

Members Present: Ian Johnson, Chair, Judy Lucas, Cliff Watts, Ronn Moody, Jo Lown, Denzil Drewry, John Arnold, Carolyn Spring. Absent: Brigitte Casemyr.

At 7:09 p.m. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

### **Open Forum**

Anna Tortora appeared before the committee to voice her concerns about the teachers' union contract negotiations in light of the tight budget situation this year, and urge all parties to consider the effect of an override / tax increase on many residents. Elderly residents and others on fixed incomes will find it difficult to absorb a tax increase.

### **Approval of minutes –Meeting No. 9, February 4, 2008, FY2008.**

Ms. Lown requested a change in the first paragraph on page two, to "that a description of the Advisory Finance Committee's role does exist."

Ms. Lown moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 9, February 4, 2008, FY2008, with the noted change. The vote to approve the minutes was 7 in favor and 1 abstention (Johnson), with 8 members being present.

### **Snow & Ice Budget Deficit Spending Requests**

Committee reviewed a request from John Walden, Manager, DPW, to allow deficit spending on the Snow Budget, Expenses of an additional \$100,000. The Board of Selectmen approved this request at its last meeting. Committee members questioned one of the expenses listed. Liaisons to the DPW will request clarification. Mr. Moody moved acceptance of this request. The vote to approve the deficit spending request was 7 in favor and 1 opposed (Spring), with 8 members being present.

Committee reviewed a request from John Walden, Manager, DPW, to allow deficit spending on the Snow Budget, Wages of up to \$20,000. The Board of Selectmen will vote on this request at their next meeting on February 26, 2008. Mr. Moody moved acceptance of this request. The vote to approve the deficit spending request was 8 in favor, with 8 members being present.

### **Budget and Article Review – Recreation Department**

Frank DeSiata presented the Recreation Department budget request of \$218,328, an increase of 3.6% (\$7,581) over last year's budget.

The Recreation Department budget includes salaries for 3 full-time employees and 50% of the salaries for temporary and seasonal employees. All other expenses and 50% of the salaries for temporary and seasonal employees are paid from the department's revolving account. The increase requested provides a cost of living increase for the Department Head, union-negotiated increases for the Program Coordinator and Administrative Assistant, and a full year of the increased minimum wage for temporary and seasonal employees. The minimum wage increased to \$8.00 per hour as of January 1, 2008.

No projects are needed at this time. A Committee to determine uses of the Lee Property has been formed and begun work, which may result in future projects for the Recreation Department. Current properties are in good shape, and maintenance of these properties comes from the DPW budget. Mr. DeSiata commended John Walden and the DPW for their good maintenance of town properties. The lights at Haskell Field got new

bulbs a couple of years ago. The light poles installed in the early 1980s have been tested and are still in good shape. The power control was replaced 4 years ago.

All Expenses for the Recreation Department are paid from the revolving account, with the income from program fees. Expenses from the revolving account must be approved by the Recreation Commission. This year, the account currently has about \$75,000 to \$80,000 in it with approximately \$35,000 of expenses pending. Program enrollments are up this year, even with increased competition from other sources.

The agreement with Northborough to share the beach at Chauncy Lake has been in place since 1978. The agreement is cost effective, with Northborough sharing the cost of sand and other maintenance. Northborough pays for its portion of the costs directly rather than being billed by Westborough, so these funds do not appear in Westborough's budget. Northborough residents pay Westborough for passes also.

Summer jobs applications are being distributed now. The Recreation Department hires 60 to 75 Westborough residents each summer.

Payment for referees comes from the Basketball expenses and so is not listed in the wage schedule.

### **Budget and Article Review – Library**

Carolyn Delude, Director, James Holmes, Chair, Library Trustees, and Library Trustees Michael Grim, Patricia Fontes, Mary Lou Conna, Lisa Freeman, Karen Griegal, and Linda Rice presented the Library budget request of \$882,057, an increase of 3.38% (\$28,856) over last year's budget.

Salary/wages increase of \$16,944 includes only increases voted by the Personnel Board or negotiated in union contracts. No new personnel or increased hours were requested. Current operating hours meet minimum requirements set by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Expenses include:

Line 5201 – Advertising, \$340 (increased from \$200) for job postings in local newspapers

Line 5202 – Grounds and Building Maintenance, level funded at \$9,300, includes cost of elevator inspection and repair, furnace repair, pruning of shrubs, professional cleaning of carpets, window washing, and building repair.

Line 5202E – HVAC Maintenance, \$8,000 (increased from \$7,888) for seasonal inspection, maintenance and repair of HVAC system.

Line 5203 – Equipment Maintenance, level funded at \$2,800, includes cost of service and repair for fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, snow blower, 20 computers, etc.

Line 5205A – Office Equipment, \$10,231 (increased from \$8,494) for replacement of 2 computers, 28 wood chairs originally purchased in 1980, and 1 office copier. The copier had in the past been provided at no charge by the vendor who installed the for-pay copier for public use. This service is no longer available.

Line 5209 – Travel, \$400 (decreased from \$500) to cover staff travel to required regional meetings.

Line 5211 – Electricity, \$16,800, and Line 5213 – Fuel, \$14,700, combined increase of \$1,500 over last year reflects cost increase.

Line 5217 – Dues and Memberships, \$445 (increased from \$320), includes 4 MLA memberships and 1 MA Trustees Association membership, an increase of 1 membership over last year.

Line 5219B – Special Event/Program, level funded at \$1,900. Special events are often grant-funded, with some grants coming from the Cultural Council, and so the request does not reflect the total cost.

Line 5223 – Office supplies, level funded at \$2,000, includes ink cartridges for computer printers.

Lines 5224 – Other supplies (\$20,484), 5224E – Other supplies, material (\$20,435), and 5224F – Book supplies (\$3,500). Total increase over last year is \$4,157.

Line 5227 – Books and Periodicals, \$91,399 (increased from \$88,481).

Line 5227A – Book binding, level funded at \$500, for the preservation/reproduction of books at risk. This amount covers the cost to preserve 3 or 4 books.

Line 5243 – Misc. Service/Computer, \$27,922 (increased from \$27,149) covers cost of membership in C/W MARS, the library's automated resource sharing network.

Income: Fines and Receipts, \$13,200. This income goes into the town's general fund.

Report on Article 12 from last year:

Wireless network has been installed. There are 8 public computers in the main room and 3 in the Children's room. The wireless will not decrease the need for these, although it will alleviate the wait times to use them and may prevent an increased need. Mr. Arnold pointed out that what has occurred in other libraries when wireless is installed is that the public computers become more accessible to those who don't have another option, and patrons who can bring their own computer do. \$3,200 remaining from \$10,000 request will be used to install more access points if necessary.

HVAC pipe repair and exterior painting of building have been completed under budget. The Trustees will return \$16,580.80 to the town.

Article 14. Improvements to Library Building (in draft dated February 25, 2008). This is a request for \$34,795 for upgrades to the Fire Alarm System, painting the interior of 1980 building, scheduled HVAC repair, and to install a temperature alarm system to the furnace.

The upgrades to the Fire Alarm System are to replace the alarm panel and some smoke detectors. The last test of the system noted the age and incompatibility of the current system, installed in 1979. Parts are no longer available for the panel which is outdated. \$15,000 will replace the panel and some smoke detectors. This upgrade should last for several years, until funding is available to replace the whole system.

Painting the interior of the 1908 building has not been done since 1975, \$5,000.

HVAC repairs include replacing 3 fan controls (\$6,995) and replace and install DDC controls (\$5,800). These repairs are done on a schedule recommended by the inspectors.

Installing a temperature alarm system to the furnace (\$2,000) – This repair was recommended by the town's insurer.

Library Trust Funds come from bequests left either to the town for the library or to the Library Trustees. Funds left to the Library Trustees are generally for specific uses, such as buying books about history, or books for Children's Room, etc. Funds left to the Town are called Type A, and are available for more general use to support the library. Interest from these funds is subtracted from the total budget request for the library.

### **Liaison Updates**

- Mr. Johnson noted the draft Warrant in the folders. The Warrant needs to be voted on by the Selectmen by April 8<sup>th</sup>. There have been no Citizen's Petitions brought forward as of today.
- Ms. Lown reported on a meeting she attended to discuss the Treatment Plant. They will be asking for an additional \$9.5 million (over the \$28 million approved at last ATM.) Increased costs come from inclusion of items not previously considered, additional cost of current bid items, and anticipated future costs. A copy of an explanation of the increases prepared by Earthtek has been distributed to committee members. Ms. Lown asked the committee members to review the explanation and to send her any questions they want relayed to the Wastewater Treatment Board members before they appear before the committee. Mr. Danis, Town Coordinator, noted that the bids have not yet gone out so the figures are not set. The bids may not come in until just before ATM. Ms. Lown noted that the \$9.5 million request is a "worst case" request and may end up being lower.
- Mr. Drewry has met with the Council on Aging and will be contacting them again to discuss their budget in more detail. Veteran's Services will present their budget on Thursday, 2/28. The Zoning Board of Appeals is requesting a minor increase.

- Mr. Arnold is continuing to schedule meetings with his liaison assignments. The Government Study Committee is presenting their summary report to the Board of Selectmen tomorrow, 2/26/08. The Selectmen will then decide what happens with the committee.
- Ms. Spring has met with the Police Chief and he is ready to present his budget request. Town Counsel is coming in on Monday, 3/3/08. Several townspeople have approached her with questions for the School Committee which Ms. Spring has forwarded to the appropriate liaisons.
- Ms. Lucas and Mr. Watts will be meeting with the School Department. The School Committee is beginning budget discussions in March. Mr. Johnson suggested having a representative of the AFC attend these meetings as it was helpful and appreciated last year.
- Mr. Watts noted no surprises in the budget for the Building Commissioner, which will be presented 3/3/08.
- Mr. Johnson noted a clarification from the Personnel Board on the seasonal worker impact at the DPW. The change will have no impact on the DPW budget.

**Comments and Concerns of Committee Members**

No comments or concerns were noted.

**Adjournment**

At 8:47 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous (8 members present and in favor).