

Members Present: Jo Lown, Chair, Bill Linnane, Cliff Watts, John E. Arnold, Brigitte Casemyr, Michael Meachen (arrived 7:25 p.m.). Absent: Ian Johnson, Judy Lucas.

At 7:05 p.m. Ms. Lown called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Open Forum

There were no requests to address the committee.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 26, April 16, 2009.

Mr. Watts moved to approve the minutes of meeting No. 26, April 16, 2009 as amended. The vote to approve the minutes was 5 in favor, with 5 being present.

Financial Update

Ms. Lown alerted committee members to information distributed in folders, including updated information from Linda Swadel on overlay surplus funds, updated Selectmen budget sheets from Leah Talbot, and an updated recap sheet, with a memo from Henry Danis, using House Ways & Means numbers. Current excess levy estimate is \$56,228.

Discussion and votes on various FY2009 Articles and budgets

A table of votes taken is attached to these minutes.

Buildings and Grounds

The Committee discussed maintenance issues in town buildings. Some of the capital projects on the Warrant should result in savings in energy costs as well as repair costs. Mr. Linnane would like to have a comprehensive analysis of the repair and renovation needs of all town buildings. Ms. Lown noted that the Board of Selectmen has discussed forming a committee to look at all town buildings for energy-saving improvements.

Youth and Family Services (WYFS)

Ms. Lown proposed a nearly level-funded budget of \$160,543. This would keep the counselor hours, Youth Program, and Hot Summer Nights Program. Ms. Lown feels that these programs are counted on by people in town. To make such a dramatic change so suddenly would cause problems that the new Town Manager will have to deal with immediately upon starting. The needs served by these programs are increasing with the current economic downturn. The department should be given time to find alternative funding sources for these programs. Mr. Linnane noted that WYFS is looking for ways to fund the programs in the future, but cannot do it immediately, and that the Recreation Department was given time to move to another funding source. Mr. Linnane also noted that in the past, WYFS was advised not to seek grant funding, and he agrees time should be given to the department as they have been following previous recommendations. Mr. Meachen was convinced by their presentation that the services are essential, especially given the comments by Chief Gordon. Mr. Arnold requested more specific information from John Badenhause on how this proposed budget would be used. Mr. Linnane will follow up with WYFS.

ARTICLE 6. Amend Section 25 Wage and Salary Schedule (Personnel Board)

Ms. Casemyr noted the impact of the 2.93% increase is \$55,825. The Personnel Board recommends these increases to keep all employees on par with unions. Ms. Casemyr is very concerned with the increases across the board. For negotiated contracts, the AFC cannot do anything but express concern. She questioned if the AFC should begin by recommending a vote against this salary schedule. Ms. Lown

feels this should be part of the budget process, not done at the end of the year. These increases, however, should not be automatic. Mr. Arnold thinks getting the discussion moving is a good idea, but agrees with Ms. Lown about the timing. He also feels the new Town Manager should be included in this discussion. Mr. Linnane noted the new Town Manager is proficient in negotiating contracts. He feels that the discussion is important, but that it should occur in conjunction with union contract negotiations. Mr. Meachen noted that if the AFC splits their decision, this is noted by townspeople. Mr. Watts feels the budget discussion deserves to be held, but will support this Article at this time. Ms. Casemyr notes that she is not in favor of penalizing non-union employees, but the discussion needs to begin somewhere. Mr. Linnane thanked Ms. Casemyr for sensitively starting this difficult discussion.

Article 8E. (Police Department)

Ms. Lown notes only one cruiser is requested this year. Ms. Casemyr questions if this is an absolutely necessary purchase. Mr. Meachen feels that as this is part of a planned replacement strategy, it should be continued.

Article 8G. (Board of Health)

Ms. Lown stated she is usually in favor of holding the Hazardous Waste Day, but this year cannot support it in light of the current fiscal situation. She feels the Board of Health recommendation of every other year is adequate. Mr. Linnane notes that the mosquito control funded in this Article only covers the catch basin program. The Commonwealth covers other mosquito control.

ARTICLE 11. Improvements to Sewer Treatment Plant (Westborough Treatment Plant Board)

Ms. Lown and Ms. Casemyr reported no new information. Final numbers are still unknown. The project is on the state's list for SRF loans. The AFC will defer voting on this Article.

ARTICLE 15. Various Town Buildings and Grounds Repairs (Asst. Town Manager)

Requesting \$153,000 for the following projects:

- Replace steam boiler in the Forbes Municipal Building, estimated cost \$85,000.
- Wall paper removal, skim coat, plaster, paint stair well/hallways for all three (3) floors in the Forbes Municipal Building, estimated cost \$13,000.
- Senior Center automated HVAC climate control, estimated cost \$25,000.
- Replace 30 windows in the Forbes Community Building, estimated cost \$30,000.

Ms. Casemyr questioned the cost of the windows. Mr. Meachen feels the painting may be a "want to have." Ms. Lown feels the boiler replacement cannot be put off, and the committee agrees. The Senior Center HVAC, the boiler replacement, and the window replacement should all result in energy savings.

ARTICLE 16. Repairs at Various Schools (School Committee)

Mr. Arnold would like the School Committee to present all capital expenditures to the Capital Expenditure Planning Committee, even when they feel there is no money to pay for them.

ARTICLE 17. Improvements to Library Building (Library Board of Trustees)

Mr. Linnane would like repairs to be passed through the Municipal Building Committee for recommendation in the future.

ARTICLES 22, 23, 25, and 26.

The AFC will defer voting on these Articles until the next meeting.

ARTICLE 29. Amendment to Assabet Valley Regional Vocation H.S. District Agreement (Board of Selectmen)

Mr. Watts reported that Marlborough has defeated this Article. The Assabet Superintendent of Schools is asking support for this Article from the other member towns in order to move this forward to the next

stage of negotiation. Mr. Arnold would still recommend defeat, as passage could still put the town in the position of having to accept representation not elected or appointed by Westborough residents.

Article 33. Accept Gift of Land (Board of Selectmen)

The AFC will defer voting on this Article until the next meeting.

Town Meeting Booklet

Mr. Arnold will prepare slides (for use at Town Meeting if questions arise) that can be used to explain how the percent increase is determined in the case of employees who receive a step increase.

Ms. Casemyr will write a footnote on the Hazardous Waste Day for Article 8.

Ms. Lown will write a footnote for Article 15, which will include the cost of each job.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Linnane reported that Alma Demanche has been on vacation. He will follow up on the Senior Center budget question when she returns.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Mr. Arnold has distributed the final Government Study II reports which were presented to the Board of Selectmen. The Committee has not been disbanded at this time.

Ms. Casemyr reported on new Town Meeting Informational Videos, featuring Joe Harrington, that have been posted on the town web site.

Ms. Lown noted that amounts listed on overlay memo from Linda Swadel include only funds that have been released from overlay. Each year still has some overlay monies available in the account to cover pending cases.

Adjournment

At 9:30 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.

Votes taken at the Finance Committee meeting on April 30, 2009

1) Budget votes

Budgets are voted on using figures current as of 4/30/09.

Buildings & Grounds, Dept. No. 11852, 11853 Salary \$186,009, Expenses \$213,900, Total \$399,909
Mr. Watts moved to accept the \$186,009 salary and \$213,900 expenses.
Vote to approve the budget recommendation is unanimous, 5 in favor with 5 being present.

Fire/EMS, Dept. No. 12201, 12203 Salary \$2,894,459, Expenses \$277,594, Total \$3,172,053
Mr. Watts moved to accept the \$2,894,459 salary and \$277,594 expenses.
Vote to approve the budget recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.

School Department Salary and Expenses \$38,255,528
Mr. Watts moved to accept the \$38,255,528 salary and expense budget
Vote to approve the budget recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.
Ms. Lown commended School Department and School Committee on the work done to get to this budget number. Mr. Watts reported no new information on stimulus funding.

2) Article votes

ARTICLE 6. Amend Section 25 Wage and Salary Schedule (Personnel Board)

Mr. Watts moved to recommend the town vote to approve this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.

ARTICLE 8. Regularly Recurring Articles (Town Manager)

E. (Police Department)

Mr. Watts moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$35,400 from overlay surplus for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 5 in favor and 1 opposed (Casemyr), with 6 being present.

F. (Recreation Department)

Mr. Watts moved to recommend the town vote to Raise and Appropriate \$2,500 for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 5 in favor and 1 opposed (Casemyr), with 6 being present.

Mr. Arnold will add this to the list of items that could be cut if necessary.

G. (Board of Health)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to defeat this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 5 in favor and 1 opposed (Arnold), with 6 being present.

I. (DPW)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$10,750 from Water Retained Earnings and to transfer \$43,001 from Sewer Retained Earnings for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.

ARTICLE 15. Various Town Buildings and Grounds Repairs (Asst. Town Manager)

Mr. Watts moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$153,000 from overlay surplus for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 4 in favor and 2 opposed (Watts and Casemyr), with 6 being present.

ARTICLE 16. Repairs at Various Schools (School Committee)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$89,693 from overlay surplus and transfer \$307 from Article 15 of the 2008 STM for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor with 6 being present.

ARTICLE 17. Improvements to Library Building (Library Board of Trustees)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$36,539 from overlay surplus, transfer \$40,000 from Library Trust Funds, transfer \$3,405 from Article 12 of the 2007 ATM, and transfer \$56 from FY08 Library expense encumbrance for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor 6 being present.

ARTICLE 18. Groundwater Monitoring at Vee Arc Property (Municipal Building Committee)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$4,932 from Article 22 of the 2007 ATM and transfer \$54,863 from Article 23 of the 2007 ATM for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor 6 being present.

ARTICLE 20. Purchase Voting Equipment (Town Clerk)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$34,000 from overlay surplus for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor 6 being present.

ARTICLE 21. Purchase New Defibrillator (Fire Chief)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$24,839 from overlay surplus, transfer \$856 from Article 26C of the 2006 ATM, and transfer \$305 from FY08 Fire Department expense encumbrance, for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 6 in favor 6 being present.

ARTICLE 29. Amendment to Assabet Valley Regional Vocation H.S. District Agreement (Board of Selectmen)

Mr. Watts moved to recommend the town vote to support this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 3 in favor and 3 opposed (Linnane, Arnold, Casemyr), with 6 being present.

Mr. Arnold moved to recommend the town vote to defeat this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is 3 in favor and 3 opposed (Watts, Lown, Meachen), with 6 being present.