

TO: All Elected Officials

CC: Jim Boudreau, Town Administrator

FROM: Norwell Advisory Board  
Ellen H. Allen, Chairman  
Mary Ellen Coffey, Clerk

DATE: April 28, 2010

---

The attached recommendations have come out of the Advisory Board's consultations with department heads and boards regarding their FY 2011 budgets. They represent a summary of efforts we believe should be made over the coming year in order to be better prepared to deal with the financial challenges that await us for FY 2012. We recognize that these initiatives must be supported by the elected officials, who have the authority to encourage and/or direct departments to pursue these initiatives.

This list is certainly not all-inclusive and can be amended as you deem appropriate. Some may prove to be impractical. However, the Advisory Board believes that both cost containment and revenue enhancement are vital to Norwell's successful financial management and that this board would be remiss not to bring these recommendations to the attention of the appropriate departments.

Thank you for your consideration. We hope you will communicate your responses to these recommendations with the Advisory Board over the coming months.

The Norwell Advisory Board:

Ellen H. Allen, Chairman  
Timothy Greene, Vice Chairman  
Jason Brown  
Mary Ellen Coffey  
Ralph Gordon  
Ralph Rivkind  
Paul Rosebach  
Peter Shea  
Gary Thomas

Advisory Board Recommendations for Expense Reduction and Revenue Enhancement:  
Ideas to Explore Further

Townwide:

- Engage "Best Practices" consultant to help identify and implement cost savings
- Conduct Cost/Benefit analysis of outsourcing more town services
- Formally review all fees annually
- Consider adoption of the Meals Tax & Passport services
- Increase on-line services (a la Marshfield, Boston and Hingham)
- Initiate Regionalization efforts for one or more additional services
- Convert stipends to expense reimbursements
- Broaden the role of the Computer Study Committee to a Technology Study Committee for all town departments
- Evaluate Costs/Benefits of retaining an IT professional to automate town services (including in the Clerk's office a la Marshfield)
- Establish incentives for employee (and citizen?) cost saving recommendations
- Set goals w/deadlines for cost saving and revenue reduction achievements and assign responsibilities for them

Schools & Town:

- Closely coordinate union contract negotiations for FY12
- Pursue sharing of resources for Finance, Accounting, IT and Custodial work
- Explore sharing of School and Library resources

Fire:

- Increase and possibly add additional user fees (permits, ambulance)
- Quantify additional ambulance revenue we will get with both a new & the old ambulance
- Conduct Cost/Benefit analysis of owning vs. outsourcing ambulance service

Police:

- Use Permanent Intermittent Police (PIP) to reduce overtime
- Use cruisers to read water meters (ones only requiring a drive-by)
- Use flagmen in low traffic areas
- Pursue safety grants
- Use smaller, more fuel efficient cruisers
- Pursue a lower cost upgrade of police station instead of building a new station
- Pursue additional savings from Dispatch such as use of PIP instead of 24/7 staffing and installation of technology outside the station enabling people to communicate directly with the 911 call center via video and audio link

Snow & Ice Removal:

- Establish a plowing policy intended to reduce hours and use of salt/sand
- Reduce plowing to prolong life of pavement and yellow lines

Highway/Trees & Grounds:

- Conduct Cost/Benefit analysis of outsourcing more Trees & Grounds work

Formalize meetings w/Water Dept. to work together more consistently  
Revisit use of state funds for paving lower Main St.

Water:

Formalize meetings with Highway/Trees & Grounds to work together more consistently  
Explore opportunities to achieve cost savings with other departments such as doing drive-by Water Dept. meter readings  
Create 3 year operating projections  
Create 5 year capital plans and identify funding options

BOH:

Charge fees (new or increased) for septic permitting  
Conduct Cost/Benefit analysis of outsourcing additional services/inspections (Hanover & Pembroke use same restaurant inspector--do we outsource this?)  
Share Health Agent with other towns  
Add "pay as you throw" to new recycling incentives

Building Dept.:

Share Inspector with other towns or reduce hours until new growth resumes

Planning and Conservation:

Share staff with other towns  
Cover some of Building Department's activities during this low growth period

Assessors:

Conduct Cost/Benefit analysis of further outsourcing

Treasurer's Office/Accounting:

Replace manual payroll processes with electronic transmissions  
Go to bi-weekly pay and direct deposit  
Reduce part time hours (&/or \$3500 outside clerical expense) as office becomes more efficient from lockbox, sweep account, payroll changes, etc.

Recreation:

Charge higher fees for summer programs (while maintaining tuition assistance)

Library:

Explore ways to share resources with Schools  
Work more closely with neighboring towns to compensate for reduced hours and materials purchases

Capital Budget Committee:

Conduct more extensive 5 year capital planning  
Provide Cost/Benefit analyses for capital budget requests  
Confer earlier with Selectmen and Advisory Board about revenues available for annual capital spending