

Members Present: Ian Johnson, Chair, Judy Lucas, Cliff Watts, Jo Lown, John Arnold, Brigitte Casemyr, Ronn Moody (arrived 7:10 p.m.). Absent: Carolyn Spring.

At 7:02 p.m. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Open Forum

Leigh Emery, Selectman, appeared before the committee to discuss Article 26, Department Head Employment Contracts (Board of Selectmen). Ms. Emery explained that the Board of Selectmen did not think adding the Town Counsel to the Article at this time was wise, but that they had intended to bring another Article to a Special Town Meeting in the fall to change the Town Counsel position. Mr. Johnson stated that the AFC thought both positions, which are 'Key Personnel', went well with the Town Charter changes recommended by the Government Study Committee. The AFC felt there were some process issues, noting that the Personnel Board was not consulted about the change and so were not part of the discussion. The AFC has recommended defeat now, but will ask that both the DPW Manager and Town Counsel positions be changed in the fall, with input from the Personnel Board. Ms. Emery noted that conversations with the Personnel Board have occurred in the last few days, and that since the Article is on the warrant the Board of Selectmen would like the AFC to support it.

Henry Danis, Town Coordinator, appeared before the committee to discuss the MIS/GIS budget request for funding for the currently unfunded MIS/GIS Manager position. Mr. Danis explained that the department has looked at contracting out the service and determined this was not the best solution for this position. Problems with using contracted services for a position such as this include increased frequency of personnel changes, not having full-time coverage by one person who will get to know the people with whom they are working, not being able to ask for a specific person, and providing security for the sensitive information kept on the system including personnel records and Police Department files. The town needs someone in this position who will fit into the system well, is able to work with many different people, and who is able to teach town employees about the system and how to make use of the tools available. The current MIS/GIS staff is overloaded and so is not able to increase their skills or take on new projects. This position has been vacant for five years. The town does use contracted services when that is the most effective, efficient solution. Currently one IT person handles at least 125 users.

Mr. Arnold asked how this position will be coordinated with other IT positions in town, including in the schools. Mr. Danis said that ultimately this office will handle all town computers. The goal is to make the system more continuous and expand the services offered, and to eventually coordinate all IT services in town. Ms. Casemyr questioned whether the salary being offered for this particular job description is adequate. Mr. Danis stated that at some point the town may need to look for contracted project help, but for now they are looking for an employee who may want more job satisfaction in return for less salary. Joe Lawrence, MIS/GIS Director, noted that the job description has not been updated from five years ago but that the grade was increased. They did not survey surrounding towns for salary. Mr. Danis is hoping that the number of MIS specialists has increased in the last five years while the number of available positions has not changed, and noted that Westborough is an attractive place to work and live.

Currently there is one full time Network Specialist, one 10-hour position in the Police Department, one 10-hour volunteer position (an EMT who is willing to work outside the job description when not on a call) in the Fire Department, and one 10-hour administrator position. The current employees put in more hours than they are paid. Mr. Lawrence (paid for 10 hours/week) does the Department Management and GIS services, and

covers when the full-time employee is out of the office. Ms. Casemyr asked if this position will centralize the system administration. Mr. Danis hopes that over time the system will become centralized rather than having pockets of IT services in some departments. Mr. Lawrence noted that the department does have one budget for all staff and purchasing. Ms. Lown asked if the position would be one that a new Town Coordinator would want to fill. Mr. Danis replied that the department can't wait 1½ years as the need is current. Ms. Emery noted that the Board of Selectmen often gets requests for using the town's web services which they cannot fill, and would like to have this work done now.

John Walden, DPW Manager, gave more information about Article 17, Work on Town Water System (DPW Manager), Section A, requesting \$1,350,000 for the purpose of reconditioning the Route 9 Water Tank. A tank survey done one year ago recommended painting the tank within three years, and deterioration since then has happened more quickly than expected. The current paint job lasted 12 years, which is within the expected life of the job, but Mr. Walden would like to be able to get 20 - 25 years. The original estimate was \$22 / ft², but a tank specialist hired to review the job found exterior lead on the upper section of the tank. Removing the lead will add to the cost of the job as it will require tenting the whole tank to contain the lead dust, and has raised the estimate to \$44 / ft². This project needs to be done this year or next, and there are other large projects planned for next year. Painting requires draining the tank, so doing the interior at the same time makes sense. This work should be done this fall, if possible. Mr. Danis pointed out that the funds for this project will be borrowed under the Water Enterprise Fund.

Mr. Danis asked the AFC for clarification about their recommendation on the DPW budget. Mr. Johnson explained that the budget reduction of \$16,000 was made because the AFC noted several areas in the budget where savings could be made. Ms. Lown will prepare a report on the specific items questioned. Mr. Danis pointed to two areas where huge increases may be coming – the cost of electricity and the cost of gas.

Approval of minutes – Meeting No. 24, April 17, 2008, FY2008.

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 24, April 17, 2008. The vote to approve the minutes was 7 in favor with 7 members being present.

Discussion and votes on various FY2009 budgets

A table of votes taken is attached to these minutes.

Discussion of ARTICLE 10. Adopt Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Bylaw (DPW Manager)

Joe Harrington, Town Moderator, discussed two possible amendments to the Article:

- The 2,000 ft² could be replaced by a different figure that is less restrictive.
- Deleting a section of the article could be done as long as it is clearly stated.

Since these changes have been identified in advance of Annual Town Meeting, allowing for prior discussion with all affected parties, these would be acceptable to him.

Mr. Johnson pointed out a meeting of the Water Resources Committee to be held on Monday. Ms. Lown stated her support for the underlying Bylaw, and feels that having it passed, as amended, is a good thing. Her initial concern was with the 2,000 ft², but after review she has additional concerns with this section of the bylaw not being well integrated with the rest of the bylaw. The language is unclear as to standards or guidelines for what is required of homeowners, and there is a vagueness to the language which is troubling. She is not in favor of the law as written, but would be in favor of passing it as amended with the hope that the committee could come back to a later town meeting with an amendment. Mr. Johnson agreed that this section does not integrate well with the rest of the bylaw, specifically that the penalties fit with a larger project but the bylaw doesn't delineate differences with smaller projects. Ms. Lown added that there is not a defined response time for the department, which could lead to problems for homeowners doing landscaping projects.

Discussion of Article 17. Work on Town Water System (DPW Manager)

B. Request for \$110,000 for the purchasing of radio frequency transmitters to convert from a touch pad system to a remote radio read for the water/sewer billing system. Ms. Casemyr did not think spending this money for the purpose of finding leaks would save enough money to justify the cost. Mr. Moody noted there would be no reduction in expense with this purchase. Ms. Casemyr argued that the DPW could still go ahead with the switch for commercial accounts. Mr. Watts thought that the 125 problematic accounts could be addressed separately, but that these issues do not warrant changing all the meters in town. Mr. Johnson would rather have the DPW come back with a request for \$14,500 for the problem accounts. The new meters have a limited life span.

C. Request for \$750,000 to perform engineering and construction services, extend, rehabilitate, upgrade and or replace the municipal water system in East Main Street and adjoining ways from State Street easterly to Route 9. Mr. Johnson noted that the transfers recommended are from previous borrowings done for similar work that has been completed. This area of East Main Street is problematic and this work needs to be done. Ms. Lown added that Mr. Walden has said not all the funds requested may be required depending on what conditions are found as the work progresses.

Discussion of ARTICLE 18. Work on Town Sewer System (DPW Manager)

A. Request for \$600,000 to rehabilitate the East Main Street Pump Station and the Beachmont Station and to purchase, accept as a gift, or take by eminent domain under the provisions of General Laws, Chapter 79, as amended or otherwise acquire parcels of land and/or easements for said pump stations, Ms. Lown questions whether the language of the Article would include using the funds for the possible elimination of a pump station. Mr. Harrington will ask the DPW if an amendment needs to be made to include this possibility.

Discussion of ARTICLE 19. Purchase Equipment (DPW Manager)

Request for \$78,000 for the purpose of purchasing DPW equipment including, but not limited to, a truck chassis and other vehicles. Mr. Moody checked on the cost for the DPW Manager's car – the breakdown would be \$7,057 (34%) from town DPW funds, \$6,851 from Water Department funds, and \$6,851 from Sewer Department funds. Mr. Johnson noted that the vehicle with transmission problems has 180,000 miles on it.

Discussion of ARTICLE 33. Amend Zoning Bylaws (Citizens' Petition)

Request to amend the Zoning Bylaws of the Town of Westborough, specifically Article 2, District Regulations, Section 2300, Use Regulations Schedule, to include within a definition of Institutional Uses a Use Category which includes the following: "Hospital, sanitarium, convalescent, nursing or rest home, congregate housing, and assisted living facilities licensed under M.G.L. c. 19D and 651 C.M.R. s. 12.01 et seq., Mr. Johnson reported the proponents of this Article will be making a presentation to the AFC on May 5 at 7:10 p.m., and requests the committee wait until after the presentation to vote on their recommendation.

Discussion of MIS/GIS budget request of Salary \$140,841, Expenses \$174,000, Total \$314,841

Ms. Casemyr thought Mr. Danis had brought additional information about those employees currently supporting the town being severely overburdened. She still has concerns about the salary level, but does now agree Mr. Danis should go ahead with hiring an Administrator. Mr. Arnold understands the need is now so waiting until a new Coordinator is hired is not an option.

Discussion of ARTICLE 26. Department Head Employment Contracts (Board of Selectmen)

Mr. Watts stated he still heard no urgency to make this change now. Ms. Lown still has concerns about the package of Articles – the order and sequence works better with the Town Charter Articles first. Mr. Johnson would like to have proper process followed with both positions put on the warrant for a Fall Special Town Meeting. Including the Personnel Board in consultation is a 'best practice'. No new motion was made.

Discussion of Dept. of Public Works budget request of Salary \$1,456,858, Expenses \$730,750, Total \$2,187,608

Ms. Lown would like the opportunity to make a report/presentation on her budget findings. Mr. Moody said the two areas of the budget Mr. Danis spoke to are eligible for Reserve Fund transfers, and that putting \$16,000 into the budget is not the answer to this. Mr. Johnson was in support of the original budget request but understands Ms. Lown's points. The detail level in the budget may be the problem. Ms. Lucas noted the DPW increase was much larger than other departments. Mr. Johnson pointed out that the increase was mostly due to the increase in the price of gas. No new motion was made.

Liaison Updates

Ms. Lown reported that Mr. Pratt and Mr. Goodhall have asked for clarification on the AFC vote to recommend \$7,600,000 for ARTICLE 24. Amend Previous Town Meeting Action (Waste Water Treatment Plant). They question whether the vote was to approve Items 1 through 10, or on the dollar amount. If the bids come back higher, what would the committee want?

- Ms. Lown thinks if the bids come back lower, she would hope the board would lower the request. If the bids come back higher, she would like to see a proposal with some items put off to a later project.
- Mr. Johnson would like to include items 1 through 10 as items that should be done. Ms. Lown's arguments on items 11 and 12 are good ones, especially the "best technology available" argument. Mr. Johnson would support items 1 through 10 even if the bids are greater than the additional \$7,600,000. If the bids come in lower he would like to lower the request to include only items 1 through 10.
- Ms. Lucas and Mr. Moody would be in favor of items 1 through 10 if the bids came in higher.
- Mr. Arnold would be on the fence if bids allowed doing items 1 through 12 for the additional \$7,600,000. He would want to balance the value of what you get for the money spent.
- Ms. Casemyr would be in favor of doing all items if the additional cost was under \$7,600,000.

Mr. Johnson would like to speak with the WWTP Board before Annual Town Meeting, either on Thursday May 15 or Saturday May 17.

Mr. Arnold announced a Government Study Committee information session to be held on May 7, 2008 at 7:30 p.m. in the Forbes Municipal Building room 23. The session will be televised.

Mr. Johnson announced a Stone Soup Supper to be held during ATM in the High School Cafeteria from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Harrington also announced a Town Meeting Procedure Primer to be held on May 14 at 7:00 p.m. in the Library meeting room. All town members are welcome to attend.

Adjournment

At 9:12 p.m. Mr. Watts moved to adjourn the meeting. The vote to adjourn was unanimous (7 members present and in favor).

Votes taken at the Finance Committee meeting on April 24, 2008

1) Budget votes

Budgets are voted on using figures current as of 4/24/08.

MIS/GIS, Dept. No. 11541, 11543

Salary \$140,841, Expenses \$174,000, Total \$314,841

Ms. Casemyr moved to accept the \$140,841 salary and \$174,000 expenses.

Vote to approve the budget recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

2) Warrant article votes

ARTICLE 10. Adopt Stormwater Management and Erosion Control Bylaw (DPW Manager)

Ms. Lown moved to recommend that the Town vote to approve Article 10, amended by removing the language in Section 3 beginning with: "For projects involving: Disturbance of more than 2,000 square feet up to 1 acre" and ending with: "evaluating existing drainage systems as required" and, under the heading "Exemptions," by removing the parenthetical "(not to exceed 2,000 square feet)", and further that the spelling of "Section" be corrected in the headings of Sections 9 and 11.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

ARTICLE 17. Work on Town Water System (DPW Manager)

A. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to borrow \$1,350,000 under the Water Enterprise Fund for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

B. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to defeat this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

C. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$2,842 from Article 25B of the 2003 Annual Town Meeting, transfer \$34,085 from Article 19D of the 2005 ATM, transfer \$4,605 from Article 22B of the 2002 ATM, transfer \$62,287 from Article 22B of the 2004 ATM, transfer \$145 from Article 25H of the 2003 ATM, and borrow \$646,036 under the Water Enterprise Fund for the purposes of this article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

D. Mr. Moody moved to recommend that the town vote to transfer \$70,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purpose of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

E. Mr. Moody moved to recommend that the town vote to transfer \$32,900 from Article 19A of the 2005 ATM, transfer \$7,669 from Article 21C of the 2006 ATM, transfer \$9,305 from Article 8 of the 2005 Special Town Meeting, and transfer \$150,126 from the Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

F. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$47,500 from the Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

G. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$30,500 from the Water Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

ARTICLE 18. Work on Town Sewer System (DPW Manager)

A. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$600,000 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

B. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to transfer \$75,000 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

C. Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to borrow \$463,000 under the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the purposes of this Article.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.

ARTICLE 19. Purchase Equipment (DPW Manager)

Mr. Moody moved to recommend the town vote to raise and appropriate \$7,000, raise and appropriate \$54,200 under the Water Enterprise Fund, and raise and appropriate \$16,800 under the Sewer Enterprise Fund for the purposes of this Article, and that the size of the town's fleet not be increased by these purchases.

Vote to approve the article recommendation is unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 being present.