

Advisory Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
23 September 2013

Approved:  
September 30, 2013

Location: Room 23, Forbes Building

Members present:

Ed Behn, Chair  
Lisa Blazejewski  
Kathy Rosenblum Senie  
Sharon Kaiser  
Gary Wells  
Jim Tepper

Members absent:

Hank Rauch  
John Arnold  
Peter Allen

Others Present:

Derek Saari, Conservation Officer/Asst. Town Planner  
John Walden, DPW Manager  
Bob Rand, Fire Department  
Joe Harrington, Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Voting

Mr. Behn called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Wells' made a motion to approve the amended minutes of 16 September 2013. VOTED: 5 in favor, 1 abstention (Rosenblum Senie), with 6 being present.

**Review of Fall 2013 Special Town Meeting Warrant  
Article 14**

Derek Saari and John Walden met with the committee to discuss Article 14 which is a request for \$50,000 to fund a watershed maintenance project at Sandra Pond. Mr. Saari started the meeting by providing various photos of the areas around Sandra Pond where the project would take place. There are three parcels of land involved in the project, however most of the work would take place on the DPW managed parcel of approximately 3 acres of land that abuts the Reservoir. The other two parcels of land are managed by the Conservation Commission. Timber harvesting would take place on all three parcels of land and would involve the removal of dead or diseased trees, fallen trees, and invasive species (Honeysuckle). Mr. Saari did mention that some healthy trees may be removed to clean up the area as growth has made it difficult to get to fallen trees or trees in poor condition. The main purpose of the timber harvesting on the DPW managed land would be to open up the area for additional work in order to protect the town's water supply. The timber harvesting that would occur on the Conservation managed parcels would be to clean up the land. Mr. Saari later acknowledged that removal of healthy trees would occur as a means of compensating the contractor, who would sell and keep the proceeds of the wood product. The committee understood the need for cleaning up the land that abuts the Reservoir, but there were questions as to why there needed to be timber harvesting on the two parcels of land managed by the Conservation Commission. Mr. Walden noted that, by removing the dead and fallen trees, it would give access to clean up of trash and sand in this area and open up the trails. He also mentioned that it's important to establish growth on land away from the water, and that it is necessary to have an Eco system that isn't all of the same maturity in order to protect the water supply. Regarding the invasive species, Mr. Saari noted that the town should remove the Honeysuckle so it doesn't damage nearby homes. The timber harvesting accounted for \$15,000 of the \$50,000 that is being requested for this project.

According to Mr. Saari, the critical part of this project would be to do additional work on the 3 acres managed by the DPW that abut the Reservoir in order to protect the town's water supply. However, it was noted that the timber harvesting on this parcel of land must take place in order to continue to this next step. Along with the timber harvesting, the plan calls for building a landing area and access road that the timber harvester can use in order to remove accumulated sediment and debris from the entire main tributary length from the Mass Pike fence to the mouth of the Reservoir. Currently this area is difficult to get to since it hasn't been maintained. Building a road would provide the town with future access for clean-up and maintenance for years to come. In addition to gaining access to this area and creating a road for maintenance and in the event of an emergency, the plan also calls for re-shaping slopes and installing rip-rap to alleviate erosion and sediment transport from entering the Reservoir, and cleaning of headwalls and catch basins. Mr. Saari mentioned that it would also be helpful to identify and mark catch basins and install emergency boxes in the event of a chemical spill on the Mass Pike near the Reservoir. Mr. Rand was in attendance on behalf of Chief Perron to support this Article. In the 1980's, there was a chemical spill on the Mass Pike and the Fire Dept was able to access the headwall that was affected. Right now, the Fire Dept would find it difficult to identify where a spill was going since they cannot gain access to this area with their emergency vehicles. The amount needed for this phase of the project was estimated at \$25,000 of the \$50,000 that is being requested.

The additional monies needed for this project (\$10,000) would be used for the purchase of the rip rap (6"-8" stone), police details along Upton Road, specialized equipment for cleaning of the clam-shell type catch basins, and an update to the 10-year forestry management plan for this area. Mr. Saari was asked what the process was for creating and approving the forestry management plans. He said that he writes the plans, and Mr. Walden approves them. He said that no approval was necessary from the Conservation Commission or other town boards.

After hearing the discussion and questions posed regarding this project, Mr. Behn felt it may help clarify to voters if the job was broken out in to two parts. One part would address the need for clean-up, maintenance, and installation of a road on the DPW managed parcel adjacent to the Reservoir as being necessary to protect the town's water supply. The other part would describe the clean-up of the Conservation Commission's two parcels - what the benefits are to the town, and why it makes sense to do this project as a whole. However, the committee noted that the town has always desired the preservation of its natural resources and they'd like to not have healthy trees taken down unnecessarily.

### **Articles 1, 28, & 29**

Joe Harrington from the Ad Hoc Committee on Electronic Voting was in attendance to discuss the articles pertaining to electronic voting. Article 1 is requesting the use of electronic voting for the special town meeting taking place on October 21<sup>st</sup> instead of a "show of hands" as currently stated in the town bylaws. He mentioned that Article 1 would be voted on by paper at the town meeting and then, if passed, would transition to electronic clickers. Members of the Ad Hoc committee attended a town meeting in Wayland to observe how electronic voting worked. The reports from the Selectmen in Wayland after using the electronic method were enthusiastic. The clickers would have numbers for voting such as press "1" to vote "yes" – press "2" to vote "no" – or press "3" to "abstain". The same company that administered the electronic voting at the Wayland town meeting will administer the electronic voting at the special town meeting. They are offering this demonstration free of charge at both the October and March meetings. If the town decides to move forward with electronic voting, they can provide a quote. They would have a better idea of the cost after the 10/21 meeting, though Mr. Harrington guessed at \$35,000 to \$45,000 annually. OTI will provide the electronic clickers but paper slips will be available if there

aren't a sufficient number of clickers or if Article 1 doesn't pass. Audits of clickers can be done at the town meeting to make sure votes are registered. There will also be a Help Desk set up at the 10/21 meeting and an assistant will be on stage to help Nancy Yendriga and Mr. Harrington. When asked what he felt was the main benefit to electronic voting, Mr. Harrington mentioned privacy and that every ballot would be a secret ballot. Also the counting of votes would be more efficient and accurate.

Mr. Behn felt that a recommendation could be made in the booklet on Article 1 but that a recommendation on Article 28 would need to be made from the floor of the town meeting after viewing how the electronic voting worked and if it was going well. Article 28 is asking if voters would like to continue with the demo on electronic voting at the town meeting in March or if they'd like to see a line item added to the FY '15 budget allowing for electronic voting. Article 29 amends the bylaws. Mr. Harrington mentioned that if he finds they are running out of time at the special town meeting that he will pull up Article 28 so residents in attendance that experienced the electronic voting could vote on whether it should be continued.

There was a brief discussion on the articles pertaining to the purchase of the State Hospital land, particularly Article 6 regarding the revolving fund. There is concern that the town won't get back money deposited in this fund for sale of the State Hospital land until all of the parcels are sold, and that could take years. It was suggested that Town Counsel, Greg Franks, be contacted to help clarify laws governing revolving funds. Mr. Behn said he would follow up with Mr. Franks. These articles will also be discussed further when Mr. Malloy and a representative from the Board of Selectmen meet with the AFC.

#### **Article Action Item List - Update**

The committee reviewed what needed to be done for clarification on articles:

Article 1, 28, & 29 were understood after tonight's discussion with Mr. Harrington.

Article 2 – A TIF spreadsheet was sent out to committee members via email. Mr. Tepper asked how the performance has gone on prior TIF's (eClinical, Dana Films, and Micro Chem). He felt it would be helpful information to have on how prior TIF's have performed. Mr. Behn will follow up with Mr. Malloy.

Article 3 through 7 – further discussion on these articles will take place at a future meeting with Mr. Malloy and a Board of Selectmen representative.

Article 8 – no further action required.

Article 9 – Mr. Arnold followed up with the Library Board of Trustees. They cannot come in until mid-October. Since this article didn't call for an appropriation of funds, the committee will look to have the Library Board of Trustees attend a meeting in November to discuss their vision as to where they see the library growing in the future.

Article 10 – Mr. McNulty will attend the AFC's September 30<sup>th</sup> meeting to discuss the request for a part time Health Inspector. Additional clarification on this article can be directed to Mr. Malloy when he meets with the committee to discuss the purchase of the State Hospital land.

Article 11 & 12 – Ms. Kaiser reported that Mr. DeSiata said there would be no increase to Rec Dept fees if this article passes. Mr. Wells felt that the proposed changes could increase the

personnel head count for the Rec Dept. Mr. Behn asked Mr. Wells to follow up with the Assistant Town Manager and the Rec Dept to verify his numbers and get an explanation.

Article 13 – Mr. Rauch contacted Mr. Burn from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Ad Hoc Committee and the easements will only be in the town of Westborough for the pedestrian/bike trail.

Article 14 – Mr. Saari and Mr. Walden provided a sufficient explanation at tonight's meeting.

Article 15 – No additional action required.

Article 16 – Ms. Kaiser provided an update. She said that after checking with the Council on Aging that these funds are used for senior related activities and programs. The heating assistance is done through the state and is very regulated. The committee felt there needed to be a tightening of the language and further clarification on what the funds are being used for. Ms. Kaiser will follow up and report back to the committee.

Article 17 – Mr. Wells pointed out that there is still approximately \$16,000 in Article 10 from FY '12 that was appropriated toward the paving of the Senior Center. There was a question as to why these funds can't be used toward this current article. Will follow up with Mr. Malloy when he meets with the committee.

Article 18 – Lester Hensley from the Economic Development Committee and Jim Robbins from the Planning Board will be at the September 26<sup>th</sup> AFC meeting to discuss this article.

Articles 19, 20, & 21 required no additional action.

Articles 22 through 27 will be discussed at the September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting with Mr. Robbins and Mr. Hensley.

Article 30 – Mr. Behn has requested a map for the Country Club renovations.

Article 31 – addition off back of Town Hall – no additional action needed.

Mr. Behn suggested that a theme for the Memo to Voters in this Report and Recommendations Book focus on articles dealing with improving the economic environment that supports increased Commercial and Industrial development in town.

### **Future Meetings**

The next Advisory Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 30, 2013 at 7:00 pm in Room 23 at the Forbes Building.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Wells moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:01 pm. Motion to adjourn was 6 in favor, with 6 being present.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Thomas, Administrative Assistant