

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting No. 18, FY2011
March 7, 2011

Approved
March 14, 2011

Members Present: John E. Arnold, Chair, Brigitte Casemyr, Peter Allen, Bill Linnane, Ian Johnson, Jim Tepper, Ed Behn. Absent: Jo Lown. (There is currently one opening on the Committee.)

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Arnold called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Call to Order/Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Approval of Minutes

Meeting No. 16, February 28, 2011

Ms. Casemyr had emailed corrections to the minutes. Ms. Casemyr moved to accept the minutes as amended. The vote to approve the minutes is 4 in favor, 2 abstentions (Behn, Allen), with 6 being present.

The Committee noted that the date should be included on each version of the warrant, for clarity.

AFC Preparations for Annual Town Meeting budget article reviews

Departmental budget discussions

Youth Commission (Youth & Family Services)

John Badenhause, Director, Judith Tully (Youth Commission) and Michelle Grasso (Chair of the Youth Commission), appeared before the Committee to present the Youth & Family Services budget. Mr. Badenhause explained that this small department consists of one full-time Director, 2 part-time Counselors, and 1 part-time Administrative Assistant. A Youth Activities Coordinator is also hired in the summer to run the Hot Summer Nights program, but that position is paid out of grant monies. Mr. Badenhause noted that this level-services budget was initially less than last year's due to a new Administrative Assistant coming on board (at a lower Step level). However, the Town Manager recently added a 1% cost-of-living increase for all non-union employees, which brought the Wages/Salaries line over last year's by about \$1,200. Expenses are the same as last year.

The Department of Youth & Family Services provides clinical services free of charge to qualified Town residents. Referrals are received from the School Department, Police Department, Board of Health, and other medical providers in town. Ms. Grasso explained that the Youth Commission has 5 adult members and 5 youth members (3 high school juniors and 2 high school seniors).

Mr. Badenhause explained that, last year, the Hot Summer Nights program was funded by private donations. Of the \$9,000 required for the program, \$5,500 in donations was received, so the program was scaled back by discontinuing bus trips. This year the Youth Commission have initiated a "Buy a Bus" program to encourage donations in order to restore the very popular bus trips to the program. Each bus costs about \$475; the goal is to raise \$2,000. Donations may be sent to Youth & Family Services, 34 W. Main Street, Westborough MA 01581, or in person at their office in Town Hall. Mr. Badenhause informed the Committee that \$6,000 had been raised so far toward the Hot Summer Nights program, with major contributions coming from the "In Your Shoes" Polar Plunge, Central Federal Credit Union (\$1,000), Cultural Council (\$500), Tufts Foundation (\$500), Country Club Foundation (\$500) and the Civic Club (\$1,000).

Mr. Badenhause announced that a monthly email newsletter is now available and people can subscribe to it on the Town Web site. He also mentioned a 2008 Youth Commission survey of Middle School and High School students, which showed that students are experiencing social and academic stress. When asked what would make Westborough a better place, respondents answered that they would like to have more indoor and outdoor spaces to hang out with their friends, less homework, more down-time, and trusted people to talk to in confidence. The Youth Commission would like to conduct a more comprehensive survey to obtain more detailed information.

MIS/GIS

Mark Stockman appeared before the Committee to present his department's budget. Though expenses are essentially level-funded, there is an increase of \$10,100 due to the addition of Fire Department software mandated by the State. Mr. Stockman noted that, although the immediate effect of a level-funded budget was not dramatic, over time the department would feel the pressure resulting from not upgrading equipment. The line item for CRT monitors has been removed, as all monitors will have been replaced by FY2012. MECnet internet service and support has been changed from T1 to a FiOS Primary and Charter Back-up for internet connectivity and archiving of email.

Mr. Stockman explained that navigation on the Town Web site is being improved as part of the Web site re-design. Once the re-design is complete, there will be a public announcement. There was some discussion of ways to contact residents via email to keep them informed. Mr. Johnson suggested a link to Virtual Town Hall via Westborough Patch.

Mr. Stockman informed the Committee that the town's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) services are going very well. This involved a recent flyover of Westborough resulting in detailed photos and other data of sufficient accuracy to be used by the Planning Department, Selectmen, and DPW.

Updates on Committee member liaison work/meetings to date

Mr. Arnold reviewed the departments which are ready to present to the Committee. Ms. Casemyr noted that she is interested in tracking the Assabet School Building Project. Mr. Johnson noted that the Board of Health is putting Mosquito Control and Hazardous Waste Day into their budget rather than the past practice of having those as separate warrant articles.

Mr. Arnold noted that a review of the Warrant would be on Thursday's agenda.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Mr. Linnane noted the need for residents to get involved in Town committees and Boards. The Board of Selectmen has a list of committees, on all their agendas and at their Web site, where volunteers are needed. He added that prospective candidates can consider the current openings on the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee for the May ballot.

Adjournment

Ms. Casemyr moved to adjourn the meeting at 8 p.m. Vote to adjourn was 7 in favor, with 7 being present.

Document List

Youth Commission Annual Report, 2010.
Needs Assessment ESummary, from Michelle Grasso, Youth Commission.
Westborough Teen Activities Survey Report.
Health Insurance Estimate.
Budget Background Information sheet, MIS-GIS.