Advisory Meeting, 4/11/22 Approved 4/19/22

Melville Room, Town Hall

Meeting began at 6:04 PM.

Present: Doug Boyd, Carol Fitzgerald, Sandra Sheehan, Heather Turcotte

Absent: Kathy Pessolano

Guests: Dick Patullo, Cliff Bombard

Review of 4/11/22 draft town budget Excel spreadsheet, draft green sheets including warrant

Budget and Green Sheet Review

Review of budget draft dated 4/11/22. Cliff noted that the Accountant salary needed to be updated. The school number also needs revision based on the assessment letter. Committee members agreed to review each line in the budget as well as the rest of the green sheets and provide Carol any changes by the end of the week so it can be prepared for the Advisory Public Hearing on Tuesday, 4/19/22. Cliff will provide the 2022 tax calculation sheet to include.

Carol and Doug provided an update on the inclusion of a separate capital item (for the network switches at the high school) in the school assessment letter. They were surprised that a capital item was in the letter, as this was not previously discussed at the budget subcommittee meetings that they attend weekly. Carol and Doug did have an opportunity to express their strong concerns and frustration to the superintendent, finance director, and school committee chair. Rather than openly discuss this item and how it could be paid through our typical collaborative process, the finance director included it in the assessment letter without notice. The solution to the immediate issue of the $60,902 capital expense request is to pay for this through Hampden’s ARPA funding. The BOS chair was going to bring that forward to the larger board for approval. The school assessment figure would be presented as the larger amount recommended; but the Advisory could vote to reduce the recommended amount by $60,902.

There are very few articles requiring funding on the warrant. Conservation is likely to be the standard $1,000; School Resource Officer is $11,650; Advisory will recommend $25,000 for the Reserve Fund; CPA includes approximately $30,000 for site design and engineering studies at the high school and approximately $17,000 to replace all the locks at the Housing Authority.

The Public Hearing is Tuesday, 4/19/22, at 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Auditorium. Advisory will meet at 6:30 PM in advance of the meeting and anticipates staying after the hearing to vote our budget recommendations.

Minutes

Sandra made a motion to approve minutes of the 3/28/22 Advisory meeting. Doug seconded. Heather abstained, as she was not present. All in favor.

Heather made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Doug seconded. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.

Recorded by Carol Fitzgerald