

Members Present: Gary Wells, Chair, Lisa Blazejewski, Ed Behn, Peter Allen, Tara Howard, Hank Rauch, Beth Blumberg, Jim Tepper, Sharon Kaiser.

At 12:30 p.m. Mr. Wells called the meeting to order in the Auditorium at the Westborough High School.

Call to Order/Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Approval of Past Minutes:

There were no minutes to approve.

ATM preparation and related items:

There was discussion about the Report & Recommendations book. Regarding the "Message to Voters", Mr. Wells noted that he made a correction to the low growth range for taxes from \$124.56 to \$120.00 in the first paragraph. He also made some minor spelling corrections to the book, and added the vote by the AFC for the Gibbons renovation project (Article 10).

Historical Commission's FY16 Budget: Mr. Behn wanted to re-vote the Historical Commission's Salary & Wages line item for their FY16 budget. Mr. Behn made a motion to recommend that the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,003 in Salary & Wages and \$5,725 in Expenses for the Historical Commission's FY16 budget. It was noted that the Selectmen voted at the BOS meeting last Tuesday to create a Service Level Study Committee to study the services provided by the Historical Commission. There was discussion over what to do about the Historical Commission's Administrative Assistant. Mr. Rauch and Mr. Behn both agreed with the lower number of \$3,034 as proposed by the Town Manager and Board of Selectmen for the Historical Commission's Salary & Wages line item. Mr. Allen was more agreeable to funding the position at roughly 50% of what the Historical Commission was looking for until the Special Town Meeting in October. Mr. Behn asked Town Manager, Jim Malloy, if the AFC could vote a salary, and if it implies that the salary will be evenly split over the year or if it could be front loaded or back loaded. Mr. Malloy said the AFC could vote a salary as long as the average doesn't exceed 19 hours per week over 52 weeks. Ms. Blazejewski agreed with Mr. Allen's recommendation of funding the salary at 50%, and Ms. Kaiser agreed with that proposal as well. Mr. Wells felt that it should be business as usual with the Historical Commission and hopefully a committee is put in place to determine their needs going forward. This committee can then bring their recommendation back to the Fall Town Meeting as to what the Town wants for a Historical Commission. Right now Mr. Wells felt that the AFC was stuck between two different opinions. Mr. Behn disagreed and didn't feel someone should be paid more in wages when they may not have the work load to support that salary. Mr. Behn wanted to fund the position at 9 hours per week until October. Mr. Tepper didn't feel it was the AFC's place to determine if the Administrative Assistant's work load justified the salary being paid. Mr. Behn reiterated the motion he made previously to vote the Historical Commission's budget at \$12,003 in Salary & Wages and \$5,725 in Expenses. Voted: 6-3-0.

Article 8C – Regularly Recurring Articles – AFC Reserve Fund: Mr. Behn asked for a re-vote on this portion of the article. After doing more analysis, Mr. Behn mentioned the large increase to the Worcester Regional Retirement (WRR) assessment for this year and that it was \$300,000 more than what we thought. Since we can't vote the assessment, Mr. Behn thought that maybe we could use the AFC Reserve Fund to absorb some of this increase. Ms. Blumberg had questions about the assessment and Mr. Malloy provided an explanation. He said that next year they will be starting with a negative \$250,000 in this account. Mr. Malloy reviewed the history and the Board of Selectmen's fiscal policy. He said that a few years back they phased out using free cash for operating expenses, so he didn't support using Free Cash to fund the AFC Reserve Fund. Mr. Wells again pointed to the

excessive hit from the WRR assessment which pushed the tax increase up this year. He also pointed out that snow and ice removal is coming out of Free Cash. Mr. Wells mentioned that currently only \$28,000 has been spent out of the AFC Reserve Fund so far. Usually snow and ice deficit spending is funded from the AFC Reserve Fund, but because of the large amount of snow, the AFC wasn't able to cover the amount needed this year. Mr. Malloy added that he had sent Mr. Wells an email suggesting that the purchase of the new street sweeper for \$200,000 come out of what was left in the AFC Reserve Fund so the Town doesn't have to borrow the money. Mr. Malloy said that the Selectmen also support this suggestion. Mr. Wells disagreed and wanted to fund the AFC Reserve Fund with Free Cash due to unanticipated expenses for this year. Ms. Blazejewski agreed with Mr. Wells and felt that the AFC worked hard to keep the increase to taxes down. No re-vote was taken on Article 8C. .

Annual Town Meeting began at 1:00 p.m.

The AFC recessed at 5:50 p.m. when the ATM recessed.

The AFC reconvened at 7:30 p.m. The ATM reconvened at 7:45 p.m.

Adjournment

The ATM concluded at 9:51 p.m. The AFC adjourned their meeting at 9:52 p.m.

Document List

ATM 2015 AFC Report & Recommendations Book – Final
2015 State of Town Finances – Jim Malloy

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Thomas
AFC Administrative Assistant