

Members Present: Ian Johnson, Chair, Judy Lucas, Cliff Watts, Ronn Moody, J. J. Malone, Jo Lown, Polly Howard, John Arnold, Carolyn Spring (arrived 7:04 p.m.). Absent: None.

At 7:01 p.m. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 18, April 2, 2007

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 18, April 2, 2007. The vote to approve the minutes was 8 in favor with 8 members present.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Johnson pointed out the School Committee Budget proposal and a memo from Mr. Wagner in each folder.

Mr. Johnson gave a report on the School Committee meeting that he attended. The Committee voted to approve a number of new positions and to add back \$80,000 in activity fees from the \$160,000 reduction recommended by the Superintendent. This makes the total budget request \$35,362,969, which is \$137,669 above the coordinator's recommendation. No union contract negotiations have been completed at this time, so no increases for union employees have been included in this request.

Budget Review – Treasurer/Collector

Joanne Savignac, Treasurer/Collector, gave an overview of the duties of the Treasurer/Collector Department.

- Print, mail, and collect all personal property taxes, real estate taxes, excise taxes, water/sewer bills. The Department mails out 18,000 excise tax bills each year.
- Remain current on all Massachusetts General Laws pertaining to the collecting of taxes
- Post all payments and reconcile accounts with the Town Accountant
- Maintain responsibility for all town accounts. Reconcile accounts monthly with Town Accountant.
- File monthly statements to State of Massachusetts
- Initiate and maintain all town borrowing of funds
- File annual report to State of Massachusetts on borrowing accounts
- Post and reconcile all retiree health insurance payments
- Pay all town employees except for School Department employees
- File all reports involving state and federal payroll taxes
- Handle all town trust funds and scholarship funds

Ms. Savignac presented the FY08 proposed budget of \$237,630, an increase of \$10,178 from FY07. Expense increases include:

- Line 5209 Travel – Board of Selectmen increased the allowable mileage charge to \$0.40/mile (increase of \$100.)
- Line 5223 Office Supplies – most of this increase is for toner for printer used to print town invoices (increase of \$200.)
- Line 5228 Forms and Bills – yearly order is place in spring (increase \$200.)

- Line 5243A Misc Service Tax Title – there are more of these accounts each year. Each filing with the Registry of Deeds costs \$75 (increase \$2,000.)
- 5243B Misc Service Bank Charges – banks are increasing charges and fees, such as the NSF check return fee (increase \$1,000.)

Ms. Savignac explained how the town funds may be invested. Only the Stabilization Fund and town trust funds may be invested for a long-term. For all investments she considers safety first, then liquidity, then yield.

Budget Review – General Fund Debt Principal and Debt Interest

Ms. Savignac reviewed the Debt Principal and Debt Interest payments for all town borrowing. These figures do not include borrowing for the sewer treatment plant, which will occur in FY09. These figures do include all articles on the draft warrant dated March 27, 2007. Debt Principal payments due in FY08 total \$5,084,487. Debt Interest payments due in FY08 total \$3,696,340.

Short-term and long-term rates have been very flat recently. This is not expected to change. Ms. Savignac does keep a close watch on interest rates to get the lowest rates possible. The purpose of the borrowing can determine the legally allowable term of the borrowing.

Budget Review – Sewer Debt Principal and Debt Interest

Ms. Savignac reviewed the Debt Principal and Debt Interest payments for all sewer project borrowing. The interest owed has gone down due to refinancing. Debt Principal payments due in FY08 total \$422,908. Debt Interest payments due in FY08 total \$276,198. These figures do include amounts from Articles in the draft warrant of 3/27/07.

Budget Review – Water Debt Principal and Debt Interest

Ms. Savignac reviewed the Debt Principal and Debt Interest payments for all water project borrowing. The interest owed has gone down due to refinancing. Debt Principal payments due in FY08 total \$1,236,655. Debt Interest payments due in FY08 total \$678,223. These figures do include amounts from Articles in the draft warrant of 3/27/07.

Mr. Johnson asked if Ms. Savignac had any ideas for how to present this material to the town. Ms. Savignac suggested including the interest estimate in the actual warrant, with the caveat that this was only an estimate. Interest payments, and the total payment for a project, could be estimated using the total borrow, term, and current interest rate. As interest rates do fluctuate this would only be an estimate.

Dr. Malone asked about school borrowing. The total Debt Principal payment is \$4,720,800 and the Debt Interest payment is \$3,135,310. These payments are offset by \$2,819,176 and \$779,100 from School Building Assistance from the State, for a net payment of \$4,257,834.

Article Review – Citizen's Petition

Article 35. Request for Additional Wine & Malt Beverage Restaurant License

Young Nam Lee and her son and daughter presented the request for an additional license for the Westborough Korean Restaurant. They would like to be able to serve Korean wines and beer. Many customers have requested Korean beverages. The application is for a site-specific license for the Westborough Korean Restaurant at 7 East Main Street and would not be transferable. The building is leased for 15 years. Seating capacity is 46 – 50 diners.

Budget Review – Sewer Treatment Plant

Mike Stanton, Chair, Sewer Treatment Plant Board, and Jack Goodhall, Plant Engineer, presented the FY08 budget proposal for \$2,958,560, an increase of \$109,360 from FY07. Most of this increase comes from a new

contract negotiated with Veolia Water NA. Bids for this contract were lower than expected, and Veolia gives a discount of \$1,820/month, which is valid while they operate both the Water Treatment and Wastewater Treatment plants. Plant insurance budget was decreased by \$500. Electricity costs have remained stable due to a contract negotiated 4 years ago. These costs are expected to rise in FY09 when a new contract will be negotiated. Current rates are determined by usage, with off-peak usage costing less

The bar screens approved at the 2006 town meeting will be put out to bid in the near future. Improvements made in the next few years will produce an increase in the use of electricity and chemicals.

Article Review – Article 21. Sewer Treatment Plant Upgrade.

This article is divided into three parts.

- A. \$1,490,000 for design and other engineering services of the Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements. These funds will be added to the \$500,000 approved by the 2006 ATM. The consultant is pursuing grant money to offset these costs.
- B. \$28,235,000 for construction costs and related engineering services. These funds need to be authorized by June 2007, final plans need to be submitted by January 2008, and construction must be underway by June 2008, in order to qualify for borrowing from the Massachusetts Water Pollution Abatement Trust at a low, fixed interest rate.
- C. This is to establish dimensional zoning for the site.

The consultant used by the Treatment Plant Board is Earthtech. These estimates are, hopefully, high in order to prevent the need to ask for more funds to complete the project. Base improvements to the plant, necessary due to the age (20 years) of the plant, account for 30-35% of the total. Additional treatment legally required by the DEP and EPA, including phosphorous treatment, account for 60-65% of the total cost. Four pilot studies are being produced for the board, outlining various methods of additional treatment. These studies will include treatment below current phosphorous limit and future increases in amount of sewage treated.

Other towns in the partnership do contribute to the design costs based on their usage of the plant. Approximate percentages are Westborough 38%, Shrewsbury 57%, Hopkinton 5%. Westborough will appropriate the entire cost, and the other towns will be billed for their share. This upgrade is mandated .

Liaison Updates

Ms. Spring had several comments:

- The Police budget salary is higher due to a new hire at a higher rate.
- Last year at ATM the Building Committee did not mention a space needs analysis for the town. What has changed since last year? When did the Vee-Arc site become too small to accommodate the Public Safety complex?
- On the School Committee meetings:
 - When you add a position with benefits, the School Committee does not seem to consider benefits as part of their budget since it is in the Town budget. AFC members discussed the fact that the cost of benefits is borne by the town and does not appear in the School Committee budget.
 - The Mill Pond grade 4 teacher – without this position the class size would be 23.5, which is within their target range of 20-24.
 - There seems to be a need to remind the committee of the upcoming computer expense in 2009.
 - Has the grant-writer position covered the costs of the salary? Is this position to be continued?
 - Is there a need for the Mill Pond Language Based SPED teacher? AFC members thought that while there was no guarantee that current students would remain at the school if this position is added, there was a good chance that the students would leave the school if the position was not added. If the students were placed in a school where this program is available outside of the Westborough Schools this would be more costly to the town than funding the position.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Dr. Malone pointed to the discussion with the DPW about the possibility of adding a position, and to prior discussions about improved communication with the Board of Selectmen. The DPW is under the Selectmen's purview so this would be a good place to approach the Selectmen for their input. When the numbers have been determined, Mr. Johnson will speak with Mr. Barrette.

Mr. Johnson asked for a volunteer to check with Mr. Franks about the language in the Citizen's Petition. This would need to be done by tomorrow, or added as an amendment to the Article.

Adjournment

At 9:15 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous (9 present and in favor).