

Members Present: John E. Arnold, Chair, Peter Allen, Bill Linnane, Jo Lown, Kathy Rosenblum Senie, J. J. Malone, Lisa Blazejewski. Absent: Ed Behn, Jim Tepper.

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, January 19, 2012

Mr. Allen and Mr. Malone had emailed some amendments to the minutes. Ms. Lown and Mr. Linnane also had some amendments. Mr. Linnane moved to accept the minutes as amended. The vote to approve the minutes is 7 in favor with 7 being present.

Preparations for FY2013 Annual Town Meeting

Wastewater Treatment Plant Board (WTPB)

Mike Stanton (Treatment Plant Board), Chris Pratt (Project Manager), and Jack Goodhall (WTPB Administrator/Engineer), appeared before the Committee to present this budget. Jack Goodhall noted that Salaries are basically level-funded. The increases in Expenses are in two areas: electricity and contract services. Mr. Goodhall explained that rebates are being sought for the newer, more energy efficient motors being used at the plant. Town Manager Jim Malloy is also looking into renewable energy credits for the solar array. Based on FY11 flow allocations (Westborough 35%, Shrewsbury 61%, Hopkinton 5%), the Town would receive 35% of any credits or rebates.

Mr. Goodhall explained that Contract Services was made up of three areas: Basic Contract, Additional Services, and Septage. Mr. Goodhall noted that the increase under Basic Contract was partly due to the CPI and PPI percentages. There was some discussion of the timing of these percentages being applied to the budget. Regarding Additional Services, Mr. Pratt explained that \$100,000 of this line is for pH control, \$100,000 for phosphorus control, and the remaining \$90,000 for additional Treatment Plant staff. The New England Inter-State Commission had issued a spreadsheet for determining staffing levels based on various parameters. Mr. Pratt noted that the Plant had been operating with 10.5 employees for many years; however, the spreadsheet provided by the Commission recommended 12.4 employees. Taking into consideration the high efficiency of the new plant, the Treatment Plant board is proposing to add one full-time person. In addition, a SCADA consultant would be hired for \$50,000. It would be determined later if, in fact, a full-time SCADA programmer was needed. Mr. Pratt added that the full-time position was actually approved and budgeted for last year, but the position was never filled. Mr. Goodhall noted that the final area, Septage, was level-funded.

Mr. Allen questioned the estimate of a 4.2% CPI in this budget, while another Town budget had a CPI of 3.5%. Mr. Goodhall explained that the Treatment Plant contract is a combination of 92% CPI and 8% PPI, which may account for the difference.

DPW-related articles (DPW, Water, Sewer, etc.)

John Walden, DPW Manager, and Carl Baldof, Town Engineer, appeared before the Committee to present these articles.

Article 8g. Ch. 90 Roadwork, \$812,143. Mr. Walden noted that this would be used for work on Milk Street and other streets in accordance with the Roadway Maintenance Plan.

Article 9e. Drainage Maintenance & Evaluation, \$70,000. Mr. Walden explained that miles of corrugated metal pipe had been installed in the 50s and 60s which now needed to be replaced. This article seeks funding for a survey to determine the condition of the pipes. Mr. Malone pointed out these are storm water pipes.

Article 9f. Dump Truck, \$100,000. Mr. Walden explained that the old 1985 truck, used for hauling dirt and sanding roads in winter, has rust and rot issues. Originally a brand-new truck was being requested, but the DPW now plans to purchase a used truck.

Article 9g. Ford Ranger Replacement, \$25,000. Mr. Walden explained that this vehicle was scheduled to be replaced in 2016, but already had significant rusting. The DPW would like to purchase a replacement with the savings from buying a used vehicle rather than a new one, under Article 9f above. Mr. Walden noted that there was no need to buy a new vehicle, if the used one had a good, rust-free frame. He added that the DPW has an aggressive and extensive program for re-furbishing and maintaining its vehicles. There was discussion that this vehicle appeared (scheduled for 2016 replacement) on last year's Capital Expense Plan but had slipped off this year's plan. This has highlighted an area for process improvement in the Capital Expense Planning process.

9h. Fisher Street Water Plant Roof Repair, \$38,000. Mr. Walden noted that the scope of this article had changed, bringing the dollar value down. This article seeks funds for putting together design and contract specifications, allowing the project to go out to bid with a view to bringing a total amount to Fall Town Meeting. Therefore, they intend to ask for a smaller amount now to do design and specification. The updated amount will be provided later. Mr. Balduf added that the eventual cost of the repair would exceed \$100,000.

9j. Street Sweeper Lease, \$45,000. Mr. Walden explained that the current 14-year old vacuum sweeper is used for vacuuming up trash up in center of town and other areas where a mechanical sweeper is not as effective. The Town's other two mechanical sweepers get up most material, and the vacuum sweeper follows after and gets what they can't. The vacuum feature is also used for leaf pickup in the fall. This is a 5-year purchase lease, totaling \$225,000 for this vehicle. Mr. Allen questioned whether the wording of the article was open enough. Ms. Blazejewski felt the article should explain that the \$45,000 will be yearly for the next 5 years. Mr. Linnane will follow up with Jim Malloy to insure the wording is correct with regard to the lease/purchase approach that seems to be suggested in the current wording.

9k. Mack Truck Replacement, \$65,000. Mr. Walden explained that the current 1984 truck, used by the Water Department, was bought used and has rust problems. Mr. Arnold noted that funds are expected to come from the Water Enterprise Fund.

9l. Nourse Street Cemetery, \$30,000. Mr. Walden noted that this is a continuation of a multi-year project that is still in its early stages. The original plan had been tweaked by a firm which specializes in cemetery design, resulting in a very nice layout, efficient and aesthetically pleasing, which will be presented at Town Meeting. This phase allows for surveying roads, and tree and stump removal. Then over the next few years the DPW work crews can box and gravel the roads. Eventually the cemetery will have a stone wall and a Veterans memorial. Mr. Walden added that spreading the work over 10 years avoids any major economic impact.

11. Crownridge Area Water Project. Mr. Balduf noted that the Sewer portion of this project had been funded at fall Town Meeting. That article had to go forward in the fall to qualify for the Water Pollution Abatement Trust financing. This article seeks authorization to appropriate \$800,000 for the Water portion of the work. Mr. Balduf added that coordinating Sewer and Water work means repair of roads is only done once, which economizes on paving, inspections, etc. Mr. Walden noted that creating a loop in the water line eliminates a dead-end and improves water quality for the affected area. Mr. Balduf explained that the project would go out to bid in the spring, with work beginning in summer or fall, and extending into the following year.

Article 29. Sewer Bylaw. Mr. Balduf explained that the addition of a threshold on square footage would streamline the bylaw, making it easier to calculate commercial use. Mr. Walden noted that the change would encourage small businesses and was also competitive with neighboring communities, as well as being an opportunity to encourage water conservation.

Chairman, Committee Liaison, and Department Liaison Reports

Mr. Arnold had prepared the Committee's report for inclusion in the Town's Annual Report. There was Committee consensus that Mr. Arnold's document was acceptable for submission. For the record, Mr. Arnold noted the seven documents from Mr. Malloy that have been emailed to the Committee: FTE 10-Year Updated spreadsheet, Savings per Thousand spreadsheet, Last Approved Custodian Description, 2011 Custodian Description, Step Inc FTE spreadsheet, Budget Summary spreadsheet, and Insurance spreadsheet. He reminded the Committee that Ms. Lown would be providing a walkthrough of the Committee workbooks at the end of Monday's meeting, for all those interested.

Mr. Allen noted that he may be attending the MMA Legislative meeting on February 24th. He also reported that Town Counsel Greg Franks had provided the following information in answer to the Committee's questions: the Town pays an Outside Legal rate of \$175/hour to one firm and pays \$200/hour to a firm that specializes in Tax Assessment appeals. Mr. Allen also reported that the Town Clerk expense that had been questions is for out-of-state travel. He concluded by indicating that the increase of 2.5% in the Recreation department Salaries/Wages is due to a step increase.

Ms. Blazejewski is meeting with the Historical Commission next Thursday, and met with the Youth Commission on Tuesday.

Mr. Arnold noted that he and Ms. Rosenblum Senie had met with the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Assabet Valley Regional High School, who will be meeting with the Committee to provide a brief overview of Assabet's changes in town assessments and their building repair project. The Library still plans to attend the February 6th meeting.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Mr. Malone reported that the Board of Selectmen had approved all budgets except for Insurance, Town Buildings and Grounds, Library, Council on Aging and School Department, and had also voted to approve all Police, Fire and DPW articles.

Mr. Linnane felt that time could be saved by having key departments (for example, the School Department) present to the both the Advisory Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen jointly, rather than having to give two separate presentations.

Mr. Allen noted that the Board of Selectmen had asked for up-to-date job descriptions for the two custodial-related positions at the Senior Center and Library.

Adjournment

Mr. Linnane moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. Vote to adjourn was 6 in favor, with 6 being present.

Document List

2011 Custodian Job Description.	FY2013 Local Aid Estimates.
2012 ATM Warrant, version 5.	Insurance spreadsheet.
Last Approved Custodian Description	Budget Summary.
Appropriations Report 2012.	Savings per Thousand.
FTE 10-Year Updated 1-3-12.	Step Inc. FTE.
Warrant Article Summary ATM FY13, v. 3	AFC Annual Report 2011.
Warrant Article Summary ATM FY13, v. 4.	