



**OFFICE OF THE
Advisory Board
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April 5, 2018

Present: Christine Muir, Kieran Meehan, Bob Nelson, Harold Simmons, Leo Tometich, Adria Fischer
Also present: Leah Basbanes, Ron Mikol, Walter Alterisio, Tracey Hutton

In this joint meeting, the Advisory Board and the Board of Selectmen reviewed the FY19 budget. C. Muir advised all that the primary goals of the meeting were to work through various budget scenarios to determine whether or not an override question was needed on the May 15 ballot.

The budget review began by including the full request of the Highway Department, which had asked for nearly \$200,000 to employ two additional laborers and \$500,000 for paving and road repair. This request left the budget in high override territory. Removing the costs of both requests takes us out of override territory (leaving us with a smaller deficit that can be offset with free cash), but the boards wanted to provide something for the Highway Department. It was suggested, and generally seemed favorable to all, that we consider a debt exclusion for about \$2.5 million to cover paving and road repair. The debt exclusion could be bonded over a five-year period. Road Commissioner Paul Dalida was in Town Hall for another meeting, so he stopped in to consider this proposal. He seemed open to the idea and agreed to meet with the Advisory Board the following week to discuss in more detail. One detail to work out is what the operating budget should contain for future upkeep of roads.

The latest budget also provides \$15,000 for a second School Resource Officer, funded in the Police Department's Communications line since that is an account that already gets paid out to Groton for dispatch services. This addition did not impact the rest of the police budget in any way.

The Safe Pathways committee has decided to remove the request for \$70,000 to fund engineering and design for a sidewalk from the center of town to the library (the "High to Highland sidewalk").

The board has several pending Reserve transfer requests, including \$9,000 to remove asbestos from the River Street property; \$2,000 for police lock-up; \$8,000 for a police legal issue; \$6,000 for a Board of Health budgeting error. This totals \$25,000, and the current Reserve balance is just \$26,000. The Advisory Board asked if the asbestos removal can be moved into the warrant article related to River Street, helping to preserve our Reserve balance. None of the requests required approval at tonight's meeting.

The board adjourned at 10 p.m.