

MINUTES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 19, 2008

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairman Wilson with Nick Thomo, Greg Burnham, David Holdcraft and Beverly Lund in attendance. Guests included Fire Chief, Peter Martel, Emergency Squad Chief, Donna Lafleur and Selectmen, Rudy Heller.

ARTICLE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Highway Department – An article to replace the 1982 John Deere loader was received. There was no dollar amount but at a previous meeting Mr. Chaffee had advised that the cost would be \$160,000. It was further noted that he was also looking to use Chapter 90 funds to purchase this piece of equipment.

A second additional article was received requesting the sum of \$1,750.00 to purchase a heat tape for the Highway Garage roof, gutters and down spouts. There was damage to the building during the past winter from the snow and ice on the roof. It was the consensus of the group that the engineer should have been aware of this but to date there has been no action against the engineer. It was mentioned that there is \$8,100 in the Fiscal Year 2009 budget for building maintenance and this should be considered when the committee reviews this article at a future meeting.

Personnel Board – Three articles have been requested to change the Personnel by laws with respect to the Highway Operator Position Grade and points; to add a new position of Administrative Secretary, Board of Health, Part-Time and to allow bereavement pay for part time employees. It was noted that this has not been submitted to the Personnel Board for consideration or approval but was submitted by Mr. Phil Peirce, Chairman of the Board.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter Senator Brewer and Representative Gobi – STRAP Grant

Copy of letter received by Selectmen from Senator Brewer and Representative Gobi read advising that they have contacted the state regarding the Town's application for the STRAP grant funds. The state is currently reviewing the Town's application.

MINUTES FEBRUARY 13, 2008

Mr. Thomo moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to approve the minutes of February 13 following with the corrections as discussed; so voted.

ARTICLES –BOARD OF SELECTMEN

The Selectmen provided the committee with a list of the articles that have been received to date for the annual town meeting. Ms. Lund brought Article 18 and 19 to the attention of the committee as they deal with changes to the Advisory Committee by laws. Ms.

Lund indicated that she had some concerns about these changes and this will be discussed when the articles are reviewed by the committee.

BUDGET REVIEWS

Emergency Squad

Expenses – This account has increased in the amount of \$2,450 from \$29,000 to \$31,450. It was noted that there is one cell phone but 13 radio tone pagers.

Wages – This account has increased from \$106,620 to \$110,900. The breakdown of this accounts is On Call Wages - \$66,013; Vacation, Sick Time, Holidays, etc. - \$1,025 and Full Time Paramedic - \$43,862. It was noted that there are 7 Basic EMT's; 1 Intermediate EMT and 5 Paramedics on the squad.

Articles – They are looking to transfer the sum of \$15,000 to fund the purchase of a new ambulance. The sum of \$150,000 was transferred last year. This will give them a total of \$165,000 for a new ambulance. There are still engine problems with the ambulances being produce and the squad is waiting to purchase a new ambulance until these problems are worked out.

Fire Department

Expenses – There is an increase of \$870 from last year bringing the requested total for fiscal year 2009 from \$32,130 to \$33,200. Increases are in dues and subscriptions - \$100; equipment - \$200; office supplies - \$300; cell phone - \$120 and Utilities \$150. The repairs and maintenance portion of this budget is for minor repairs. The department is still using the same clothing repair/washing company as in the past and they estimate this cost to be approximately \$4,000.

New Truck – Chief Martel advised the committee that the new truck is in and is currently being housed in the Fire Department building. Tanker 2 (Forestry truck) is currently housed at the Highway Department. The 1971 truck will be replaced following which the forestry truck will be moved up to the Fire Station.

Recertification/Testing – This account has decreased by \$500 due to the fact that there is no need to test some equipment every year. The amount requested is \$3,000.

Asset Repair and Replacement – This account has been increased from \$8,000 to \$9,000. This account funds repairs to the large ticket items such as the station and the trucks.

Articles – One article is to appropriate funds to do repairs to the brick work at the station as well as painting. The amount of this article is \$7,500. It was noted that \$5,000 was appropriated last year for work on the station. Chief Martel advised the committee that the chimney work was not done but it will be done in the spring and the funds will be spent. After some discussion it was the consensus of the committee to check with the Accountant to see if there are funds that have not as yet been spent.

Air Packs – Chief Martel advised the committee that even though they received funding for two air packs last year instead of the four, they are not seeking funds this year for this purpose.

Old Ambulance – Chief Martel stated that when the old ambulance (1998) is removed from service he would be requesting that it be transferred to the Fire Department. They would then put the old ambulance (1990) that they have out to bid.

Fleet Account – Chief Martel advised that the Fire Department does not need to replace any vehicles at this time but would be looking to replace the brush truck in two years.

Wages – The Chief has submitted figures that include 3% cost of living increase for all members resulting in an hourly rate of \$8.48. This would result in an increase to the Fire Department Wages from \$9,041 to \$9,316. Membership in the department is composed of one Chief, one Assistant Chief, two Captains, three Lieutenants and 16 Firefighters.

Brush Fire/Special Duty Wages – The Chief has included a 3% increase to this category which would result in an increase from \$4,115 to \$5,936 at an estimated hourly figure of 700 hours at the hourly rate of \$8.48.

Fire Chief Salary – Chief Martel included a 3% increase bringing the account up from \$1,283 to \$1,322. Chief Martel stated that he does inspections, etc while he is serving as the full time paramedic.

Questions were raised regarding the response time with only one ambulance being in service for the Town of Brookfield. If the Brookfield ambulance is out, then dispatch automatically calls for mutual aid. Chief Martel stated that this only occurred about 10 times last year. The question as to whether or not the ambulance can roll with only one EMT on board was brought up and Chief Martel stated that it could roll with one and the call to roll was made either by the EMT, the police or dispatch. The possibility of keeping the old ambulance as a back up was discussed but Chief Martel felt that this would not be feasible. On the other hand, with regard to response time, it was brought up that the full time paramedic was to be on call at the station as listed in the budget and not out of the station. Chief Martel stated that this was not the case but the committee questioned this statement. Due to the fact that there was concern about response time, it was the consensus of the committee that the paramedic should be at the station at all times as required by the job description and the budget submitted.

AWARD PRINTING OF TOWN WARRANT BOOK

Mr. Heller advised the Committee that quotations for printing of the Annual Report and the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Book had been received.

Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to award the project to Select Print Solutions of North Brookfield who submitted the low bid of \$706.00; so voted.

CONTINUATION OF MEETING

Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to continue the meeting beyond 9:00 p.m.; so voted.

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT – GASOLINE REPORT

This report for the month of January was provided to the members by the Highway Superintendent.

LEVEL FUNDED BUDGETS

Mr. Thomo moved to approve all level funded budgets following a review; Mr. Holdcraft seconded; so voted.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUDGET HEARING

Mrs. Wilson announced that the budget hearing will be held for the Elementary School on Tuesday, March 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the school. Members will make every attempt to attend.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thomo moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to adjourn the meeting; so voted. Meeting adjourned at 9:14.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Lund, Secretary

Date Approved by Committee:
Date Submitted to the Selectmen: