

Members Present: Ian Johnson, Chair, Cliff Watts, J. J. Malone, Jo Lown, Polly Howard, John Arnold, Ronn Moody (arrived 7:13 p.m.), Judy Lucas (arrived 7:18 p.m.), Carolyn Spring (arrived 7:27 p.m.). Absent: None.

At 7:06 p.m. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Open Forum

Maryanne Bilodeau and the Board of Selectmen would like to have the upgrade of streetlights done now rather than in the next fiscal year and are asking for a transfer of \$3,500 from the reserve account. \$2,000 of these funds would pay for equipment, \$500 would pay for the increased electricity costs, and \$1,000 would pay for an anticipated shortage in the account for FY07. This transfer now would reduce the proposed street light budget for FY2008 by \$2,000, to \$53,000.

Dr. Malone voiced strong opposition to this transfer, stating that Daylight Savings Time and the longer days mean there is no emergency. Ms. Bilodeau answered that this has been determined to be a public safety issue that should be corrected now. Mr. Johnson pointed out that this is a one-time cost that should not be in the general operating budget. By doing the work now the cost will not be included in the FY08 budget. Mr. Arnold asked if there would also be increased enforcement of current pedestrian safety laws. Ms. Bilodeau responded that Chief Gordon is working on this, and that there have been many complaints from citizens about the issue. Ms. Lown asked if the complaints were specifically about safety at night. Ms. Bilodeau replied that many complaints are more general but dusk and nighttime hours were very hazardous. Ms. Bilodeau also noted that the brighter lights would mostly be over the crosswalks.

Ms. Lown moved to approve a transfer of \$3,000 from the reserve fund to the Street Light Account 14243-5212. The transfer was approved by a vote of 6 in favor and 1 opposed (Malone), with 7 members present.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 15, March 22, 2007

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 15, March 22, 2007. The vote to approve the minutes was 7 in favor with 7 members present.

Budget Review – Planning Board

Jim Robbins, Town Planner, and Edward Newton, Jr., Chairman, presented the budget proposal for FY2008 for \$196,206, an increase of \$7,057 over last year. Increased expenses of \$1,200 include funds for travel out-of-state, training and education, office supplies, postage and courier, and books and periodicals. \$1,000 for other equipment in last year's budget remains unspent due to the lack of space to put additional flat files. The equipment will be purchased when more space is obtained and so should remain in the budget. Salary/Wages increases include the cost of living increases and one step increase. The Assistant Planner is beginning his 6th year of employment.

Article 26. Acquire Gift of Land (in draft warrant dated 3/27/07)

This article is asking ATM to vote to accept a parcel of land located at 169A West Main Street. The gift is being offered by the developer of Westborough Village Green in order to increase the allowable density of his transit-oriented village development under section 5090 Density Bonus for the Preservation of Open Space of the town zoning regulations. The planning board has given the property a rating of 9, which could increase the size of the development to 350 units. The developer is currently planning on constructing 300 units.

This 23.6-acre property has a tennis court in good condition and access to SuAsCo Reservoir (Mill Pond) and West Main Street. It is currently farmed for hay.

Open space under this provision may be conveyed to an Open Space Land Trust or to the Town for conservation and/or recreational use. The Planning Board's article requests the Town to accept this land parcel.

Mr. Johnson asked if the DPW would become responsible for maintenance of the property if the Town accepts the gift, and if there would be any restrictions on future use. Mr. Robbins stated that the DPW would need to maintain the property, and that another article at a future ATM could change the stated use of the property. It was also pointed out that if the town does not accept this gift the property would almost certainly be developed into residential building. The developer must improve the property with a street up to a cul-de-sac and drainage.

Article 36. Request to Rezone Property (in draft warrant dated 3/27/07)

This Article is a Citizens Petition, and has not been reviewed by the Planning Board. It involves two parcels to the rear of Village Lumber, which currently are residences occupied by rental units. Other surrounding properties are residential. The Planning Board does not currently know to what use these properties would be put.

Dr. Malone asked about funds from an Article approved at the 2001 ATM. Mr. Robbins reported that the remaining funds from this article will be used to fund a Route 9 Corridor study with Mass Highway. This study was recommended in the Master Plan.

Budget Review – Town Clerk

Nancy Yendriga, Town Clerk, presented the budget proposal for FY2008 for \$180,591, an increase of \$46,222 over last year. This increase is mostly due to a request by the department to hire another Assistant Town Clerk. The Town Coordinator does not support this request.

Ms. Yendriga explained that the town continues to grow and there are only two people in this office. They handle a variety of tasks, including giving directions and general information. While it is helpful to have a greeter in the lobby, that does not cut down on the amount of traffic in the Town Clerk's office. The Personnel Board supported this increase by a vote of 4 to 1. Mr. Moody noted that the Town Coordinator does not support this new position because he has instituted a no new hire rule. Ms. Spring asked if it would be possible to determine some specific hours for which a part-time person could be of greatest use. Ms. Yendriga stated that the office is always busy

Budget Review –Elections and Registration

Nancy Yendriga, Town Clerk, presented the budget proposal for FY2008 for \$29,930, a decrease of \$5,105 over last year. This decrease is due to the need for only two elections for next year. Ms. Yendriga did note that the food budget has increased. These funds cover food for all poll workers.

Liaison Updates

Ms. Howard gave several schedule notes.

Ms. Lown reported attending the most recent School Committee meeting. She requested time to consolidate her notes and recover her voice before giving her report. Nothing was voted on but much was discussed. Mr. Johnson requested AFC members to attend the next School Committee meetings as much of the budget will be decided during this time.

Dr. Malone reported that Mr. Danis still believes there should be no new personnel for next year.

Mr. Johnson met with Paula Skog from the Historical Commission. They are not in support of the Article about the Nathan Fisher House in the warrant. They are still hoping to get someone to take over the historical property.

Ms. Lucas and Ms. Howard met with Gene Carlo of Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District. Westborough student participation has increased.

Ms. Spring reported that there would be a change in the Council on Aging budget proposal.

Mr. Watts reported that the Council on Aging is at odds with the Personnel Board over staffing. Members of the Personnel Board will attend the Council's presentation to the AFC.

Comments and concerns of Committee members

Mr. Watts noted that when budgets get sent to the Coordinator's Office for recommendation, the recommendations are not sent back to the departments. No information goes back to the department.

Dr. Malone reported that Chief Perron has researched the \$160 budget item that was not labeled in the Account 5233B detail and determined that these funds are for junction boxes. Dr. Malone reported that he has been working with Leah Talbot and the new financial sheets should be coming out soon. At this point we are in the hole!

Ms. Howard noted that no one asked Chief Perron for his opinion about the Vee-Arc building. Mr. Johnson has spoken with him at length and his feelings are clear. He is upset with the Building Committee over the length of the process as he has delayed repairs to the current firehouse waiting for a new building. Ms. Lown suggested Chief Perron may want to be present when the Building Committee makes their next presentation. Cal Lawrence is on this committee as a representative from the Fire Department.

Mr. Johnson asked all AFC members to attend one of the Discriminatory Harassment Training sessions if possible, or at minimum to read and sign the receipt of the policy. Mr. Danis has prepared transfers from the Water and Sewer Reserve accounts as discussed at the last meeting. Discussion and vote on these transfers will be tabled until DPW makes their presentation. Mr. Badenhausen has hired a new administrative assistant at the Youth and Family Services and has submitted new budget amounts for his department. Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Spring to speak to Chief Gordon to make sure the budgets agree (AFC and Police Department versions)

Adjournment

At 8:42 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous (9 present and in favor).