

Members Present: Ian Johnson, Chair, Ronn Moody, Cliff Watts, J. J. Malone, Jo Lown, Polly Howard, John Arnold, Judy Lucas (arrived 12:20 p.m.). Absent: Carolyn Spring.

At 12:12 p.m. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order in the High School Auditorium.

Open Forum

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Approval of minutes – Meetings No. 24, April 23, 2007, No. 25, April 26, 2007 and No. 26, May 3, 2007

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 24, April 23, 2007. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 members present.

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 25, April 26, 2007. Mr. Arnold noted one correction to be made in the minutes. The vote to approve the minutes with the correction was 6 in favor and 1 abstention (Malone), with 7 members present.

Mr. Watts moved approval of the minutes of Meeting No. 26, May 3, 2007. The vote to approve the minutes was unanimous, 7 in favor with 7 members present.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Ms. Lown clarified her comment made at the April 26, 2007 meeting. Her focus is the concept of applying unspent funds and earmarking it towards current obligations that are not funded, as Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School is able to do using their 3A Trust.

Discussion and votes on various FY2008 budgets and Warrant Articles

Police Department, Dept. No. 12101, 12103

Salary \$2,408,474, Expenses \$99,609, Total \$2,508,083

Mr. Johnson distributed copies of the Memo of Agreement reached with the Superior Officer's Union. The Agreement calls for a 2½% increase in July 2007, a 2½% increase in July 2008, and a 2½% increase in July 2009. Sergeants (grade P5) will add an additional step making the grade include minimum, step 2, step 3, step 4, and maximum, bringing it in line with the other grades. This adds an additional 1¾% for this year, for a total 4.29% increase this year only. The total salary increase for this year's budget is \$28,773, making the Salary request \$2,408,474 and the total \$2,508,083. There will be an additional \$1 increase in the food allowance, and \$0.75 increase in the 3rd shift differential. Additional overtime hours have been added to the maximum allowed to bring it in line with other officers.

Mr. Johnson moved to approve the \$2,408,474 Salary and Wages for the Police Department. Vote to approve the budget recommendation is unanimous, 8 in favor with 8 being present.

ARTICLE 41. Request to Repair Culvert (Citizens' Petition)

Mr. Johnson reported on the presentation and discussion of this article at the recent Selectmen's Meeting. Carl Balduf, Town Engineer provided a revised study which included new and corrected information. No deterioration was found in the culvert, and the Engineers are now recommending rehabilitation rather than replacement. Derek Saari, Assistant Conservation Comm. Officer has mandated cleaning the culvert and looking at upstream issues as well as downstream clearing of vegetation. The citizens' are still going forward with the motion to Raise and Appropriate \$200,000 for the purposes of this article.

The liability to the town would not be negligence according to the town counsel, but there is some liability. The town needs to follow the engineer's recommendations with a good faith effort. Funds for rehabilitation

would come from last year's Chapter 90 funds. The DPW needs to wait until the water flow goes down to do the work, hopefully in July. Even if Article 41 passes, the conservation commission mandates the rehabilitation work needs to be done. Town Meeting cannot mandate a project be done, it can only authorize funding.

Mr. Johnson moved to recommend the town vote to defeat this Article. Vote to approve the article recommendation is 7 in favor and 1 opposed (Howard) with 8 being present.

ARTICLE 6. Amend Salary Administration Plan (Personnel Board)

The Personnel Board has amended this motion to remove the sections that the AFC had recommended be stricken.

Comments and Concerns of Committee Members

Mr. Johnson asked if any discussion was necessary to bring to Annual Town Meeting. The AFC has not had much time to study the Superior Officer's contract, and so is not able to present all the information they would like to give to the town. The length of the contract, increase/year, and % of health insurance paid (25% employee, 75% town) are known and may be disclosed.

Mr. Harrington has determined that Article 29 will be treated separately from Article 28. Article 28 will be presented, then he will ask for a vote to postpone action until Article 29 has been presented.

Adjournment

Meeting remained in session until adjournment of Town Meeting.