to approve, Ron seconded, all approved.
- Article 21-Dana motioned to approved, Pam seconded, all approved.
- Article 22-already moved to support
- Article 23-Pending review; would like to hear more about individual projects
- Article 24-Already moved to support
- Article 25- Dana asked why there wasn’t more detail on this article. Christine countered that the agreement is supposed to be posted to the GDRSD website for review. Tracey said it would be on the Town website as well.
  - Pending review.
- Article 26-Dana has some concerns on this article. He thinks this should remain an elected position so that it is accountable to the residents.
  - The parks and the recreation departments consist of the same board members.
  - Tracey confirmed that if we approve this article it still needs to be approved by the state legislature.
  - Pending review
- Article 27-Dana motioned to support, Pam seconded, all approved.
- Article 28-Pending review (more time to read)
- Article 29-Pending review (would like Town Clerk to explain further)
- Article 30-Dana makes a motion to approve, Pam seconded, all approved.
- Article 31-Dana makes a motion to approve, Pam seconded, all approved.
- Article 32-35-Pending review (more time to read)

We will consider articles 19,23,25,26,28,29, 32-35 next Monday.

Ron asked about the solar article and how the wattage and system sizes are calculated.

He inquired what roof mounted means? Can someone put them on a garage roof? Are there regulations on this.

Dana moved to approved minutes of 3/13, Harold seconded, all approved.

Dana moved to approve minutes of 3/20, Harold seconded, all approved.

Next meeting Monday April 10th.

We adjourned at 9:20 pm.