

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting No. 1, FY2015  
July 14, 2014

Approved:  
September 8, 2014

Members Present: Gary Wells, Chair, Ed Behn, Lisa Blazejewski, Peter Allen, Sharon Kaiser, Tara Howard. Absent: Hank Rauch, Jim Tepper, Kathy Rosenblum Senie.

At 7:00 p.m. Mr. Wells called the meeting to order in Room 23 of the Forbes Municipal Building.

### **Call to Order/Open Forum**

There were no requests to address the Committee.

### **Approval of Minutes**

#### **Meeting No. 30, June 2, 2014**

Mr. Wells and Ms. Howard requested corrections to the minutes. Mr. Behn made a motion to accept the amended minutes from 6-2-14. The vote was 5-0-1 with 6 being present (abstention: Allen).

### **Department Transfer Report**

The Committee received a Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments from Insurance to Legal in the amount of \$20,000. Mr. Behn made a motion to transfer from Insurance – Account #11933 in the amount of \$20,000 to Legal – Account #11513. Voted: 6-0-0 with 6 being present.

The Committee received a Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments from Town Clerk – Salaries & Wages to Elec. & Reg. Expenses – Printing & Copying in the amount of \$2,000. Mr. Behn made a motion to transfer from Town Clerk – Salaries & Wages Account #11611-5101 in the amount of \$2,000 to Elec. & Reg. Expenses – Printing & Copying – Account #11623-5228. Voted: 6-0-0 with 6 being present.

The Committee received a Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments from Insurance to Personnel Board in the amount of \$1,387.84. Ms. Covino was present in the event the Committee had any questions. Mr. Behn made a motion to transfer from Insurance – Account #11933 in the amount of \$1,387.84 to Personnel Board – Account #11523. Voted: 6-0-0 with 6 being present.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Behn mentioned that he attended the recent Charter Review meeting, along with Mr. Wells and liaison, Ms. Blazejewski. They brought up items that were discussed at the last AFC meeting, specifically submission of the budget and materials being available electronically, and requirements for the content of the budget being applicable to both the Town Manager and the Superintendent of Schools. Mr. Behn suggested that the Town Manager present his budget to the Board of Selectmen and then in a separate meeting to the general public, and the School Committee should do the same. Mr. Behn was disappointed in the tone of the meeting and thought the discussion turned in to more of a debate. Mr. Wells felt that the Charter Review was not a good place to define these items since only small parts of the Charter concern the Finance Committee. Ms. Blazejewski said they are still working on what absolutely must be in a Charter, what can be in a Charter, and what perhaps would be better as a bylaw.

### **New Business**

Mr. Wells suggested that the AFC suspend its August meeting. He mentioned there wasn't any pending business currently before the Committee and meetings would resume in September. The Committee voted to suspend the AFC August meeting as published. Voted: 6-0-0 with 6 being present.

### **Future Business**

Mr. Behn mentioned the recent article in the press about Westborough's increase in its bond rating to AAA. He said that Westborough will save about a million dollars on borrowings that are coming up. Mr. Behn credited good fiscal policy and tight budgeting for the increase.

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

Mr. Wells reminded the Committee that Mr. Behn has graciously agreed to be the temporary Vice Chair for the AFC but he is hoping that someone else will step forward.

Regarding liaison assignments, Mr. Wells has asked Mr. Behn to handle the School Committee. Ms. Howard volunteered to help Mr. Behn. Mr. Allen had to bow out from being the Conservation and Planning Board liaisons due to a conflict on most Tuesday evenings, but has agreed to take over the Police Department. Mr. Wells said that there are currently openings for liaison assignments for the Conservation Commission, Planning Board, and Library. Mr. Behn said he has interest in the Library but will wait to see what liaison roles the new person may want. Mr. Wells mentioned that liaison assignments can change and for Committee members to think about what they would like to do so he can have roles in place before budget season.

Mr. Wells mentioned the email he forwarded to Committee members regarding the meeting that the Green Technology Advisory Group is hosting on July 31<sup>st</sup> about the reuse of the Hocomonco Pond land and the proposed solar array. Please get back to Mr. Wells if you plan on attending the meeting so he can provide a headcount to Leigh Emery.

Mr. Behn, at Mr. Allen's request, provided an update on the Economic Development Committee (EDC). Mr. Behn mentioned that the EDC hired a new director. The EDC also has a new website that they've come up with to promote Westborough, and have been advertising on the digital billboards. Deborah Penta helped create ads showing the different aspects of working in Westborough. Mr. Behn pointed out that the Family Circle magazine ranked Westborough as the number one town to raise a family. He said that Family Circle hired a research firm that took in to consideration population, median income, home prices, school system, safety, recreational activities, and the generosity of the community, and that Westborough was the only town that was recognized in New England. Mr. Allen commented on the fundraising work done for Rwanda. Mr. Behn mentioned that he would like to see some sort of philanthropic activity to help celebrate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Westborough and Mr. Allen said that he thought the high school was already doing something like that. Mr. Allen indicated that the new director of the EDC has Westborough in the Telegram & Gazette.

Mr. Allen reported on the Municipal Building Committee (MBC). He said that the MBC meets the first and third Wednesday morning of each month. He attended the meeting on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, which included a walk through, and reported that the new Fire Station project is operating within budget and still on track for an end of September move in date. Mr. Allen thought the new station would be operational beginning in early October, but it wouldn't be until the first part of 2015 before the old station was demolished and punch list items complete. Mr. Allen felt the MBC was doing a good job minimizing change orders, which can be expensive since rates are negotiated. He has been impressed watching the MBC determine what is needed and what isn't necessary so as not to overspend on the project. Mr. Allen said that he also participated in the walk through of the Town Hall renovation project. He said that the inside has been totally gutted and offices are all framed. He mentioned that work on the new addition has not begun yet due to some issues with the adjoining property, but that it is still on track for a move in date of May 2015.

Ms. Blazejewski said that the Charter Review meeting was covered earlier and that the Capital Review Committee doesn't start meeting until October.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Behn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:38 p.m. The vote to adjourn was 6 in favor, with 6 being present.

**Document List**

- Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments – Legal
- Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments – Town Clerk
- Request for Appropriation Transfers Between or Within Departments – Personnel Board

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica Thomas  
AFC Administrative Assistant