

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
March 25, 2019
Hampden Town House**

Approved April 1, 2019

Called to order at 6:07pm.

Members Present – Carol Fitzgerald and Doug Boyd co-chairs, Heather Turcotte, Matt Fisher and Alan Fritts

Members Absent – none

Also Present – Town Treasurer Richard Patullo, Town Accountant Cliff Bombard, Nancy & Ted Zebert, Betty Howarth, MaryEllen Glover, Donald Davenport, Selectmen Vinnie Villamaino, John Flynn and Norman Charest, BOS Admin Pam Courtney, Tyler Witkop, Town Admin Mary McNally

FY20 ATM Budget Process

General Discussion:

Revised green sheet review, placeholders used for contracted salaries still under negotiation, Cliff informed Committee that he has reduced the salary request for his assistant. Carol asked if there was any sense of new growth and both Cliff and Richard suggesting using \$100,000. They also explained that a \$120,000 budget increase equals a 1% tax increase and a \$300,000 would be about 2 ½%.

Review of Highway salary, snow and ice use.

Cliff wants to see detail of what 'we' are buying for communications, if there is a maintenance agreement, the projected length of service, etc.

Article 2 review:

John Flynn explained that the Enterprise fund covers the salaries for the transfer station workers and the requested \$25,000 covers testing. He went on to say that these tests are needed each year and also that some are discontinued after a period of time. John will ask what this year's test costs will be from our service provider.

Doug stated that article two requests are an approximate \$521,000 increase, and we are prioritizing and trimming. John pointed out that there was a \$400,000 drop in the operating debt, but that cost has now moved inside of the budget line.

Carol asked Norman about new growth and he said he would provide her with something by the end of the week. Dick mentioned that he felt \$100,000 was a safe number; Norman agreed and suggested that Advisory start with that number. Doug calculated with that \$100,000 and 2 ½% we would be at \$400,000, which was still \$121,000 shy. Carol added that there was new information on the Tree Warden accounts, Dana now has to outsource due to new OSHA regulations. Carol questioned the gasoline account request and John replied that there was a price drop and Vinnie said that the fire department may use more now. John said that they could easily take a bite out of the \$65,000 gas account; \$10,000 could be taken off. Pam added that it is a fixed cost that is good for another year.

Cliff suggested taking all of the COA salary lines, (with the exception of the director) and combining them into a personal services line for salaries as both the Library and Highway department do. Carol would like to see the breakdown for presentation purposes before the salaries are rolled up into one line item.

COA has requested additional hours for the director, clerical and receptionist positions as well as a grade change for the receptionist position.

Tree Warden and hours need clarification, Mary to follow up and obtain clarification.

Carol asked if there was a sense of the warrant expenses and was told that the warrant was closed tonight.

Richard asked the monetary amounts for the articles, Vinnie brought up the communications for the Police department and Carol cautioned that due diligence be done, with details of what Jeff wants to buy along with competitive bids and are we buying or leasing, life expectancy, service agreements. Vinnie thinks leasing may be better since the service will be included. Neither Vinnie nor John are planning on bringing forth a recommendation

to purchase a new tanker for the Fire department at this time. John wants to explore a truck that would fit in the bay and Vinnie added that mutual aid has worked out well.

Vinnie has requested monies from Senator Lessers office for the proposed Highway building, and John wants to leave the fire station on since the ventilation systems needs to be upgraded. Richard cautioned that if they upgrade the ventilation system care to make sure that it will not be obsolete if an addition is added to the building. Carol informed the Select board that Advisory had decided to pull one cruiser from the Police departments request for two.

Doug questioned reducing the paving amount to which Vinnie replied that Wilbraham road will cost \$450,000 if we have to repave it, unless water sewer passes then we will only have to shim it. Doug pointed out that the operational budget has increased by \$335,000 and Richard stated he is in favor of the money inside of the budget but reminded everyone that it took Mark an extra year to spend all of the bond money. John answered that \$330,000 is coming in Chapter 90 funding and instructed Advisory to take \$100,000 off of the \$400,000 paving request. John mentioned that they may need \$10,000 in the Enterprise fund this year. Carol is concerned about the timing for the warrant articles with no real numbers for the Fire department or Highway buildings.

Doug asked if the solar bylaw was ready and Don Davenport replied it was not, and that it would be ready for the fall.

Cliff asked what was next and Carol replied that another draft of the green sheets, updates on warrant articles and the public hearing on the April 22nd.

Carol went through the responses that she had received to an email she had sent to Mary requesting clarification on items.

\$30,000 is a request from Mary to hire a consultant for the water sewer project, the \$300,000 figure for employee benefits is not firm, but it addresses the buyback of sick time for the police and highway departments, Selectmen's expense increase is for some dues/membership fees; work on salary revisions, training, and digitalization of records. Richard pointed out that the digitalization of records does not comply with state mandates and the increase to the town admin's salary is a contractual increase.

The solar array at the transfer station was brought up as it is a loss of an expected \$200,000 in revenues each year it is not operational. The increase in office equipment is based on the IT inventory, seven new pc's are needed. Townhouse maintenance increase will cover window and floor washing as well as painting and carpeting the remaining offices. There is talk of the Department of Revenue looking at splitting Stabilization accounts into 70% Stabilization and 30% Capital Planning funds

Firm school numbers are needed.

Previous meeting minutes – Will be reviewed at next week's meeting.

With no further comments or discussions, Carol made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Heather seconded, all in favor 5-0

Respectfully submitted,

Cindi Connors, Admin Asst