

Members Present: Jo Lown, Chair, Bill Linnane, Cliff Watts, Ian Johnson, John E. Arnold, Brigitte Casemyr, Michael Meachen. Absent: Judy Lucas, Christine Hirsch.

At 7:00 p.m. Ms. Lown called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

FY10 Budgets and Articles

Library

Carolyn Delude, Director, James Holmes, Helena Engberg, Patricia Fontes, Lisa Freeman, Karen Griegal, and Dorothy Mello, Trustees, presented the budget request for FY10. Mr. Arnold noted that the FY10 budget as recommended by the coordinator does meet the requirements for certification and state aid.

Ms. Delude described new features on the library's web site, including online reservations for museum passes and online availability of the community room. Library circulation has increased 6% over the last year, and there has been a 38% increase in the Inter-Library loan program. These loans now require two hours/day to inventory and notify patrons that their book has come in. The library does use seniors from the town's work program as well as volunteers. There are currently 18,328 active library cards.

This budget makes no changes to personnel, only negotiated wage increases are included. Expenses have been cut. The Library is expecting minimal staff turnover for FY10, so Advertising funds used to meet the legal requirements for job recruitment have been cut to \$200. They will defer the purchase of new chairs, seating in the Children's Room, shelving, and computers. Librarians will pay their own dues and membership fees in the Mass Library Association and New England Library Association. Staff Travel, which includes delivery of library material to shut-ins and attendance at regional association meetings, has been reduced. The special events/programs budget is level-funded at \$995. Book-binding, a long-term project for preservation/reproduction of historic books, will be suspended for one year.

Library fines are expected to generate \$13,200. Current fines are 10¢ per day for books and periodicals, and \$1 per day for DVDs. These fines were increased 4 years ago. Mr. Arnold noted that increasing fines can be counterproductive -- if the amount of the fine accumulates to the cost of replacement of the item too quickly there is less incentive for the book to be returned. Replacement cost does not take into account the time spent ordering and processing replacements, and the time the item is unavailable to other patrons, so libraries try to set fines that will encourage people to return the items and pay a fine rather than just pay the fine and keep the books.

Book purchases are chosen by librarians from review journals before books are published, with some reader requests included. The library belongs to a regional cooperative which puts the list out to bid and all libraries in the region buy from the winning bidder.

ARTICLE 16. Improvements to Library Building (Library Board of Trustees)

\$80,000 in funding is requested to repair water damage to the northwest corner of the building, and includes masonry and limestone repair, some roof repairs, and repair to the fire escape. This damage was noted after some flooding around the drainage dry wells at this corner of the building. More testing will be done when the weather warms up to determine the extent of the damage, and whether the interior drain pipe also needs to be

replaced. The cracks in the masonry may be due to the back-up of the dry wells or may be a more serious problem. The preliminary assessment including Order of Magnitude Costs was supplied by the Engineer, the Maguire Group. This repair is a good match for the intended use of Trust Funds A, which will require a vote of Town Meeting to approve.

Town Clerk

Nancy Yendriga, Town Clerk, presented the budget requests for the Town Clerk's Office and for Elections. Ms. Yendriga has been Town Clerk for 15 years. This budget includes mostly salary and wages, and is not level-funded. The department has three employees. Expenses of \$4,350 include travel to conferences, membership in the Mass Town Clerks Association, training and education for professional conferences, office supplies, book binding for records of births, marriages, and deaths, and forms. Estimated receipts from various licenses, fines, permits, and certificates are \$44,600.

Elections and Registration

Ms. Yendriga presented the budget for elections. FY10 will include only one election, so the budget has decreased from last year when there were three elections. Expenses of \$20,605 include professional services funds (used mostly for Annual Town Meeting), food for election workers, printing and copying for town ballots (the Commonwealth pays for printing of state election ballots,) coding Automark (handicapped marking device) for town ballots as required by Secretary of State to comply with federal election law, and \$4,000 for the possible rental of five new voting scanners.

ARTICLE 19. Purchase Voting Equipment (Town Clerk)

This article requests funds for the purchase of 5 new voting machines. The current voting machines will no longer be supported by the manufacturer, and so can no longer be used. Maintaining the integrity of the election process is of primary importance to the town. The Commonwealth has not certified the new machines, so if certification happens in time for the election funds will have been approved to make the purchase. If not, funds are included in the Elections and Registration expense budget to rent five machines. The cost of purchase includes training election workers on use of the new machines.

Planning Board

Jim Robbins, Town Planner, and Ed Newton, Planning Board Chair, presented the budget. This budget is level-funded, which results in a 55% reduction in expenses but no cut in staff hours. Expenses which have been decreased include advertising for placing legal notices, travel in-state for site visits to subdivisions and special permits, travel out-of-state to annual APA conference and other conferences, dues and memberships for professional organizations, office supplies, postage and currier services, books and periodicals, and other professional services (used for legal consultants.) There are funds remaining from a prior article (to update the Master Plan) which can be used for the legal consultant for the senior housing by-law. Training and education activities are useful to stimulate the exchange of ideas on new initiatives.

The community has changed substantially in the last five years, becoming more commercial than residential. Only two smaller residential developments are currently in progress. EMC has been given approval on a large commercial development in town. Several projects are awaiting improvement in the economy, including the Transit-Oriented Village and a mixed residential/commercial project on Route 9 near Target.

The Bay State Commons is almost done, with only a few items remaining. There has been a problem with the pavers used in the parking lot on Union Street which will need to be changed to minimize damage from snow plowing. There are some sidewalk frost heaves which need repair. And, there are still some deed restrictions being negotiated. The transfer of the park is close to resolution, however, and has been added to the draft warrant in anticipation of a possible settlement.

ARTICLE 26. Zoning Bylaws and Zoning Map Amendment (Planning Board)

To change two lots at the corner of Milk Street and Route 9 from Single Residential (R) to Highway Business (BA). These are the only two residential lots left in this area, and the owners now want to make the change.

ARTICLE 27. Zoning Bylaw Amendment (Planning Board)

To add an amendment to the Zoning Bylaws to create a new section entitled “Senior Housing”, to encompass all types of senior housing from congregate housing to nursing homes. This will be kept near the center of town to maintain walkable access to services. This needs to be approved by the Board of Selectmen, then the Planning Board, by March 30 in order to be able to complete all public hearings and advertising requirements prior to Annual Town Meeting. The Planning Board would prefer this to be included on the Warrant this spring if possible.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 15, March 5, 2009.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the minutes of meeting No. 15, March 5, 2009. The vote to approve the minutes was 6 in favor and 1 abstention (Arnold), with 7 being present.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Linnane has spoken with John Badenhausen about making another presentation. Youth and Family Services (WYFS) is scheduled to attend the AFC meeting on March 30. Mr. Linnane also noted another letter of support for WYFS services from a resident.

Mr. Watts reported on the School Committee budget meeting held last Wednesday. Presentations included Transportation, Technology, Facilities, and Utilities budgets, but no individual schools. Budgets for the elementary schools and Mill Pond will be presented on March 18, and the Gibbons Middle School, High School, Fine Arts, and Athletics on March 25. The primary issue is people. The committee may decide to submit a budget that will need Town Meeting support. Preliminary enrollment indicates a 100 pupil drop in enrollment next year. At this time, the School Department estimates 33 positions may be cut.

Ms. Lown will meet with Maryanne Bilodeau tomorrow. She has met with Greg Franks, and discussed the Nathan Fisher House Articles. One of these articles has now been removed, and Joe Harrington is investigating the Articles to determine if they are similar to ones already approved at a prior ATM. Mr. Harrington will attend the AFC meeting on 4/16.

Mr. Johnson noted the DPW is scheduled to present their budgets on 3/19. He will distribute the impact statement prior to the presentation.

Ms. Casemyr reported on her meeting with Paul McNulty, which Bill Linnane also attended. Hazardous Waste Day could be done for \$18,000 this year or could skip one year if necessary to save funds. There is a new mandate on household sharps disposal (syringes) coming in July 2010. The Landfill contract is in its second year and reflects a negotiated increase. Currently the town rate of recycling is only 30%. This is one area where it would be relatively easy to save money, since a higher recycling rate would mean less trash to be hauled to the incinerator. Disposal of trash is charged by the ton. Recycling is free to the townspeople.

Ms. Lown noted that there will be a Town Manager candidate interview on April 2. The committee agreed to delay the scheduled AFC meeting until 8 p.m., to allow committee members to attend the interview.

Committee Reports

No committee reports were given.

Town Meeting Booklet and Information

Mr. Johnson sent the press release to Joe Harrington for review. The AFC reviewed his comments. Mr. Johnson will send around a final draft for review.

Mr. Meachen asked for guidance from the committee on preferences for classification of debt categories. Ms. Lown brought, as an example, a report from 2005 showing percentages of the budget for each department of total non-school budget. Committee discussed what data to collect, and how to analyze and display this data.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Ms. Lown called committee members attention to the Snow and Ice deficit spending request. Mr. Johnson moved to approve additional deficit spending of \$10,000 in wages, for a total wages deficit of \$60,000, and \$50,000 in expenses, for a total expenses deficit of \$150,000. The vote to approve the deficit spending was 7 in favor with 7 being present.

Ms. Casemyr will distribute information on Performance Based budgeting. This is a method of budgeting which includes setting goals, and developing a line item budget with narrative to explain purpose of expenses. Units of service change with each department.

Mr. Arnold suggested each liaison focus on their departments' cuts and impact statements, as well as tracking expenses and projects that are deferred.

Mr. Linnane noted the death of Sarkis Kojoyian, a long-time Westborough resident who was very active in town affairs for many years.

Adjournment

At 9:50 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.