

TOWN OF PRINCETON MA
Princeton Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
April 4 2016

AB members in attendance were: John Shipman, George Handy, Bill Lawton, Dave Cruise, Jimmy O'Coin, and Wayne Adams
BOS members in attendance were: Edith Morgan, Stan Moss, Town Administrator Nina Nazarian

Agenda AB

- Budget
 - Budget review for rollup of all town department expenses and projected town revenues
 - Capital Expense request list review
 - Draft Town Warrant
- Other AB Business

Meeting started at 6:10 PM

Town of Princeton Budget

- Budget
 - Focus on large expense items, seeking more clarification/justification
 - Police department request to lease a new vehicle, retire a vehicle
 - As requested. Lease 1 once in 2017 , lease 2 cars in 2018
 - Suggested: defer lease plan, lease none in 2018, lease one in 2018, etc.. goal is to have one lease at any given time.
 - Bagg Hall discussion on required work (maintain the facility for current use) vs expanded use work (renovate 2nd floor and provide elevator for handicap access).
 - Bagg Hall suggested expense not researched enough for eligible grants, donations, fundraising program
 - WRSD budget, specific to the Operational Costs component, Princeton portion of the district expense changes >200% year to year.
 - Request more insight from WRSD why the large increase
 - Noted that WRSD Princeton WIFI needs added to list of Capital Requests for next review
 - Discussed Free Cash
 - How does it work, y-o-y ; where do surpluses go; how do allocations get decided and when
 - Overall trends
 - If all projects go forward, Debt service as a % of total budget >7% , whereby best practice states to not go over 8%, which effects bond rating. Being close to 8% leaves no room for any new project that becomes mandated for safety, etc...
 - Suggestion for AB to research area towns for debt as a % of total budget.

- Known that Rutland is 12% and cash-strapped
 - Town government workshop, 8% is best practice
- Draft budget shows y-over-y increase of >5% . Should set a goal to be closer to typical 2.5% increase; need to recognize that COI/CPI are less than 2%
 - Salaries are increasing faster than COI/CPI. Budget does not reflect a few staff planned increases, subject BOS decisions
 - Questions about the Quinn Bill for the police dept, whether the state is making contributions still, is mandated by union contract with town, or town is optionally funding since State ceased the program.
- No time left to discuss draft town warrant. Plan is to review on 4/11/2016
- Town Administrator requested list of budget questions ahead of 4/11, allowing time to research.

Other AB Business

- Approved AB meeting minutes for January 4, February 8, 22, 29, and March 7, 21, 28
- Princeton Chapter 70 funding
 - Dave, George, and John to draft letter for Kim Ferguson and Harriet Chandler summarizing the same data, graphs, and impact Princeton has endured for the past several years as part of the WRSD regional school district Chapter 70 formula.
- AB to meet on 4/7, 5PM, town annex with these initial agenda items
 - budget review and position on large expense items, in prep for 4/11 meeting
 - from 4/4 and previous meetings, cited items include
 - WRSD
 - Bagg Hall renovation and repairs
 - Police Dept
 - Fire Dept roof
 - Salary growth
 - Debt growth
 - Accounting dept weekly hour increase
 - Any line item with >2.5% increase from previous year
 - review draft Chapter 70 letter

Handouts

- Draft roll-up of all town departments expenses and town projected revenue
- Draft list of capital requests
- Draft town warrant

AB Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Adams, AB Member