Westborough Advisory Finance Committee Minutes of Meeting No. 7, FY2015 October 14, 2014 Approved: November 3, 2014

Members Present: Gary Wells, Chair, Sharon Kaiser, Lisa Blazejewski, Jim Tepper, Ed Behn, Peter Allen. Tara. Howard and Beth Blumberg arrived at 7:00 p.m. Absent: Hank Rauch.

At 6:34 p.m. Mr. Wells called the meeting to order in the Lower Level Meeting Room at the Westborough Public Library.

Call to Order/Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

John E. Arnold - Town Moderator - Special Town Meeting

Town Moderator, John E. Arnold attended tonight's AFC meeting. He started out by thanking AFC members for their hard work in a short period of time. He mentioned that the warrant for Special Town Meeting (STM) was just approved the month before, and that going forward, they are looking at bylaws and having the warrant done earlier. Mr. Arnold encouraged voters to attend STM. He pointed out that the meeting starts at 7 p.m. at the high school and his remarks would be brief in an effort to get through as many articles on the first night as possible. Mr. Arnold suggested that voters spend time reviewing the warrant and the Report & Recommendations Book (R&R Book) before STM. He pointed out that residents could check the Town's website for the Selectmen's votes, and also obtain an electronic copy of the R&R Book, and that voters come prepared so the meeting moves quicker. Mr. Arnold mentioned that hand held voting devices will only be used the first night (Monday night), and that extra nights will require the use of the paper slips to vote. Mr. Arnold is available if voters have any questions and he can be reached at moderator@town.westborough.ma.us. Mr. Wells pointed out the Town Moderator's comments in the R&R Book and Mr. Arnold said if there are any mistakes that he will accept responsibility. Mr. Arnold said that Article 35 may be tabled pending further study. There was discussion about printing the glossary separately. Mr. Behn asked Mr. Arnold if he would move up any controversial articles that may come toward the end of the meeting since electronic voting is only available the first night and residents may prefer a secret ballot. Mr. Arnold said he has given it thought and felt there may be frustration from moving articles around since that may slow the meeting, but if someone makes a motion then he will do it. Mr. Arnold mentioned that he will review the process to make sure he is aware of the procedure so he can handle what to do if a motion is made to move an article. Mr. Wells asked if there could be an override to overspend and get the electronic voting for all nights, and Mr. Arnold didn't think that was possible since the company providing the hand held devices may have other plans. Mr. Arnold reminded the Committee to remember to allocate funds for electronic voting for Annual Town Meeting (ATM) in March.

Open Discussion on Warrant Articles - Vote and make Recommendations for the Articles of the STM

Mr. Wells informed the Committee that he emailed the R&R Book, Revision F, out for their review. He said that there were some small accounting errors that were corrected by Town Accountant, Leah Talbot, that didn't affect the tax rate or estimated tax decrease. The numbers in the book have been verified by both Ms. Talbot and by Town Assessor, Linda Swadel. The total evaluation is final and is what will be used for the tax rate - and the same is true for average house values. There was discussion about the "Index of Articles and Summary Recommendations" in the R&R Book. The Committee agreed on an index that provided a brief description of the article, the proponent, and the amount. Mr. Tepper brought up the letter to the voters on page 3 of the R&R Book. The recommendation of the Committee was to change the last sentence in the fourth paragraph to begin with "As voters we each ask ourselves 'can we afford them all...ability to pay'", with quotes around the rhetorical question. Voted 6-0-0, with 6 being present.

Article 1, MIS/GIS Department Staffing. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Five Hundred Sixty Four (\$7,564) for the purpose of this article. Voted 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Tepper asked if this position was already created and Mr. Wells said that the position had been created but not yet funded.

- **Article 2, Firefighters Contract Appropriation.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Seven Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Eight (\$57,238) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- Article 3, DPW Manager Contract Appropriation. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Five (\$1,375) to the General Fund Public Works Salaries and Wages Account; One Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Five (\$1,335) to the Water Fund Salaries and Wages Account; and One Thousand Three Hundred Thirty Five (\$1,335) to the Sewer Fund Salaries and Wages Account for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Behn noted that this was an increase of 3.5% and normally salary increases are around 2%.
- **Article 4, Library HVAC Repairs.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Twenty Three Thousand (\$23,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Allen mentioned that the Library is asking for help from the Municipal Building Committee in overseeing their upcoming renovations (Article 7).
- **Article 5, Digitizing Historic Town Records.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Six Hundred (\$10,600) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 7-1-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 6, Restoring Historic Frames for Re-Use.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Nine Thousand (\$9,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 3-3-2, with 8 being present (abstention: Allen, Behn).
- **Article 7, Window Replacement and Restroom Repairs.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 8, Chapter 90 Reduction.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the town vote to reduce the appropriation from Article 8E of the 2014 Annual Town Meeting by the sum of Twenty One Thousand One Hundred Thirty Eight (\$21,138). Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 9, Co-Star Real Estate Market Data.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand (\$10,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 7-0-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Behn).
- **Article 10, Sick Leave Buy Back.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand (\$3,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 11, Fingerprint Scanner.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty One (\$15,731) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 12, Recreation Salaries and Wages.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the town vote to reduce the appropriation for the FY15 Recreation Department Salaries and Wages Account by the sum of Thirty Four Thousand Nine Hundred \$34,900. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.
- **Article 13, DPW Furnace Replacement in the Piggery.** Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand (\$10,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 14, Baker Way Pump Station Upgrade. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Sewer Retained Earnings the sum of Fifty Thousand (\$50,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 15, Water Department Water Line Maintenance. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Water Retained Earnings the sum of Fifty Thousand (\$50,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 16, Sandra Pond Water Line. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Water Retained Earnings the sum of Eighty Thousand (\$80,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 17, School Budget Appropriation. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Nine Thousand Five Hundred (\$89,500) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Wells noted that this amount is the top number and that the paraprofessionals and tutors were voting October 15th and 16th. If this proposal isn't accepted, the School Committee will pull this article and present a new proposal on Town Meeting floor. Mr. Tepper asked if the percentage increase had been calculated and Mr. Wells said he was under the impression that the School Committee negotiated a 2% raise across all units. Mr. Behn mentioned that, as liaison, the salary increases were placed under step and lane line items on the school budget. Mr. Wells added that the schools had extra retirees so higher salaries were replaced by lower salaries for new employees. Mr. Tepper asked if there were detailed numbers and Mr. Behn said there was not regarding the salary negotiations, however, he does have the background on the salary numbers proposed for FY15.

Article 18, Mill Pond Test Drilling and Well Installation. Mr. Behn had questions - so voting on this article was skipped until later in the meeting.

Article 19, Web-Based Interfaced Direct Digital Control System at the High School and Mill Pond School. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Fifty Five Thousand (\$55,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Ms. Howard asked if we had heard back from School Superintendent, Amber Bock, regarding the savings the web-based controls will provide and Mr. Wells said that she went with a conservative estimate of 20% savings on utilities per year, or a 5 year payback, at each of these schools.

Article 20, Wireless Access Points. Mr. Allen asked if the School Committee reported back on whether they consulted the Town's MIS/GIS Department regarding this article and Mr. Wells said he never received word that they had. Ms. Blazejewski said that this article received her attention since lack of wireless access was noted as a negative on the school's recent accreditation and she felt this should be addressed immediately. Ms. Kaiser noted that upcoming PARCC testing will be done on a computer so wireless access will be necessary. Mr. Behn pointed out that the School Department has its own Technology Director, but that it would be good to get more people involved, though the schools should be self-sufficient. Ms. Blazejewski agreed with Mr. Allen and thought that sharing ideas with the Town's MIS/GIS Department would help and she mentioned that Ms. Bock was previously in a school district where she was used to getting help from that Town's departments. Mr. Behn asked about bandwidth and was told that it had been increased already. Ms. Howard was concerned with security regarding student and teacher data. Mr. Allen couldn't understand why Town resources wouldn't be tapped in to for their input and pointed out that the Library could have saved money on their HVAC system that they have experienced many problems with if they had involved the Municipal Building Committee in that renovation. There was some discussion about moving money from this article to the school's budget and whether it could then be used for something else. Mr. Wells said that he checked with Town Counsel, Greg Franks, and Town Accountant, Leah Talbot, and money that is voted for in an article has to be used for that specific item. Mr. Tepper asked if the School Department specified what they would take out of their technology budget if they received no money, and Mr. Wells said that they did not, but that this article only covers the High School. Mr. Wells said that Ms. Bock had mentioned that adding wireless access points is a progression and will happen throughout all of the schools and warned the AFC that these types of expenditures are likely to occur annually

over the next few years. Mr. Tepper asked why this expense wasn't put in to their annual technology budget and Ms. Blumberg guessed that it could be the result of PARCC testing and accreditation.

Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash and appropriate the sum of Ninety Thousand (\$90,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 5-2-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Kaiser).

Article 21, Amend Salary Administration Plan. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 22, Amend Classification Plan. Mr. Wells explained that this article creates the position for a part-time minibus driver for the Council on Aging and Article 23 funds the position. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 4-2-2, with 8 being present (abstention: Behn, Tepper).

Article 23, Council on Aging Staffer. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 4-2-2, with 8 being present (abstention: Behn, Tepper).

Article 24, Acceptance of MGL Ch. 32B, S20. There was discussion about whether the fund set up for OPEB funding was revocable or irrevocable. Mr. Arnold looked up the statute and said it doesn't specify whether the fund needs to be revocable or irrevocable. Ms. Blazejewski asked if this article was defeated what happens to the \$1.2 million that has been set aside and Mr. Behn said it would be held by the Treasurer. Mr. Tepper pointed out that the article specifies setting up a fund, but Mr. Behn would like to know the nature of the fund. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 25, Exemption from MGL Ch. 138, Sections 17A-17C. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 26, Accept Gift of Easement East Main Street. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 27, Accept Gift of Easement East Main Street. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 28, Accept Gift of Easement Oak Street. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 29, Acceptance of Various Roads. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 30, Economic Development Committee Membership. Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, was in attendance and mentioned that when he reviewed this article he realized you can't amend an article. He recommended that the motion be changed to "we recommend that the town vote to amend the action taken on Article 4 of the October 20, 2008 Town Meeting". Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to amend the action taken on Article 4 of the October 20, 2008 Town Meeting. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 31, Establish Dimensional Zoning Regulations for Building in (M-1) District. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, noted that this was the first article that requires a two-thirds vote.

Article 32, Amend Zoning Bylaw, Article 2, Section 2630, Building in M-1 District (M-1). . Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 6-1-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Howard).

Article 33, Amend Zoning Bylaw, Article 2, Section 2300: Use Regulation Schedule, Institutional Uses. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 7-0-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Tepper).

Article 34, Amend Zoning Bylaw, Article 5, Definitions. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 35, Amend Zoning Bylaw, extension of Downtown Planning Overlay District (DPOD). Mr. Behn asked if a vote should wait until Town Meeting floor since Mr. Wells received an email from Town Planner, Jim Robbins, saying that the Planning Board is going to wait and make a motion on Town Meeting floor after they've had a chance to further study this article and the impact to the Town. Mr. Arnold provided the motion he received from the Planning Board. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the matter addressed in Article 35 be referred to the Planning Board for furher study. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present. Mr. Arnold pointed out that this article required a majority vote.

Article 36, Amend Zoning Bylaw, amendment of Zoning Classification. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 37, Home Rule Petition – Selectman Emery Retirement. There was discussion about whether Selectman, Leigh Emery, had retired yet. The Committee wasn't sure so it was suggested that a vote wait until Town Meeting floor. Town Moderator, John E. Arnold, said it would be easy for him to confirm on Town floor. Mr. Allen said he had no problem voting to pass over if the proponent's motion is to now pass over. Mr. Wells agreed to wait until Town Meeting since it didn't involve finances. Mr. Behn moved that the Committee will make their recommendation at Town Meeting. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Article 38, Easement Funding – Open Space Reserve Account. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to transfer and appropriate from the Open Space Reserve Account the sum of Thirty Two Thousand (\$32,000) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 2-5-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Allen). Mr. Behn made a new motion that we recommend that the Town vote to defeat this article. Voted: 5-1-2, with 8 being present (abstention: Allen, Behn). Mr. Wells asked the Committee for their thoughts on this article so he could pass them along to the voting public. Most agreed that they needed more information. Ms. Blumberg thought the costs were open ended and she'd prefer to support their efforts with the grants. Ms. Blazejewski didn't feel like there was a solid plan. Ms. Howard was concerned that there was no due diligence in contacting the parties involved regarding the easements. Mr. Wells felt that the plan in place didn't seem to be a cohesive one with all the required easement holdings identified and a progressive sheet with an agreement on the easements. He felt it was premature to be looking for money for obtaining the spur easements when work hasn't been completed on the easements for the main trail. Mr. Wells pointed out that no one was opposed to the idea of the bike path just that the current plan proposed had a lot of open ended issues.

Re-vote Articles 6, 18, 22, and 23 for the STM

Article 6, Restoring Historic Frames for Re-Use. There was discussion about the initial vote on this article. Mr. Tepper felt this article could wait until the Annual Town Meeting in March where there would be time to thoroughly look at it and present as part of the Town-wide budget. There was some question as to whether the quotes received for refurbishing the frames were actual quotes, whether there was a need for the frames, and if they'd be used and hung. Ms. Blazejewski agreed with Mr. Tepper that 38 articles for Special Town Meeting was a lot but felt the FinCom's responsibility was to look at what an article was about not when it was presented, since the Selectmen accepted the article in the first place. Mr. Behn felt there wasn't enough time to go in to depth on this article since there were some missing points and the Committee was focused on more significant items. Ms. Howard said it didn't seem like they had a definite use for the frames and prints once they were refurbished. Ms. Blumberg thought that, as custodians for the Town, if we were going to hold on to the frames and prints that they should be refurbished and then figure out a use when finished. Mr. Behn questioned why the Library was doing this and not the Historical Commission. Mr. Allen wanted to take a re-vote. Mr. Arnold mentioned that it was okay for the Committee to not have a recommendation and present their reasons for this article and their reasons against. Mr. Allen made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to defeat this article. Voted: 5-2-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Behn).

Article 18, Mill Pond Test Drilling and Well Installation. Mr. Behn mentioned that he didn't feel he was informed enough about the wells and asked if the Committee had any information from the schools or DPW about a payback

period. Mr. Wells said that he did email School Committee Chair, Steve Doret, and also the DPW. Mr. Wells did receive a response back from the DPW regarding the cost of treated water but he never heard back from Mr. Doret. Mr. Wells was looking to get an idea from Mr. Doret as to how much water would be utilized by the sprinkler system that was already installed, or at least a 6 month rough estimate during the heavy watering months of May through September. Mr. Behn asked what the cost was for treated water per gallon and Mr. Wells said about half a cent. Mr. Allen thought that Mr. Doret had thrown out a figure of 400,000 gallons per week for watering the field at Mill Pond but Mr. Wells wasn't sure what that was based on. Ms. Blumberg pointed out that right now they are dealing with labor costs for manually watering the field plus the cost for treated water. Mr. Behn wasn't sure why they couldn't put a pipe in and connect to town water. Mr. Wells said that the DPW recommended to the School Department that they put their own well in since they don't want to pay for the treated water. Mr. Behn was concerned that we didn't have the calculations for a payback period. He suggested that the AFC's recommendation be made on Town Meeting floor so more information could be obtained. Mr. Tepper felt that \$50,000 seemed like a lot of money for a shallow well given the facts and that they know there's definitely water. Ms. Blumberg brought up that we voted in a prior Town Meeting not to allow sprinkler systems to hook up to Town water. Ms. Blazejewski located the bylaw but there was nothing mentioned about municipal use. Mr. Behn made a motion that a recommendation will be given on Town Meeting floor. Voted: 7-1-0, with 8 being present. Ms. Howard asked if someone should be contacted about getting more information and Mr. Wells said he would follow up. Mr. Behn suggested contacting Earl Storey. Mr. Behn also mentioned checking with Town Council, Greg Franks, to ask if Town water can be used for Town use.

Article 23, Council on Aging Staffer. Mr. Tepper and Mr. Allen requested that both Article 22 and Article 23 be revoted, but Mr. Allen would like to re-vote Article 23 first. Mr. Allen noted that the Selectmen added a requirement that the Council on Aging (COA) present a strategic plan before funding the position for a new minibus driver, however there wasn't a prerequisite that it be a good plan. Town Moderator, John E. Arnold mentioned that this requirement for a strategic plan was added at the last minute during the Selectmen's meeting regarding the STM warrant. He said that if this article is approved, money will be set aside while waiting for the strategic plan to be presented to the Selectmen by February 1, 2015, and then the money can be spent for the purpose of a new minibus driver. However, Mr. Arnold noted that there is no requirement that the Selectmen need to approve the COA's strategic plan. Mr. Allen felt this article was poorly worded and he thought it could wait until the Annual Town Meeting in March. He felt that would give the COA a chance to develop a strategic plan first and then vote to receive the funding for this position. Mr. Tepper said that he had more faith in the requirements placed on the COA by the Selectmen and that if this article passes the COA could have a plan presented in 2 weeks depending on how quickly they want to fund the position. Mr. Arnold pointed out that there is wording in the article about what the strategic plan should contain. It was noted that the COA didn't have time to meet with the AFC regarding these articles. Mr. Behn mentioned that when this issue came up last spring, the AFC specifically asked for a plan and suggested that they be more prepared when re-requesting this position and funding in the fall. He was disappointed that after 6 months the COA still didn't have a plan or justification for this position in place. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eleven Thousand Eight Hundred Four (\$11,804) for the purpose of this article. Voted: 1-6-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Blumberg). Mr. Behn made a new motion that we recommend that the Town vote to defeat this article. Voted: 6-1-1, with 8 being present (abstention: Blumberg).

Article 22, Amend Classification Plan. Ms. Blumberg asked if Article 23 was defeated if Article 22 should also be defeated. Ms. Blazejewski pointed out that the minibus driver position could be created, but then have the requirement that a strategic plan needs to be in place before funding this position. Mr. Allen felt there was nothing to gain from approving the creation of the position since it was just as easy for the COA to come back with both requests. Mr. Allen thought that the request for this position could change once the strategic plan is developed. Mr. Behn agreed that both of these articles were discussed together, and by having the COA develop a plan first, that this would give them some flexibility regarding the new position. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town so vote. Voted: 4-4-0, with 8 being present. The Finance Committee was split on its recommendation. Mr. Behn and Mr. Arnold both suggested making a motion on Town Meeting floor. Mr. Tepper said that he didn't see anything wrong with creating this position and then justifying the funding. Mr. Behn said that the AFC could have a proponent and an opponent explain their positions regarding voting on this article. Ms. Blazejewski volunteered to speak at Town Meeting. Mr. Arnold felt that the fair way to handle this was to say that there were 4 members in favor and 4 members opposed and

the voters could imply that there was no recommendation. Mr. Arnold can ask for a proponent and an opponent to speak at Town Meeting.

Vote acceptance of the STM Report and Recommendations Book

Mr. Behn moved to approve the Advisory Finance Committee Reports and Recommendations booklet as amended and edited at tonight's meeting, with the provision that typographic and formatting changes – including verifying the consistent and correct use of amounts – which do not impact the substance of the Report and Recommendation booklet may be made by the Chairman, Vice-Chair, and his or her designee. Voted: 8-0-0, with 8 being present.

Mr. Wells mentioned that he felt removing the glossary from the R&R Book and printing separately would reduce the size of future printings. He will provide final edits to Curry Printing in the morning. Mr. Wells felt that the AFC meeting scheduled for October 16th will likely be canceled, but he will verify with Committee members on Thursday in case a last minute meeting is necessary.

Adjournment

Mr. Behn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 p.m. The vote to adjourn was 8-0-0 in favor, with 8 being present.

Document List

ATM & STM, R&R Book Closing Motion

Respectfully submitted, Jessica Thomas AFC Administrative Assistant