

Members Present: Gary Wells, Chair, Beth Blumberg, Ed Behn, Lisa Blazejewski, Jim Tepper, Hank Rauch. Jim Driscoll. Absent: Tara Howard.

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

Approval of Past Minutes
Meeting No. 1, July 13, 2015

A vote on the approval of past minutes was postponed until the next AFC meeting.

Town Moderator – John Arnold

Town Moderator, John Arnold, met with the Committee to introduce its newest member, Jim Driscoll. Jim provided a brief background on himself. He is a Westborough resident with a background in finance. He has taught auditing, accounting, and finance at Worcester State, Northeastern, and Suffolk. He retired last year and after watching the AFC meetings on Westborough TV, was looking for something to do. It was a perfect fit and he's looking forward to working with the group. Mr. Arnold mentioned that Jim Tepper was re-appointed to another term. Mr. Arnold is actively looking for a ninth member for the AFC. He noted the upcoming Special Town Meeting on October 19th and hopes the meeting goes smoothly and efficiently. Mr. Arnold thanked the AFC for all that they do in preparing voters on the topics that will be covered.

Town Manager – Jim Malloy

Town Manager, Jim Malloy, was present to discuss the warrant for the Special Town Meeting. He passed out the most recent version of the warrant and reminded Committee members that the warrant is still fluid until it closes, so there could be additional changes.

Article 1 – Spurr House Committee Report. Mr. Malloy reminded the Committee that we should hear the report from the Spurr House Committee about their top recommendations as to what they propose for the future of that property. They have an Open House at the Spurr House planned for Sept 12th from 10-noon and a special open meeting on September 15th. They are busy gathering last minute public comments and hope to have a preliminary report by September 17th.

Article 2 – Spurr House Demolition. Mr. Malloy noted that this subject has been under discussion with the Municipal Building Committee (MBC) for about a year. He also pointed out that the Library Trustees support demolition of the Spurr House by a vote of 8-1. Mr. Malloy mentioned that the Town needs the land for additional parking and not the building. Ms. Blazejewski asked what it meant to "hear the report" as indicated in Article 1. Town Moderator, John Arnold, explained that the Spurr House Committee will have about 10-15 minutes to present their report. Once they decide what they would like to do, Mr. Arnold will assist them with the wording of their motion. Mr. Arnold mentioned that the scope of the wording will be broad enough to allow the motion to appropriate funds. Mr. Wells asked if the \$50,000 requested for the demolition of the Spurr House represented 50% of the costs. Mr. Malloy said that the \$50,000 would be for flattening the building and wouldn't include costs for installing and paving the parking lot. He mentioned that they wouldn't do anything until they found out if the Library received the grant for their renovation project. Ms. Blumberg asked if the Historical Commission was in agreement with demolishing the Spurr House. Mr. Malloy felt they were not in agreement but that the house could be sold and moved to another location if someone wanted to preserve it. There is also the delay of demolition bylaw. Mr. Wells asked where the amount of \$50,000 came from and Mr. Malloy said that the cost was a high end estimate from the architect used on the new Fire Station and Town Hall projects and it was for demolition only.

Article 3 – Centrell Drug Company Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Agreement. Mr. Malloy noted that the building where Ameridose was located on Flanders Road has been vacant for about two years. They went out of business due to the New England Compounding scandal. Mr. Malloy and the Economic Development Committee have been working with a drug company out of Little Rock, Arkansas, that is looking to expand in to markets in the northeast. Centrell would like to take over that building and Mr. Malloy would like to offer them a TIF to make the deal more attractive.

Article 4 – Fire Department Fire Pumper Purchase. Mr. Malloy explained that the current pumper truck is a combination rescue truck and doesn't really meet the town's needs. He noted there isn't enough room for gear nor does it hold enough water to really be considered a pumper truck. Mr. Malloy mentioned that the pumper truck failed the last inspection and, since they planned to buy a new one in a couple of years, he didn't feel it was wise to spend \$40,000-\$50,000 to repair the old truck. They have decided to purchase the new pumper truck now and replace Engine 4. Mr. Malloy pointed out that the funds would be taken out of Free Cash since the amount in Free Cash has increased due to money received from the schools. He would like to purchase the vehicle outright rather than borrowing. Mr. Wells asked about the capital fund and Mr. Malloy said that the money set aside of \$175,000 would be used to purchase a new rescue truck in a couple of years, which should cost approximately \$550,000. They will then have two separate vehicles.

Article 5 – Fire Department Brush Truck. Mr. Malloy informed the Committee that the Town of Northborough has a used brush truck for sale since Northborough has purchased a new one. Mr. Malloy noted that we don't own a brush truck. Last year the Fire Department went out on about 25 brush fire calls and this year they've had about 30 calls. Mr. Malloy mentioned that the vehicle will cost about \$18,000 to purchase and prepare for use, and we would be adding a vehicle to the fleet. However he pointed out that a brand new vehicle would be approximately \$150,000. There was a question as to when this vehicle would need to be replaced. Mr. Malloy thought it should last about 10 years, but he will double check.

Article 6 – HR/Payroll Software Upgrade. Mr. Malloy provided a handout and went on to explain that this software upgrade to the Town's Financial Software would allow payroll to be generated in house providing a savings of \$16,980 per year. Further benefits include the ability to send out notices and forms to employees electronically, the ability for employees to view and change their information online and the new system will be able to track absences and leaves. The upgrade would also track licenses and certifications and send out notifications to both the employee and department head as the expiration date gets closer.

Article 7 – Country Club Building Roof Replacement. Mr. Malloy informed the Committee that the Country Club roof experienced quite a bit of damage over the last winter. It has been patched in several different places but it is now time for a new roof. He received a quote for a new roof from the architect the Town is using for the Town Hall and Fire Station projects. The quote is \$181,900 for replacing the plywood and the shingle roofing. He mentioned that the Board of Selectmen thought the quote sounded high for replacing a roof. Mr. Malloy noted that the Town needs to perform work under prevailing wage. He could put the job out to bid, and if it comes in lower, the remainder would go back to Free Cash. Mr. Malloy let the Committee know that the roof is about 7,200 square feet and the cost is due to a deteriorated fascia, along with additional costs such as contingency, architectural, insurance, and legal. He mentioned that the current tenant has invested about \$250,000 in renovating the restaurant area and has about 8 years left on a 10 year lease. However, it is the responsibility of the Town (landlord) to maintain the building itself. Mr. Malloy felt the Town hasn't had to do much to maintain the building in the last several years. He also thought that the cost may be high due to having to replace plywood and dealing with some rot that will need to be repaired. Mr. Malloy hopes the cost comes in much lower than what he's asking for.

Article 8 – Debt Appropriations. Mr. Malloy explained that the amount needed in this article is for net additional costs for projects done over the past year. For example sewer and water projects, along with the Town Hall and new Fire Station projects.

Article 9 – Election Overtime. Mr. Malloy explained that the Town Clerk has used compensatory time for overtime costs due to elections. However, Town Clerk, Wendy Mickel, pointed out that this creates a staffing shortage in her department. She would prefer to pay overtime wages instead. Mr. Malloy noted that the costs would fluctuate based on the year and number of elections. There was some question as to whether the amount of \$3,132 was for calendar year 2016 or fiscal year 2016. Mr. Malloy will double check with Ms. Mickel and get back to the Committee.

Article 10 – Library Architectural and Engineering Services. Mr. Malloy reported that this cost is for additional architectural and engineering services for the renovation of the Library. They are asking for a transfer of funds from a previously approved article for window replacements so no additional funds are needed. The Library asked for assistance from the Municipal Building Committee (MBC) and they recommended doing total window replacements rather than inserts. The cost for the window replacements will be rolled in to the renovation project, of which the Town is hoping to receive back 50% in a grant from the MA Board of Library Trustees.

Article 11 – Westborough State Hospital Land and Hazardous Materials Survey. Mr. Malloy explained that the cost of \$176,000 is for a property survey of \$26,000 for the State Hospital land, along with \$150,000 for a hazardous materials survey. He said that they need to determine the property line as part of the preparation for selling off parts of this land. They also need to determine the extent of the hazardous materials in the buildings since that part of the property will likely be sold. In order to get more complete bids, they will include the hazardous materials survey in the RFP. The hazardous materials survey will help contractors bid on what needs to be removed and provide better negotiating. Mr. Malloy pointed out that the Town may end keeping about 45+ acres and selling about 45+ acres. He noted that the portion the Town would keep includes the soccer/sports fields, land along the shore line, and also putting aside about 5-7 acres for future municipal use.

Article 12 - Chapter 90 Reduction. Mr. Malloy noted that the State is dropping down from \$1,164,172 to \$780,403 for maintaining roads in FY16.

Article 13 – Country Club Equipment Purchase. Mr. Malloy mentioned that this is for the purchase of a new rough mower for the Country Club and would be a transfer of funds from the Country Club's retained earnings.

Article 14 – Town Hall Cleaning Contract. Mr. Malloy explained that an additional amount is needed since the Town Hall offices will be located on two floors and we have doubled the contract. The cost requested of \$7,136 is for the remaining 8 months of FY16. Mr. Malloy reviewed move in dates for the Town Hall and said that Town offices will be closed on November 9th for the move. A ribbon cutting has been proposed for November 10th for both the Town Hall and new Fire Station projects.

Article 15 – Sick Leave Buy Back. Mr. Malloy noted that a Library employee and the Fire Chief retired this past year that we weren't aware of.

Article 16 – Pre-K to 3 School Building Committee Town Authorization. Mr. Malloy explained that School Superintendent, Amber Bock, asked for a Committee to be assembled to assess the enrollment study received on June 30, 2015 – specifically for Pre-K to 3rd grade. Mr. Malloy pointed out that weaknesses in the elementary schools were indicated from the study – particularly at Fales. He thought that a replacement school would be needed rather than a renovation project due to the layout, windows, and other items not working. Mr. Malloy noted that we would be looking at 2023 before getting any funding from the State. We also need to time the end of debt for the High School and Mill Pond. Additionally the Committee would need to make a recommendation as to what can be done for the upcoming bubble of students expected.

Article 17 – Adoption of Chapter 62 of the Acts of 2014. Mr. Malloy said that this article would establish an exemption for excise bills for service members deployed overseas for 45 days or more since they aren't using their car.

Article 18 – Rescinding the Strong Fire Chief Statute. Mr. Malloy explained that the Board of Selectmen (BOS) would like to rescind the Strong Fire Chief Statute while there is a vacancy in that position. The BOS feels all departments need to be accountable to the Selectmen. Initially the statute was adopted back in 1968 to give the Fire Chief autonomy from politics, however over the years there haven't been any issues. Mr. Malloy noted that it would need to be done now since if someone is hired under the Strong Fire Chief Statute, then they are grandfathered in.

Article 19 – Wastewater Treatment Plant. Mr. Malloy mentioned that the Wastewater Treatment Plant Board has determined that they could lease a portion of their property at the plant to a third party solar company to install a solar array in order to reduce their overall costs. Mr. Malloy also noted that the Town is aiming to remove all electrical accounts and consolidate under one line item (Central Purchasing) for FY17 to offset solar credits.

Article 20 – Request for an Additional License for the Sale of All Alcoholic Beverages to Be Drunk on the Premises (Restaurant License). Mr. Malloy explained that a restaurant is being added to the Nathan Fisher House property and they would like to obtain a liquor license. The Town doesn't have one available right now so we are looking to add one.

Article 21 – Authorization to enter in to a PILOT Agreement. Mr. Malloy pointed out that the Town currently does not receive property taxes where solar fields are located. This article would allow payments to be received in lieu of taxes on the solar field located at 7 Maple Street. Mr. Malloy pointed out that negotiating PILOT agreements with solar fields is a relatively new process.

Article 22 & 23 – Downtown Overlay District Amendment and Sign Bylaw Amendment. It was noted that these are both zoning articles. Mr. Wells mentioned that we will invite the Planning Board in to discuss. Mr. Tepper asked for maps to be provided during that discussion. Mr. Behn asked about current signs and whether they are grandfathered in. Mr. Malloy said they would be unless the business has changed status or the sign was majorly destroyed. Mr. Malloy gave the example of the Package Store in the center of town. Since that business hasn't been in use for over 30 days, those signs would now be non-conforming under this article.

Mr. Malloy noted that there may possibly be another article that could be added for the bike trails, but the cost would come out of the open space fund.

Mr. Malloy pointed out that the amount of money in Free Cash would go from \$8,792,000 to \$7,858,000 after funding the articles mentioned in the warrant such as the Country Club roof, Pumper Truck, and State Hospital surveys. He noted that this amount is higher than the balance that was in Free Cash last year. Mr. Malloy said that some of the money in Free Cash came from circuit breaker funds from the schools (about \$1.4 million). Mr. Wells mentioned that he would have rather seen a reduction in the budget and taxes rather than turning that amount back over to Free Cash. Mr. Malloy said that if the AFC had any further questions that they could email him directly.

FY2016 Meeting Schedule

Mr. Wells reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule. It was noted that the meeting on Monday, 9/14, will be canceled. There was difficulty in obtaining meeting space for that night, plus it is Rosh Hashanah. However, all other meetings are on. The meeting location for 9/24 is still a "to be determined". Mr. Wells will look in to the break room on the third floor of the Forbes Building. Mr. Wells is hoping to start work on the R&R book around 10/1 and would like to start voting uncontested articles by that time. There was a discussion about what departments and committees should be invited in. It was determined that the following should appear at a future AFC meeting: Country Club Operating Committee, Westborough State Hospital Re-Use Committee, Spurr

House Committee, Fire Department, Assistant Town Manager, Kristi Williams (HR), Planning Board, and the Library. Mr. Tepper suggested giving these departments an idea of what will be discussed so they come prepared. It was noted that questions for the departments should be forwarded to Mr. Wells and he will get them to the appropriate people. The format for discussion and the approach was also mentioned. Mr. Behn asked about the Strong Fire Chief Statute and suggested bringing in retired Fire Chief, Nick Perron, for his thoughts. Ms. Blazejewski also pointed out that Town Counsel could come in. Mr. Wells mentioned watching last night's BOS meeting since Town Counsel spoke about this subject. Ms. Blazejewski felt it may be helpful to have a live discussion so questions can be asked. Mr. Arnold pointed out that the Selectmen are the proponents for this article so the AFC could invite them in as well. Mr. Behn was curious as to how many other towns in Massachusetts, with similar demographics as Westborough, have a Strong Fire Chief Statute. Mr. Driscoll noted that this was discussed during last night's BOS meeting.

Chairman, Committee Liaison, and Department Liaison Reports

Ms. Blazejewski reported on the Charter Review Committee. She said that they have been on a hiatus but will start meeting again on September 17th. The Charter Review Committee provided their recommendations to the Board of Selectmen (BOS). The BOS and Mr. Malloy are reviewing these recommendations to see how they would look as articles. Ms. Blazejewski noted that there will be no articles in this warrant, possibly there may be for the Annual Town Meeting in March. She said that they wanted time for public meetings and to have people ask questions before presenting any changes.

Mr. Tepper provided an update on the Gibbons School Building Committee. He said that the Committee will take a vote next week on the budget that will be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA). Mr. Tepper noted that they are \$2 million over what was projected. There have been heated discussions between the Committee and the design team since some items were added that weren't part of the scope. They have asked for these items to be taken out so they don't have to go back to the town asking for more money. Mr. Tepper mentioned that the Committee has gotten caught up in discussions about what is allowable through the MSBA since they only pay for certain items. He pointed out that contracts for the project should be in place after the first of the year. He also said that there has been discussion about getting some modular classrooms so the project can move faster.

Comments and Concerns – Committee Members

None

Public Reminders for Viewers

None

Adjournment

Mr. Behn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:26 p.m. The vote to adjourn was 7-0-0 in favor, with 7 being present.

Document List

Special Town Meeting Warrant – Mr. Malloy

Payroll/Human Resources Management System with Employee Self Service – Mr. Malloy

Sept/Oct 2015 Calendar Style Meeting Schedule – Mr. Wells

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Thomas
AFC Administrative Assistant