

Members Present: Jo Lown, Chair, F. Robert Brown, Bill Linnane, Brigitte Casemyr, Judy Lucas, Ian Johnson, John E. Arnold, Michael Meachen, Kevin Cronin. Absent: None.

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.

FY2011 Proposed Budget Review

Library

Carolyn Delude, Director, Pat Fontes, Library Trustees Chair, and Library Trustees Helena Engberg, Karen Griegal, Jim Holmes, Lisa Freeman, Anthone Vaver, and Dorothy Mello, appeared before the committee to present their budget request for FY11.

The original budget request was level funded from FY2010 and allowed the library to meet the requirements for state certification. The level of funding currently being requested does not meet the requirements for state certification. The requested reduction of 1.8% would be \$16,305. The actual reduction of \$19,180 was met by the retirement of two long-term employees who will be replaced by employees at a lower pay rate. Without state certification the state aid funds would not be paid, which would reduce the library budget by \$28,321. This would also mean Westborough residents may not be allowed to borrow materials from other public libraries. Each town sets their own policy on whether to loan books to libraries which are not certified, and the Westborough Public Library policy does not allow loans to uncertified libraries. In FY09, 43,027 items were borrowed through Inter-Library Loan. The current certification period ends as of December 2010.

There is a waiver process for which libraries can apply at the time of application for certification. The Trustees feel Westborough would have a good case on the following grounds:

1. the town has a good history of supporting the library
2. the decrease is being applied across all town departments
3. the decrease will not affect delivery of services

While they have a good case, the waiver application would not be done until after the budget is approved. Mr. Brown asked if the state may decrease the level of funding required, since all towns are in difficult fiscal times. Mr. Arnold noted that this is an incentive program to ensure that libraries are maintained at a level adequate to allow appropriate sharing. The amount budgeted is the amount needed to run the library. Deductions are then made for state aid and trust funds to get the amount the town must raise and appropriate. This amount would need to be \$847,935, calculated as a rolling average equal to the average for the last three years plus 2.5%. The Trustees calculate the total budget needed, and the Town Treasurer then determines from the final state aid figure and the trust funds available what the Raise and Appropriate amount would be. The Trustees feel that there is a good possibility the waiver would be granted, but there is no guarantee of this. Ms. Delude stated that any funds Raised and Appropriated but not spent on salaries would be spent on building repairs which have been deferred in prior years.

Ms. Delude pointed out that there is \$4,800 budgeted for HVAC repairs in a different part of the basement. This is similar to one done successfully several years ago in the Children's Room. \$4,002 in funding is also budgeted for Office Equipment, which are needed to replace one or two of the libraries 26

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computers. The computer replacements were not funded last year, but are needed this year. The Trustees are also asking for \$870 to run additional electrical outlets for use by patrons with laptops.

Legal Department

Greg Franks, Town Counsel, submitted an almost level funded budget and then applied the requested 1.8% cut. The cuts made include \$1,900 to Outside Legal Services and \$2,150 from Miscellaneous. The \$1,900 cut will lower the amount of specialized legal counsel the town can use, although the amount budgeted is not less than the actual cost of these services in the last budget. The \$2,150 cut will come from funds used to pay for attendance at the Massachusetts Bar Association annual Municipal Law Conference, and to purchase new reference materials. Mr. Franks stated that his salary is set by the Personnel Board. He will be going to max step this year.

Building Department

Joe Inman, Building Commissioner, presented his budget. He submitted a level funded budget then added 1.8% reduction. This meant a reduction in hours, as most of his budget is in salaries. Mr. Inman distributed a chart of Building Department fees collected, the Building Department is self-supporting. He has reduced the hours of two inspectors, reduced the travel in-state line to \$0, and reduced dues and memberships by \$30. While construction has been down lately, there are several large projects "in the pipeline" which could increase at any time. Currently the big construction is in renovations of current buildings. Cutting hours of inspectors may slow the time required to get projects finished. However, construction has slowed and they are able to do some work which has been neglected, especially spending time to explain the permitting process to homeowners and business owners. Inspectors having hours cut may affect the amount of time getting an inspection, but not the amount of time to get a permit. Mr. Brown asked about the use of compensation time to account for the variability in work load, and Mr. Inman said he discourages this.

Mr. Linnane asked about the "Green Town" certification effect, and Mr. Inman stated that if the town does go green this will cause increased training and time needs for the Building Department. Mr. Meachen asked if there is state or federal reimbursement available for this, and Mr. Inman assumes that the town will be reimbursed for the training, but not for the time spent doing it. Mr. Inman does not like cutting hours, and does feel it will have an effect. The department brings in quite a bit of money to the town. In prior years his budget was not cut as it is a small budget. Mr. Inman also noted that his Electrical Inspector is over retirement age, and if he can no longer continue in the position Mr. Inman will need increased funds with which to replace him. Mr. Brown asked about the extra requirements needed by green technologies. Mr. Inman noted that mechanical systems and total sealing of homes will require more expertise and inspections, and so be more expensive. Ms. Lown asked for a projection on the costs of these processes for the future, so the town will know what the total cost is for green technologies. Mr. Inman expects that the increased time spent in training by the inspectors may necessitate hiring an additional employee, if the training required is extensive.

MOTION

At 7:50 p.m., upon a motion by Ms. Lown the Committee voted 8-0-1 (Mr. Arnold abstained) by roll call vote to enter Executive Session in order to confer with counsel.

Administrative assistant position

Mr. Johnson moved to postpone discussion to next meeting pending receipt of information on eligibility from Town Counsel. Vote is unanimous 8 to 0 (Mr. Linnane absent temporarily).

Committee/Chair Reports

The Capital Planning Expenditures Committee will meet on 3/18. Mr. Cronin has had discussions with Mr. Malloy on the process for grading projects. Ms. Lown noted that all members should have received a copy of the draft Capital Expenditures Plan by the Town Manager, which she forwarded by email. Committee members asked the plan to be sent electronically again. Ms. Lown and Mr. Cronin noted that this process is a work in progress, and that it should move more smoothly next year. Ms. Lown directed members to Appendix D, which includes the list of current projects, and explained that Mr. Malloy would like to begin closing these projects out as they are completed so the funds are no longer encumbered once the project is done. Mr. Malloy has also included a funding projection for the next five years.

Legislative Liaison Committee will hold an Open Meeting with the town's state legislators next Tuesday. The Board of Selectmen did discuss the role and mission of the committee. Mr. Johnson asked committee members to draft questions for legislators. Ms. Lown would like to know where the legislation on health insurance relief for towns stands. Ms. Lown also asked for a set level of local aid that can be more predictable than in previous years. Mr. Arnold asked about the problem of large expenses that are more statewide, such as the fact that one child with special needs moving from one town to another create budget problems. Also, he would like to include cost cutting at the state level with every increase in local costs. Mr. Brown would like to see more discussion of unfunded mandates. Mr. Meachen would like to know the cost of these mandates, and would like an inventory of both unfunded and underfunded mandates.

Government Study II Committee

Mr. Malloy and Ms. Bilodeau met with the Personnel Board, and two members of the GSCII were in attendance. Mr. Brown also was at the meeting and reported that while it was a good meeting nothing was resolved. Mr. Arnold has requested another meeting of the GSCII be scheduled.

Ms. Lown noted that Maryanne Bilodeau is scheduled to meet with the AFC on 4/15, and should be able to report on the insurance budget and proposed employee manual and ~~some~~ personnel policies. Mr. Malloy will be present on 4/26 for a final wrap-up before AFC votes.

Ms. Lown discussed scheduling of presentations.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Brown met with the Personnel Board last evening. Mr. Malloy and Ms. Bilodeau discussed a new employee manual and new Human Resources procedures, and the Personnel Board has finalized their budget and is ready to present. Mr. Brown will ask if the Conservation Commission can present on 3/22 or 3/25.

Ms. Casemyr and Mr. Linnane attended the WWTP Board meeting yesterday. The treatment plant project is going well and could be finished one month early. Mr. Linnane noted that the project has been doing very well with not needing the contingency funds for change orders. Ms. Lown asked about the current CPI and PPI, and Ms. Casemyr will find out. In the budget request, Mr. Goodhall allows for an expected increase of 4.5%.

Mr. Meachen contacted Nancy Yendriga, and reported that there was a problem with the purchase of new scanners, but the older scanners are still running. Mr. Meachen noted that Mr. Badenhausen would like to make his presentation in April, but Mr. Meachen will ask if he can come in earlier. Mr. Cronin mentioned the Capital Planning Expenditures Committee meeting on 3/18, and a Cultural Council Open House meeting on 4/7.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members.

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Ms. Lown noted that the committee will not be meeting on 3/15. Ms. Lown also noted the Assabet Student Performance report distributed to members in preparation for the presentation on 3/18/10.

Mr. Brown donated a manila folder to the committee. The Committee accepted the donation.

Mr. Johnson brought to the attention of members two recent articles stating that the information coming out of the statehouse is that towns should prepare for a 5% cut in local aid. Our town has budgeted for a 10% decrease. Mr. Johnson feels this may put the town in good standing should the local aid cut be less than 10%.

Mr. Arnold will be absent on 3/18, 3/25, and 5/15 due to personal family conflicts.

Ms. Lown asked for a show of hands on who would be available for ATM. 6 members will be available definitely, which is very close to quorum.

Mr. Linnane will not be able to attend on 4/29. Ms. Lucas may not be available on 3/25.

Mr. Meachen thanked Mr. Johnson for sending links to newspaper articles on meals tax. He also pointed out that there seemed to be significant sentiment against these new taxes.

Mr. Cronin expressed concern over the number of runaway Prii.

Mr. Linnane asked if the Library Trustees could be proactive about the waiver, and Mr. Arnold will ask. Mr. Linnane pointed to an article on NPR recently about the number of states possibly approaching bankruptcy in the next couple of years, and warned that the states are not out of fiscal trouble yet.

Ms. Lown again asked for questions for Mr. Malloy and the Capital Planning Expenditures Committee, which she will forward.

Adjournment

Ms. Lucas moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.