

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting No. 31, FY2012  
March 8, 2012

Approved  
March 15, 2012

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

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. 28, March 1, 2012**

Ms. Rosenblum Senie had requested corrections to the minutes. Mr. Linnane moved to accept the minutes as amended. The vote to approve the minutes is 7 in favor, with 7 being present.

### **Preparation for FY2013 Annual Town Meeting and March 17 Special Town Meeting**

#### **Discussion/Deliberation of STM Articles 1 & 2**

Mr. Arnold noted that he had heard from Town Moderator Joe Harrington after receiving the revised motions from Town Manager Mr. Malloy. Mr. Malloy had provided a motion for Article 1 which excluded only the borrowing for the Recreation Center, but realized that, in light of Mr. Harrington's comments, this motion may not be allowable. Mr. Harrington is still considering the question and will meet with Mr. Malloy on Tuesday. Mr. Arnold felt that, with this issue unresolved, the Committee should perhaps make its recommendation on Town Meeting floor, preparing a separate handout on these articles. There was some discussion about whether a vote on Article 2 was appropriate. Mr. Behn, after thinking more about the matter and speaking with residents, wondered whether the town should return to Article 12's intent and wait for firm bids before bringing the projects forward, thus eliminating any override issues. Mr. Tepper was concerned that the project was being rushed to take advantage of low interest rates and construction costs. Mr. Behn noted that all the projects were intertwined to some extent, making it difficult to make a recommendation on one article only. Mr. Arnold added that the Committee also does not know what the proponents of these articles intend to do if one or more of them fail. Ms. Rosenblum Senie would like the Committee to vote these articles next week, in order to have a recommendation in place before Town Meeting, even though the votes won't be included in the booklet. No vote taken.

#### **Discussion of ATM Articles 11 & 12**

Mr. Linnane felt it might be misleading if the Committee included a vote for these articles in its report, but not for STM Articles 1 & 2. There was consensus that the Committee should make their recommendation on these articles at Town Meeting. Mr. Behn moves that for ATM Articles 11 & 12 and STM Articles 1, 2 & 3, the Committee will make its recommendation at Town Meeting. The vote to approve the motion is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

### **Voting on Budgets/Warrant Articles**

**Article 25. Bylaw Amendment (Non-Criminal Disposition).** Mr. Arnold noted that Mr. Malloy had provided the Committee with further information in light of their earlier vote on this article (recommendation to defeat, 6-2-0). Mr. Behn was still concerned that the only avenue for appeal was to go to court. Mr. Behn moves to recommend the Town vote to defeat the article. The vote to approve the motion to defeat is 4 in favor, 3 opposed (Malone, Linnane, Rosenblum Senie), with 7 being present.

**Article 7D. General Reserve Fund.** Mr. Behn distributed spreadsheets developed by Ms. Lown outlining the outcomes of three scenarios: if funding is provided by Free Cash, Raise and Appropriate, or a combination of the two. There was some discussion of the effect of raise and appropriate on the tax rate. Mr. Arnold noted that Mr. Malloy had acceded to the Committee's preference for using Free Cash for the Street Sweeper (Article 8J, \$227,000), though that was not his original plan. Therefore, Mr. Arnold was inclined to support Raise and Appropriate for the Reserve Fund this year so the balance of Free Cash doesn't go too far below the level that the Town Manager prefers. Mr. Behn moves to recommend the Town vote to Raise and Appropriate the sum of \$300,000 for the AFC Reserve Fund. The vote to approve the article recommendation is 6 in favor, 1 opposed (Tepper), with 7 being present.

### **Committee work on Report and Recommendations**

The Committee reviewed the draft report Mr. Arnold and Mr. Behn had prepared, making amendments and corrections as necessary. Ms. Rosenblum Senie felt the message to voters should not attempt to tell voters what they should think or do, but rather simply present the Committee's findings. Mr. Arnold felt that though many articles and budgets may each individually have merit, it can help to remind voters that Town Meeting actions set priorities for the town and choosing to support every good project could end up with the taxpayers spending more than they can afford. Mr. Tepper agreed that voters should be encouraged to consider the costs involved before approving articles or budgets.

During the discussion, Westborough resident Domenic Capriole urged the Committee to request that Special Town Meeting be moved to a later date, if there is not enough time for the Committee to adequately consider these articles and make its recommendation.

The Committee took a brief recess at 9:30 p.m. and Mr. Arnold re-convened the meeting at 9:35 p.m.

Following the recess, the rest of the report was reviewed, including the previously voted article recommendations as well as the previously voted budget recommendations and the draft budget endnotes. When a final draft of the report is approved, Mr. Arnold and Mr. Behn volunteered to pull all the parts of the report together in a document file and prepare it as a PDF to be sent to the printer.

At the conclusion of the review of the draft Report and Recommendations document, Mr. Behn moves to approve the Advisory Finance Committee booklet as amended and edited today, with the provision that typographic and formatting changes – including verifying the consistent and correct use of amounts – which do not impact the substance can be made by the Chairman, the Vice-Chair, and his designee. The vote to approve the report is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

At the conclusion of this vote, there was discussion about the number of copies to print. There is some feeling that the Town Meetings may be better attended this year due to the Special Town Meeting articles and that, therefore, more copies of the report should be printed. Mr. Behn had requested and received quotes for printing a 60-page booklet in varying quantities and noted that the Committee's printing budget can accommodate printing 750-1,000 copies. After some discussion, the consensus of the Committee was to print 900 copies and leave enough money in the budget to, if needed, print a short addendum if recommendations can be made at a meeting next Thursday prior to Town Meeting.

### **Schedule of upcoming meetings**

Mr. Arnold has posted the upcoming meetings for Monday, March 12 (7 p.m. Town Hall), Thursday, March 15 (7 p.m. Town Hall), and Saturday, March 17 (noon - High School Auditorium).

### **Chairman, Committee Liaison, and Department Liaison Reports**

There were no reports that had not been previously discussed during the meeting.

**Comments and Concerns of Committee Members**

There were no additional comments from the Committee.

**Adjournment**

Mr, Behn moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 p.m. Vote to adjourn was 7 in favor, with 7 being present.

**Document List**

Financial pages for R&R: Reconcile, AFC Est R&E, Budget & Transfers – 3 scenarios.

2012 ATM Motions Final.

Draft ATM2012 AFC Report and Recommendations.

Non-Criminal Q&A.

Secr & Custod Salary Pay Schedule spreadsheet.

SPED FY13 Budget Summary spreadsheet.

STM Motions Final.

Updated FY13 Est Tax Rate Calculations & 5 Yr TM Proj Adj, Plus Debt & Assabet.

Levy Limit Calculations and Projections spreadsheet.

Amortization Schedule spreadsheet.