

Members Present: Jo Lown, Chair, F. Robert Brown, Bill Linnane, Brigitte Casemyr, Judy Lucas, Ian Johnson, Michael Meachen, Kevin Cronin. Absent: John E. Arnold.

At 7:00 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.

The new AFC Administrative Assistant, Julie Sams, was introduced and welcomed by the committee.

FY2011 Proposed Budget Review

Town Clerk/Elections

Nancy Yendriga, Town Clerk, appeared before the committee to present her budget request for FY11. Two budgets were requested, one level-funded and one with a 1.8% reduction. The impact of the reduction will be:

- Budget line 5210 – The cut will mean no out-of-state travel. Ms. Yendriga usually attends a one-week course in the summer at Plymouth State College for town clerks from all over New England. She is also in an association of clerks from all six New England states, which alternate hosting a conference. This year the event is in Massachusetts, so out of state travel won't be necessary. Last year's course provided training in the salvaging and preservation of records which might become wet due to some kind of disaster—town records are very valuable. Attendance at the conference is a once a year trip and is not part of training (line 5218).
- Budget line 5217 – No change, dues must be paid in order to stay in those associations.
- Budget line 5218 – Cut from \$1000 to zero. This means no training or education this year. Massachusetts town clerks meet three times a year; Ms. Yendriga usually goes to those conferences. Worcester County clerks meet twice a year.
- Budget line 5223 – Do not spend that much in any case, and most expenses for office supplies are for vital records. The Committee asked about central purchasing. At one time it was done, but it was felt that each department knew better what was needed, so now each department keeps its own supplies. Mr. Linnane suggested that Maryanne Bilodeau be asked to look into central purchasing for the future. Ms. Yendriga noted that in the past, there was a central supply room, but the inventory was unsatisfactory; now she orders only what is specifically needed for her office. The committee suggested that each department submit a minimum inventory requirement, with stocking through centralized purchasing. Ms. Yendriga recalled that in the past Mimi Carpenter did that; also, a study was done, determining that it was just as economical to have each department order what they needed. She added that \$1,100 was not much for supplies.
- Budget line 5227a – Simply won't do any bookbinding of records.
- Budget line 5228 – Reduced to \$200; will buy fewer forms.

The new ballot scanners are paid for but the Town does not have them yet. Ms. Yendriga just received a bill for \$1500 for the maintenance of the old scanners for this year, which has been paid. The old scanners are still supported. Massachusetts has to certify the new machines, and this hasn't been done; several communities are in the same boat. She hopes we will be offered a choice this summer, as what is out there now is pretty old. Maintenance of the scanners comes out of the Elections budget.

Revenues:

This year's budget was predicted at \$44,000; reduced it to \$40,000 for next year. Dog licenses and marriages are down; Pole locations really down; Gas Storage Renewals will probably stay the same. Street lists: The Town still sell them but the printing cost (\$6) is more than the selling price, and many are given away to boards and committees. Mr. Linnane noted the difference in our price compared to other towns—\$15 - \$20 in the local area. Ms. Yendriga charges seniors 70 years and older \$2. The price for persons aged 65-69 is \$5; those under 65 pay \$10. The majority of her buyers are seniors. The Auburn clerk is going to put the street list online. There are also privacy issues: only the birth year is listed now rather than a full birth date for that reason; you must be 17 or older to be listed, and those in public safety are not included. Zoning maps are down, because not much development is going on. Birth, Marriage & Death certificates were predicted at \$17,000 this year; next year only predicting \$13,000 (based on a comparison of what was really happening). Business certificates are down \$300—they do a lot, mostly for home business consulting. Marijuana Fines are new this year; there was a surge in the beginning, but now not so much.

Elections and Registration

Started with a level funded budget, then took the 1.8% decrease.

- Budget line 5103: Eliminated an election officer. It is an increase from last year because there are three elections coming up: the State primary in September, the November election, and town election. The budget last year was only for one election—and then they were surprised with two more. A third person added in the office can do what the election officer used to do.
- Budget line 5223 is being reduced from \$2000 to \$1800; this includes supplies for elections. Servicing of scanners comes under printing and copying.
- Professional services is Steve Masciarelli, for town meeting.

The AFC approved a General Fund Transfer to pay for the second election last year which the state had promised to pay back. Those funds supplemented what was needed to pay for the January 19th budget because the May 4th election money was used to pay for the December 8th election. The state finally did give around \$3,000; Ms. Yendriga requested the rest from the AFC. If it passes the Senate, we should get a reimbursement of \$23,250 for those two elections, but that money will go to the General Fund. The May election is already set, no extra funding is needed.

Advisory Finance Committee

Ms. Lown presented the AFC budget. The revised budget worksheet shows a change in the administrative assistant and a reduction of \$587. Budget line 5245 was moved to Wages-clerical as part of the administrative assistant wage, and the hours increased to reflect that. There is a net increase of \$97 in the salary line, because the hours were increased to reflect the actual number of hours needed. For AFC, a 1.8% budget cut would have been \$99, the revised budget was reduced by \$587.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of Meeting 17, March 11, 2010; the first section being the regular minutes and the second section the minutes of the executive session. The approval of minutes was deferred until the next meeting.

Warrant Review Schedule

Ms. Lown provided an updated 2010 Town Meeting Warrant Review Schedule. Mr. Cronin confirmed the April 1st date for Trustees and Soldiers' Memorial and Veteran Services. Everyone is scheduled with the exception of Police Chief Gordon. The Town Manager will meet with the Committee on April 8th. Ms. Lown hopes the numbers will be solid enough to begin deliberation and voting the following week. Mr. Johnson confirmed 7:40 p.m. on April 1st for the DPW, after Trustees and Veterans. Ms. Lown thanked the School Committee for coming in on April 12th to meet.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Cronin reminded the committee that the Cultural Council is having Open House on April 7th across the street.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Linnane will be meeting with John Walden and Carl Balduf (DPW) on March 30th, to go through all their articles; they will be in on April 1st.

Ms. Lown spoke with Joanne Savignac; she is coming on March 29th to go through the Treasurer/Collector budget, the Debt Service and her Article.

Ms. Lucas attended the school committee meeting. The Athletic, Fine Arts and other budgets are mostly level funded or less than last year, with the exception of the SPED account, which is up, and some Administration accounts; but everyone is trying to cut back. They will not have numbers by April 12th, and they still don't have circuit breaker numbers; Steve Doret said they may not have numbers until the Town Meeting. However, they can come on the 12th and go over enrollment, goals, etc. All departments are in a difficult position, but are coming in level funded or under. They are affected by grants that either aren't coming in, or are less than planned on.

The Committee noted that costs are increasing, and commended all departments for their efforts in coming back with a level funded budget twice in a row. Mr. Brown added that at town meeting, the committee should let people know that what the school department has done is appreciated. Some look at the school budget and are unhappy with the teacher raises. He felt it should be emphasized again that a good contract was signed, to rebut those who say we're paying too much for the schools.

Ms. Casemyr reported that Assabet calculates the apportionment based upon the most recent 3-year enrollment average prior to borrowing. That percentage would be used as a fixed number throughout the debt service payback schedule (likely 20 years).

Committee/Chair Reports

Mr. Johnson distributed, as promised, the Legislative Liaison Committee Agenda.

Ms. Lown distributed the Department of Revenue newsletter, in which there was the update on the Municipal Relief Act, for those interested in seeing what the proposals are; the article is informative.

AFC Report & Recommendation to Annual Town Meeting

Form and Content

Ms. Lown distributed a handout of the sections for the Report and Recommendation Booklet, the first part being the index of the committee's summary of recommendations. Members were asked to pick a project, and help to do the work that is needed: if everyone takes a section, it can be compiled and finished more quickly. Members should look at prior town meeting booklets and be involved with writing, making suggestions, proofreading, etc.

- ***Recap Page:*** Should make some changes; tried to do it last year but didn't have the time.
- ***The AFC report to voters:*** Members were asked to look at last year's, write up thoughts and suggestions to add, and get them to Ms. Lown. She will compile them so the Committee can review and vote.
- ***Articles:*** The recommendation is what it is. Members should consider whether an explanation or other information should be included, if so write a few lines and send them to Ms. Lown.
- ***Selectmen votes:*** Ms. Lown will coordinate with Jim Malloy.

- **Other Department votes:** Liaisons are to note if their department votes to approve something—planning board, for example. There are often questions about voting by other boards and committees on various articles. The Selectmen information was put in for the special town meeting and people liked that.
- **Town Manager Statement :** Jim Malloy prepares;
- **Budget spreadsheet** - Entering the budget numbers when voted;
- **End notes for budgets:** Each liaison to work on their own departments. If there is something to be highlighted, an issue or concern or the budget reflects a change, it should be noted; those questions are going to come up, especially if everyone is level funded, but there is a jump here and there. The committee can go back to the minutes and use what is written; most things are presented clearly by the proponents.
- **Graphs:** Mr. Meachen noted that last year's bar graph of all the departments was useful; the trend column graphs also were good, showing that proportions between departments had not changed much, addressing what was heard last year about certain departments taking a larger share. It also showed that insurance was going up—that issue doesn't need to be re-addressed this year. Ms. Lown noted, however, that there would be a significant change in the insurance budget this year, which probably should be reflected in the graph. A graph reflecting the Town Manager's report might be helpful. The committee discussed the possibility of graphs showing both budgeted and expended numbers, clearly labeled to avoid confusion: a "budgeted" and "expended" for prior year's history, and a "budgeted" for the current year. Mr. Meachen agreed to put together some graphs for the Committee to review.
- **Definitions:** these were updated last year. Definitions will be added as necessary; for example, "unfunded mandate" (Mr. Johnson to work on a definition for this). The Committee discussed including a definition for the "Town Manager's Summary" or "Town Manager's Statement." The Committee asked to change it from "summary" to "statement" last year. The fall message to the voters noted the addition of "the Town Manager's statement on each article." It could be a footnote if desired.
- **Enterprise fund:** Will be included again this year.
- **Town moderator :** Usually coordinated by Ms. Lown.

Reminder to the committee that there are not very many more meetings so members should start working and submitting things to avoid having it all to do at the last minute. There will be an update on the budget when the Town Manager comes before the committee on April 8th. The open enrollment period for the insurance will be the first week in April. The insurance numbers have a big impact on what is available for everything else. Should have preliminary numbers from the House Ways and Means but until the House votes there are no real specifics. The estimate being used by the Town Manager is based on a 10% cut in State Aid to towns, which is very conservative. It is expected to be closer to 4-6%.

Scheduling

The Town Manager will meet with the committee for a final wrap-up on Monday, April 26th. On April 29th, the committee is scheduled to complete voting. On Thursday, April 29th and Monday, May 3rd, the committee is scheduled to work on the Report and Recommendation Booklet. Then it goes out to everyone for editing. This worked well last year. It should go to the printer the week before town meeting. It is posted online and Ms. Lown sends it out to all departments.

The second page of the *AFC Review Schedule* lists the proposed articles and when the proponent is coming to present it.

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee minutes
March 25, 2010

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members.

The Committee extends condolences to Jim and Nora Robbins, and will be glad to accommodate Mr. Robbins should he need to change his presentation from April 5th. Mr. Meachen will check with him. Ms. Lown will find out which alternate date would have the earliest available time slot.

Ms. Casemyr met with Westborough TV yesterday, and is pleased to announce that all government meetings are now available on demand on line at www.westboroughtv.org. She also announced that BJs' headquarters is coming to Westborough.

Adjournment

Ms. Lucas moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m.