

Members Present: Jo Lown, Chair, Bill Linnane, Cliff Watts, Ian Johnson, John E. Arnold, Michael Meachen, Brigitte Casemyr (arrived 7:10 p.m.). 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

Treasurer/Collector

Joanne Savignac, Town Treasurer/Collector, presented the department budget request for FY10. The Treasurer/Collector is responsible for collecting funds and for managing all funds of the town. The office must remain open whenever Town Hall is open. Ms. Savignac did not prepare an impact statement, but stated the effect of a level-funded budget would be slower responses to citizen requests.

Salary and wages increases include negotiated increases and increases recommended by the Personnel Board. Expense increases include \$1,000 in bank charges, which is the expense of doing business. Going to a bi-weekly pay cycle would save a little less than ½ of the \$30,000 payroll services cost (approximately \$14,000). Bounced check charges are billed to the customer, but the funds recovered go into the General Fund. Online payments have increased.

Debt Service

Ms. Savignac presented an overview of the entire debt of the town, including enterprise fund borrowing. Interest rates have not dropped much recently. Principal payments are made annually, interest payments are made every six months. Short-term borrowing rates are currently at 2% to 2½%, and long-term rates are 4% to 4½%. Ms. Savignac did a long-term borrowing last fall by negotiating with a bank. The next borrowing due in May should not need to be negotiated. The town's credit rating is AA2. Westborough usually gets a good number of bids on offered borrowing.

Rating services have not yet determined the effect of the GASB-45 rule. The town's total debt is decreasing as principal is paid. The biggest projects coming forward will be the Wastewater Treatment Plant and the Public Safety Building. Ms. Savignac has prepared a spreadsheet of current debt going forward 10 years, although the debt will continue for more than 10 years. For the WWTP, borrowing can be done in pieces with the total interest estimated to be 3%. If the project is approved at May 2009 ATM, the first payments would be due in May 2011 or possibly at the end of 2010.

Council on Aging

Alma Demanche, Senior Center Director, and Charles A. Flood, Dan S. Pavolis, Jane P. Hodgdon, Sue Abladian, and Alden W. Jefts, Council on Aging Board Members, presented the FY10 level-funded budget request for the Senior Center. The Senior Center has been busy. Two buses run each day. On Friday, March 20, the Tri-M Music Honor Society from Westborough High School sponsored a dinner dance featuring several high school music groups and the Fantasy Big Band. The students did an outstanding job and put on a great night. The Community Dinners will be starting again on March 31 at 6 p.m. with a Ham & Bean Supper sponsored by the Westborough House of Pizza.

Due to a retirement, the salary and wages line will decrease by \$3,299. Ms. Demanche would like to use \$1,000 of the funds for repair and maintenance of the buses. This year they have replaced tires and brakes on both buses. They estimate the buses will need new brakes each year due to the stop-and-go driving which is a part of running the bus routes. The Senior Center has three buses, but currently only two are on the road. They are struggling to maintain a 19 hour per week schedule for the drivers. They schedule a minimum of 25 riders per day.

Budget line 5219 Professional Services is used for the homemaker service. Currently 10 to 12 hours per week of homemaking services are used. The budget is for 18 hours per week. The State funded home care services have now instituted a waiting list, which may increase the need for the Senior Center homemaker for immediate care. The Senior Center does not charge for this service. They do make referrals to other agencies when appropriate.

The Senior Center does provide outreach services, and they have been using a Senior Volunteer for some of the non-crisis services. They do refer to other agencies when appropriate.

The fuel assistance program has provided \$4,000 in assistance this year. Ms. Demanche sent out 85 information packets for fuel assistance, and has processed approximately 40 applications. Information on this program is widely disseminated throughout the community. Some town members are reluctant to apply, even when encouraged.

Donations to the Senior Center are accepted by the Friends of the Senior Center, a 501(C)3 public charity.

The Worcester RTA has been cutting service, and is now down to two runs per day between Westborough and Worcester. This service has been threatened to be cut to once per day, which will place an added burden on the Senior Center transportation needs. If this cut does happen, the Senior Center may need to put the third bus on the road. The third bus was given to the Senior Center when the AVCOA bus service ended. Many volunteers are used to drive seniors when needed.

Currently, 3,000 town members are over the age of 60. 100 seniors use the Center each day. They are looking to expand programs but are running out of space in the building. The average age of users is 75 to 85 years. The new roof is wonderful – it looks great. It has, however, created the problem of snow falling onto the sidewalks, but there is a plan to deal with this problem.

Mr. Linnane suggested reviewing the budget next year for the possibility of adding another bus driver position.

ARTICLE 15. Various Town Buildings and Grounds Repairs (Asst. Town Manager)

This article includes funds for Senior Center automated HVAC climate control, which will help with efficiency. This will be a remotely programmable thermostat system, which will help to even out the temperature throughout the building. It will also allow for automatic decrease in temperature during the hours the building is not in use.

Board of Health

Paul McNulty, Director of Public Health, presented the FY10 budget request for the department. The health department includes Mr. McNulty, two inspectors, and an administrative assistant. The department inspects all restaurants, housing, and businesses for public safety, provides some mosquito control programs, handles permits for businesses, and oversees the landfill contract. This budget is level-funded.

Salary and wages increases include negotiated increases and increases recommended by the Personnel Board. Expenses have been cut, including the mosquito control program which was added to the Hazardous Waste Day Warrant Article. Budget line 5245 is decreased by \$200, and includes funds for flu clinics and TB follow-up by a nurse. Costs of the flu clinics are reimbursed by Medicare. The TB follow-up is mandated by the State. Over the last 7 years there have been 1 – 3 TB cases per year in town, with 2 cases so far this year. FY10 receipts are estimated to be \$62,500.

Landfill

Mr. McNulty explained that the cost of trash disposal includes two parts. One part is the charge by E.L. Harvey for running the transfer station and hauling trash to the Wheelabrator Incinerator. This charge will not be increased this year. The second part is the cost charged by Wheelabrator, which will increase to \$72.25 per ton for FY10. Currently, Westborough residents recycle about 30% of the trash. This rate is good for a transfer station model. Pay-as-you-throw programs increase recycling, but this puts the cost on homeowners. Curbside recycling programs work best as trash that includes recycling is not accepted and left on the curb for the homeowner to sort. More recycling would mean lower cost for hauling and burning. The committee discussed dump sticker fees. The Board of Health will discuss this again before the next dump sticker cycle.

Article 8G. (Board of Health) Requests \$22,000, for the purpose of holding a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day, including the distribution of informational leaflets and arrangements for contractor provided reception and disposition of said waste and for Mosquito Control. Committee members questioned whether the funds requested will be adequate for both a Hazardous Waste Collection Day and the Mosquito Control program. Mr. McNulty will provide the cost trends for Hazardous Waste Days over the last few years, and adjust the funding request if necessary. Holding this collection every two years may increase the number of cars, but may not double the cost. Small loads are charged as ½ of a car load, and full loads are charged as a full car. Many loads brought to the collection day are less than ½ car load. “Household amounts” of hazardous substances can legally be thrown into the trash, but this is not the best method environmentally. Latex paint is not hazardous.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 17, March 16, 2009.

Mr. Arnold requested one change in the minutes. Mr. Watts moved to approve the minutes of meeting No. 17, March 16, 2009, as amended. The vote to approve the minutes was 6 in favor and 1 abstention (Mr. Meachen), with 7 being present.

Liaison Updates

Ms. Lown asked Ms. Casemyr to investigate having the AFC meetings put on the calendar on the town web site. Ms. Lown will ask Ms. Talbot for a breakdown of town salary increases, and when the Personnel Board looks at salaries.

Mr. Johnson is meeting with the DPW tomorrow morning.

Committee Reports

Mr. Arnold reported that the Government Study II Committee will be meeting on Wednesday to work on draft recommendations.

Town Meeting Booklet and Information

Mr. Johnson has sent the press release to the Westborough News. Ms. Lown will send out meeting dates and presentations scheduled.

Ms. Lown has edited the draft explanation of Enterprise Funds, which the committee discussed.

Mr. Meachen has prepared sample graphs of historical budget trends by department. The committee discussed these samples, and what information to include in graphs and possible ways to group departments or not. The committee also determined that some analysis would be done for the committee's use only, as it would not necessarily be useful for Town Meeting. Some graphs may also be posted on the town web site but not included in the printed town booklet to save costs. Mr. Meachen will revise his samples and bring to the next meeting.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Mr. Arnold suggested a "Town Facts" PowerPoint presentation to be shown prior to Annual Town Meeting as participants are entering the auditorium.

Adjournment

At 9:47 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.