

Members Present 10/19: Gary Wells, Chair, Ed Behn, Lisa Blazejewski, Jim Tepper, Beth Blumberg Tara Howard, Jim Driscoll, Hank Rauch.

Members Present 10/20: Gary Wells, Chair, Ed Behn, Lisa Blazejewski, Tara Howard, Jim Driscoll. Absent: Jim Tepper, Hank Rauch, Beth Blumberg.

At 6:07 p.m. Mr. Wells called the meeting to order in the Auditorium of the Westborough High School.

Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee

Approval of Past Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

Fall Special Town Meeting – Warrant Articles – Committee Discussion and Votes

Article 9 – HR/Payroll Software Upgrade – Assistant Town Manager, Kristi Williams, MIS/GIS Director, Mark Stockman, and Town Treasurer, Joanne Savignac, met with the AFC prior to Special Town Meeting to discuss Article 9. Ms. Williams mentioned that the last time they met with the AFC on September 24th, they were still in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Since then, they have been able to meet with vendors and have a question and answer session, along with demoing the software. After that, they went through each proposal and rated vendors based on their features. Ms. Williams noted that MUNIS rated the highest (50+ points), followed by their current software, Harper's, who rated in the 30's, and then two other vendors who came in lower than that. Ms. Williams mentioned that the cost for MUNIS came in higher than they thought, since a software piece was added for \$16,000, but it wasn't needed. Ms. Williams mentioned that they deleted this software piece that wasn't needed and the quote has now changed from \$98,700 to \$97,168, and the full annual maintenance cost is \$20,010. Ms. Williams pointed out that the current cost is \$27,200. She mentioned that the benefits are the same as what she described in the last meeting. There will be efficiencies to the administration and ease for employees in accessing payroll records and forms. Mr. Wells was not convinced that the new software had been totally vetted. He felt that with all of the information coming in so late, he didn't think we had a good idea of the potential hidden costs. Mr. Wells asked what the implications would be if we defeated this article tonight and they bring it back in March. He felt that they could continue to move forward in the planning process, and we could still accept MUNIS, but what is the harm in double checking that the numbers are correct and verifying that there are no hidden costs. Ms. Williams noted that they have been looking at software packages since last February and they feel comfortable with their recommendation. If they had to wait until March to bring this back, she wasn't sure what they'd do over the next few months. Ms. Williams pointed out that they have already gone through the RFP process and Mr. Stockman has been working closely with the selected vendor. She mentioned that the information that the AFC requested came in late because MUNIS quoted including the Tyler forms in the RFP but then they took out this additional software piece. Mr. Wells confirmed that we are bringing payroll back in-house and asked if additional personnel is needed since he was concerned with adding more work to the Treasurer's office. Ms. Williams said she'd like to get to the point where the Town is emailing information so they are not printing as much. Mr. Wells noted that they will still be printing out check stubs every other week. Mr. Driscoll asked what the implementation period was and Ms. Williams said about three months. Ms. Williams pointed out that they are going through the collective bargaining process with the different departments to implement electronic pay stubs, however, there may still be some employees who need their check stubs printed. Ms. Williams mentioned that they could have kiosks that are accessible for employees who may not have computer access. Mr. Tepper asked about the estimated savings and whether that is annually or only a one time deal. Ms. Williams and Ms. Savignac confirmed that the cost for the payroll through Harper's, the current software, is \$25,000 annually. Ms. Savignac provided some history from when the payroll used to be processed in-house. She mentioned that when they

outsourced the payroll, they lost a full time person in her department. Now they are bringing it back in-house to provide more HR functionality. Mr. Wells asked about the Assistant Treasurer's position that we used to have and if that has been lost. Ms. Williams said that is part of her job title now. Ms. Blumberg asked what the salary range would be for an Assistant Treasurer and Ms. Savignac estimated around \$75,000-\$80,000 annually, but that didn't include benefits.

Mr. Wells pointed out that the Spurr House article will be up first. He noted a couple of wording changes in the motion which are only technicalities but corrected the grammar. Mr. Wells read the Spurr House Committee's motion to the AFC and mentioned that this is the motion that will be presented at tonight's Town Meeting. Mr. Tepper asked if Town Moderator, John Arnold, confirmed the voting requirements and whether this was a majority vote. Mr. Wells asked if AFC members were ready to vote the motion since currently they have only voted to accept the Spurr House Committee's report. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to offer for sale the buildings, property, and land at 7 Parkman Street, known as the Spurr House for a period of 18 months, starting when the buildings, property, and land are listed for sale; and that the Town recommends the Board of Selectmen establish a price to sell the buildings, property, and land for its appraised value or higher given its current condition and for an expected use consistent with the zoning of the neighborhood. Voted: 6-2-0.

Mr. Wells asked if Article 17 for Rescinding the Strong Fire Chief Statute should be re-voted since two AFC members were absent that evening. Ms. Howard would like to re-vote this article since she was one of the members absent. Mr. Wells thought that this might be a controversial article. Voted 6-2-0.

Article 9 – HR/Payroll Software Upgrade – Mr. Wells asked if the Committee had a chance to think about Article 9 after meeting with Ms. Williams, Mr. Stockman, and Ms. Savignac, and wanted to open up this topic for discussion. Ms. Blazejewski mentioned that she had no problem with the technology but was concerned with the potential impact on the Treasurer's office. She pointed out that they may not have the manpower to handle processing the payroll. Ms. Blazejewski felt the proponents of this article were asking for a decision too quick and we could pay for it later with items not considered. Mr. Driscoll agreed with Ms. Blazejewski. Ms. Howard asked if they will be asking for a new position within the Treasurer's office at the March Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Blazejewski explained that creating a new position required going to the Personnel Board first. Mr. Rauch wondered why we would be purchasing a new software package that would increase work in-house. Mr. Tepper felt that the work load may need to be re-distributed since they found areas where it would save time. Mr. Behn could see bringing in the HR functions but maybe not payroll processing quite yet. After some discussion the general feeling of the Committee was that this was not fully vetted. Mr. Tepper pointed out that the Town Manager should be present for this conversation since he manages these folks and would be the one to authorize the redistribution of work. Ms. Blazejewski said that right now she can't say she's comfortable voting for this article, and didn't see a problem with waiting until March. Ms. Blumberg pointed out that the school system is stressed and they'd like the new software sooner rather than later, which is why they are paying the majority of the cost. Mr. Wells asked about the implications of trying to install software too quickly and was concerned there could be errors with taxes. Mr. Behn made a motion that we recommend that the Town defeat this article as printed in the warrant. Voted: 6-2-0. Mr. Tepper noted that, if asked, the AFC should be prepared to say that they agree with the purpose of this article but feel we may not be ready for it quite yet since there are unanswered questions.

Town Manager, Jim Malloy, approached the Committee to inform them that the Board of Selectmen are going to recommend that we pass over Article 16 pertaining to veterans being exempt from excise tax if deployed outside of the United States for 45 days or more. He said that the statute has changed and could include military time served within the country. Mr. Malloy was concerned that the financial impact could be greater than they thought so they want to wait on adopting this statute until they can review it more.

Special Town Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

Westborough Advisory Finance Committee minutes - STM
October 19-20, 2015

The AFC recessed at 11:06 p.m. on October 19, 2015 when the STM recessed.

The AFC reconvened at 7 p.m. on October 20, 2015 when the STM reconvened.

Adjournment

The STM concluded at 8:46 p.m. Ms. Howard made a motion to adjourn at 8:46 p.m. Voted 5-0-0.

Document List

Report & Recommendations Book – AFC

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Thomas
AFC Administrative Assistant