

TOWN OF PRINCETON MA  
Princeton Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
March 7 2016

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

**Agenda AB**

- Budget review for town departments : library, highway, and cemetery
- BOS/AB discussion with Princeton School Committee representatives

Meeting started at 6:00 PM

**Town of Princeton Budget**

- Library Department
  - o Reviewed requested 2017 budget for expense and capital improvement
  - o Identified that neither Trustees nor Friends plans to assist with the capital improvement request for the roof. Both believe ongoing building maintenance should be handled by the town budgets, not community raised funds for programs and historical preservation of the building.
- Cemetery Department
  - o Reviewed requested 2017 budget for expense and capital purchase (for a truck)
  - o Clarified the town strategy for highway dept to purchase new 1 ton truck and transfer the 2006 1 ton truck to the cemetery department. Current cemetery truck is at the end of its life and repairs are more costly than its resale value.
- Highway Department
  - o Reviewed requested 2017 budget for expense and capital purchase.
  - o Mild winter has left department with a \$30K surplus due to less plowing and sanding over projections. Surplus, if it should remain near the end of the year, it can be used for new materials, replacement parts, etc...

**WRSD Discussion**

- Discussion of changes to WRSD Agreement. Desire to move to quarterly payments to even out WRSD cashflow; a change from semi-annual.
- Discussion about the role of the School Committee and the BOS, for the role to make changes to the Agreement. School Committee has the authority and gathers input from the towns, town BOS, etc... Public meeting was held in February to review recommended changes. Agreement is renewed every 5 years, a change from 3 years. Though, for anything of critical nature, an amendment to the agreement is possible any year.
- Awareness of a WRSD survey being conducted via the internet to have citizens weigh in on priorities to assist WRSD refine their strategy to serve the students and communities.
- Agreement by all that the Chapter 70 Funding model is flawed and WRSD is being underfunded when compared to other districts. Given WRSD is ranked in the lower dollar/per student

funded districts. If WRSD would receive funds to be in the middle of the pack, this would be a >\$25M increase....and realize that towns are not resourced to do this in lieu of the state.

- Discussion on the best way to do proactive budget planning between the towns and WRSD. The 2017 process is not optimal and draft budgets with a requested increase of 5.2% are not aligned with economic conditions, sustainable town funding, nor fixed income citizens. BOS suggested WRSD look for targeted adjustments instead of an across the board 5.2% increase. School Committee reps state of the 5.2% increase, only 0.33% goes to improving/closing gaps (see next point below). The rest of the increase stays current with contracted salaries and increased costs of health insurance.
- Princeton School committee reps state that the priorities WRSD needs to improve on include class size, technology plan, and materials/supplies. WRSD is falling behind in is using modern technology and teaching methods, as well as current textbooks.

### **Handouts**

- Budget for library, highway, and cemetery

AB Meeting adjourned at 8:14 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne M. Adams, AB Member