

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

DPW Articles

John Walden presented Articles sponsored by the DPW on the Town Warrant. Mr. Johnson, Ms. Casemyr, and Mr. Linnane met with Mr. Walden and his management team on Tuesday. One question the AFC members had was if there is a plan for the town sewer system. Mr. Walden brought the plan for the committee to review.

ARTICLE 8-I. (DPW), Requests \$53,751 for the fourth of five yearly lease/purchase payments for a sewer/water vacuum truck for the DPW. These funds come out of the Enterprise Fund.

ARTICLE 22. Purchase Equipment (DPW Manager), Requests \$55,000 for the purpose of purchasing an F-350 utility truck for the water, sewer and highway department. This purchase would be split between the Sewer Enterprise Fund, the Water Enterprise Fund, and the DPW, with \$15,000 coming from the general funds and \$20,000 from each of the Enterprise funds. The new vehicle would replace a 1984 GMC Utility Truck with over 100,000 miles, which was purchased as military surplus over 10 years ago. Some of the current equipment on the old truck (tanks, compressor, and welder) would be transferred to the new vehicle, and the old truck would be auctioned.

ARTICLE 23. Purchase Equipment (DPW Manager), Requests \$39,186 for the first (1) of five (5) yearly lease payments for an Elgin Pelican NP Dual Waterless Street Sweeper for the Department of Public Works. The proposed payment plan includes approximately 5% interest. Some of the funds used for this purchase could be qualified for Chapter 90 funding if needed, but that would take away from road maintenance funds. The old sweeper will need a complete rehabilitation of the conveyor systems costing \$7,000 to \$8,000 in the fall. This has already been done twice on this ten-year old equipment. The new machine will be environmentally friendly as it does not use water. Using two machines it takes the DPW one month to clean the town's 100 miles of roadway. Each spring the center of town is swept first, and then neighborhoods are done so that the streets that were swept last one year are swept first the next year. This equipment is also used during road re-surfacing operations.

ARTICLE 24. Reconstruction and Improvement of Town Roads (DPW Manager), is the necessary Article to allow the town to access state Chapter 90 funds. These funds are used strictly for road and sidewalk maintenance, and for design fees for full reconstruction projects. Mr. Walden is currently evaluating a list of streets that will need maintenance after winter damage. This project would be a good use of a GIS database.

ARTICLE 25. Work on Town Sewer System (DPW Manager)

- A. Requests \$25,000 for the design of an extension of the municipal sewer system to Summer Street Extension, Weld Street, Whitney Street, Irving Street, Folly Lane, Belknap Street, and Hopkinton Road.

There have been no sewer extensions for the past five years, as funds have been used for pump station maintenance instead. These are small projects to start with, and the funds requested are for design and field service work. Projects on the Federal Stimulus Funding list do not tie into projects in the warrant. Adams Street will be the next major reconstruction and design is moving forward, but the project will wait until the town can afford to take on more debt. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funds for main roads take 4 to 5 years from application to start of project. Milk Street and East Main Street may get funded next.

B. Requests \$40,000 for replacement of stand-by emergency power equipment for the Denny Brook sewer pump station.

This will replace the emergency stand-by generator installed in 1967. The replacement unit will be more energy efficient. After current maintenance, the oldest of the town pump stations is 30 years old.

ARTICLE 26. Work on Town Water System (DPW Manager)

A. To amend the action taken under Article 17E of the 2008 Annual Town Meeting, by appending the words “and the Wilkinson well with related improvements to the Andrews well field” and further by increasing the amount to be transferred from retained earnings in the water enterprise fund by the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000), or such other amount as the Town Meeting may approve so that the total authorization will be increased from \$200,000.00 to \$300,000.00.

This is to include additional funds to what was already appropriated in 2008, to change the pump starter used to power the Wilkinson Well and Andrews Well field in addition to the work outlined in the original article.

B. Requests \$15,000 to design upgrading and/or replacement of water mains in the areas of town which include but are not limited to Whitney Street, Weld Street, Irving Street, Folly Lane, Hopkinton Road, and Belknap Street.

This relates to Article 25A and includes field survey and design work on the water mains. The DPW always tries to replace water pipes at the same time as the sewer project, as it is often problematic when not done simultaneously.

C. Requests \$235,000 for the repair, replacement, upgrade and installation of various facilities within the water system including but not limited to water quality analyzers, cameras, reservoir intakes, façade improvements, road repairs, and generator replacement.

List includes:

- \$59,000 for replacing analyzers and using the old analyzers as back-up
- \$28,000 for security cameras to tie into the Police Station and to add cameras on the water tank
- \$15,000 for brick re-pointing at main pond gatehouse on Sandra Pond
- \$70,000 for rehabilitation of reservoir intake stations
- \$23,000 for roadway maintenance at Otis Street well and Andrews Well field
- \$40,000 to replace generator at Bowman Street booster station. Current generator is army surplus from 1963, and will be used as back-up when replaced

D. Requests \$35,000 to provide a finished water quality assessment for the Oak Street water purification facility.

Chemical content, mainly iron and manganese, of water from the Indian Meadow well and the Chauncy well is not the same. When both wells are in use, at peak load times, the chemicals react to form crystals in the water, which are not dangerous but are destructive to pipes. This assessment will address the chemical differences at the two sites.

Mr. Johnson distributed a list of DPW receipts for FY09, a list of employee positions authorized to take town vehicles home, the cemetery charges, rules and regulations for Pine Grove Cemetery, and the Guidelines for Sewer/Water connection fee waivers.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 18, March 19, 2009.

Mr. Watts moved to approve the minutes of meeting No. 18, March 19, 2009. The vote to approve the minutes was 7 in favor, with 7 being present.

Liaison Updates

Ms. Casemyr met with the WWTP in preparation for their presentation tonight. She has also been investigating the town's Central Purchasing policies for office supplies, and will suggest the possibility of participating in store loyalty programs to help reduce costs.

Wastewater Treatment Plant

Jack Goodhall, Town Engineer, and Mike Stanton, WWTP Board member, presented the Treatment Plant budget request. There is a shortfall in the FY09 budget estimates, due mostly to an increase in contractual services of \$104,300 or 8.34%. This is mitigated somewhat by an estimated decrease in the electricity of \$52,000. Legal Services are also \$9,000 higher than budgeted due to increased legal work and negotiations with the EPA to avoid penalty as the WWTP upgrades are past the EPA deadline. Legal fees will decrease once the project begins. The electrical meter was switched at the time the bill was due, so the electric company is billing for two months making estimates temporarily difficult. The current rate including delivery is \$0.154/KWh. The actual shortfall for FY09 will be known soon after July 1.

The WWTP is hoping to begin construction in July. Contractors will pay for their own electricity.

The budget for FY10 includes an increase of \$338,300. Salaries and wages are level funded at \$14,880. Expense increases include \$145,600 in electricity for a full-year at the higher rate, and \$203,700 for Contract Services. The electricity usage at the plant is flow-driven and depends on the weather and other factors including the age of the plant. The plant is now included in the town negotiated rate, and is participating in the Standby Power Program. It is hoped this incentive will offset some of the charges, even when fuel charges to run the generator are included. The plant is in the third year of a five-year contract with Veolia. Increases are based on the Consumer Price Index and the Producer Price Index. Last year's 8/34% increase was unusually high. If the increases continue to be high the Board can put the contract out to bid after the fifth year. The working relationship with Veolia is good. Contract increases have averaged to a reasonable yearly increase. This is the only contract Veolia has that is structured in this manner. Veolia managers do work to save money at the plant whenever possible.

Estimated receipts for FY10 are \$2,345,000.

Mr. Goodhall briefly described the work planned at the Treatment Plant. A full presentation will be made on April 16. Stimulus funding is expected to be funneled through the SRF Program. 0% interest SRF Program is separate from the stimulus funding. This project has been approved for funding at 2% interest through the SRF. Karen Polito and other representatives have been advocating strongly for this project.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Watts reported on the School Committee budget meeting held March 25. The level-service budget originally presented was \$2,400,000 short, and would require cuts of 31 positions. Presentations made by several school departments were based on this revenue estimate. The school administration now estimates a shortfall of \$777,000 as new funding has become available. This will require cuts of 17 employees. Fees were discussed, and the activity fee is likely to rise. New funding includes stimulus monies and an increase to state education funds in the Governor's budget. It is unknown what additional funding, if any, will become available from the legislature. Bus routes and cost may also change. Enrollment is predicted to be down by 90 students, but estimates are difficult to make accurately until August.

Mr. Linnane recommended a program on Westborough Cable about Westborough Youth and Family Services. He will also ask for a copy of the presentation made to the Board of Selectmen by the WYFS about budget cuts.

Committee Reports

Mr. Arnold reported that the Government Study II Committee has voted to approve with amendments, two reports which will be sent to the Board of Selectmen and the Moderator. No recommendations made have FY10 financial implications. The recommendations will be presented to the Board of Selectmen on April 28.

Ms. Lown outlined a tentative schedule of work. She requested the meeting scheduled for April 2 be used for discussion on the bigger picture and asked committee members to prepare questions and topics for discussion.

Town Meeting Booklet and Information

Mr. Meachen distributed sample graphs of historical budget trends by department, which incorporate comments made by committee members at the last meeting. The committee discussed various models and trends shown in the graphs, and what to include in the booklet. Committee also discussed several areas of analysis that would be useful to the committee, but may need to be done at a later date.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

None.

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.