MINUTES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 4, 2008

Meeting called to order by Chairman Barbara Wilson at 7:00 p.m. with Marc Charpentier, Robert Barnes, Greg Burnham, David Holdcraft and Beverly Lund in attendance. The members welcomed Mr. Charpentier to the Committee.

APPROVAL MINUTES MAY 6, 2008

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to approve the minutes of May 6, 2008; so voted. Mr. Charpentier abstained.

REORGINAZATION

Mr. Barnes moved; Ms. Lund seconded to nominate Barbara Wilson as Chairman. There being no further nominations, Mrs. Wilson was elected Chairman by a unanimous vote.

Mr. Barnes moved; Ms. Lund seconded to nominate Greg Burnham as Vice Chairman. There being no further nominations, Mr. Burnham was elected Vice Chairman by a unanimous voted.

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to nominate Beverly Lund as Secretary. There being no further nominations, Ms. Lund was elected Secretary by a unanimous vote.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES VARIOUS COMMITTEES

By Law Committee – Ms. Lund was directed to contact the Selectmen to ascertain whether or not a representative from the Advisory Committee was needed to serve on the By Law Committee.

Master Plan Committee - Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to appoint Greg Burnham as the Advisory Committee Representative to the Master Plan Committee; so voted.

Personnel Board – Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to appoint Beverly Lund as the Advisory Committee Representative to the Personnel Board; so voted. Mr. Burnham asked that he be included in emails from the Personnel Board in the future.

Safety Committee – Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to appoint Ms. Lund as the Advisory committee representative to the Safety Committee; so voted. Mr. Charpentier expressed an interest in this committee as well and will ask Fire Chief Peter Martel to keep him informed as to meetings dates.

MUNICIPAL RELIEF TRANSFER REQUESTS

The Committee has received three municipal relief transfer requests as follows:

Fire Department - $884 from Fire Wages – Stipends to Fire Wages – Brush, Special Duty;
Fire Department - $394 from Fire Testing/Recertification to Fire Expense;
Selectmen - $1,511 from Election Salaries Account to Telephone.

Mr. Burnham questioned the Brush Fire Request due to the fact that the committee does not have a clear understanding of how the account is expended.

After a brief discussion Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to ask the department heads to present the Advisory committee with documentation when they are requesting a Reserve or Municipal Relief Fund Transfer; so voted.

Mr. Burnham further moved that a letter be sent to the Department Heads, Boards, and Committees requesting that the forward any and all Municipal Reserve Fund Transfer Requests to the Advisory Committee through the Board of Selectmen by the 25th of June along with supporting documentation and that they be presented in person to the Advisory Committee by the requesting party; Ms. Lund seconded; so voted.

The Secretary was directed to post a meeting for the 25th and to set up times when the various departments that are submitting transfer requests can come before the committee.

Ms. Lund will check with the Town Accountant to make sure that the date of the 25th is not too late for any payroll that may come through this process.

SCHEDULE OF BILLS PAYABLE

Reimbursement Class Attendance – It was noted that Mr. Burnham and Mr. Charpentier would be attending the Class for Advisory Committees to be held on Saturday, June 7 at Holy Cross. Mr. Burnham has preregistered but Mr. Charpentier had not. It was the consensus of the committee to place this item on hold until the required paperwork is submitted.

Select Print Solutions – Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to approve payment of the bill to Select Print Solutions for the printing of the Town Warrant to in the amount of $1,345.42; so voted.

Clerk Salary – Mrs. Wilson brought up the subject of reimbursing the clerk for services perform during the year. Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Barnes seconded to approve the schedule of bills payable for payment to the clerk in the amount of $700; so voted.

PLAN OF ACTION

A number of issues were discussed by the members for the upcoming year. This included a review of the budget calendar, the transfer station and the entire process of budget submission.

Mr. Burnham stated that he was interest in taking the personnel issues and pay increases away from the department heads and would like to review the personnel by laws. He was asked to prepare a list of his suggestions and/or concerns for the next meeting. He also stated that once this is discussed by the Advisory Committee that the Selectmen need to be behind the process as well. He would also like to look at the transfer station which may include monitoring cameras for the landfill, the issuance of permits and would like to meet with the Board of Health once the Advisory committee's concerns are put together.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to adjourn the meeting; so voted. Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Lund, Secretary

Date approved by Advisory Committee: June 25, 2008
Date submitted to Selectmen: June 26, 2008

RECEIVED
JUL 10 2008
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MINUTES ADVISORY COMMITTEE
JUNE 25, 2008

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Wilson with Bob Barnes, David Holdcraft, Greg Burnham, Beverly Lund, Marc Charpentier, Heather Lemieux in attendance. Guests included, Selectmen James Allen and Ron Dackson; Highway Superintendent, Herb Chaffee, Water Department Clerk, Holly Chisholm; Fire Chief Peter Martell and Cemetery Commissioner, Michael Seery.

EXPENDITURE LEDGERS ACCOUNT BALANCES

Mr. Allen advised the Committee that the Selectmen had talked with Vador, the Accountant's computer system managers, regarding the format used for the expenditure ledger account balances. They are confusing at best and they are willing to rework the system to reflect any changes suggested by the Town. Mr. Allen asked that the Advisory Committee submit any suggestions to the Selectmen and they will be presented to Vador.

MUNICIPAL RELIEF TRANSFERS

Water Department – Transfer received requesting that the amount of $275.20 be transferred from the Water Department Casual Labor Account to the Water Department Clerk Wages Account to pay for the increase in hours needed to perform office duties.

Ms. Chisholm explained that she has worked 20 hours over the amount funded by town meeting vote and was instructed by the Water Superintendent, Bruce Clarke to put in the municipal relief transfer request. The Committee was informed that this request for increased hours was not approved by the Water Commissioners and that Ms. Chisholm has also been reading meters as part of her clerical duties.

After additional discussion, Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to approve the transfer pending approval of the increased hours by the Water Commissioners and to write a letter to the Commissioners advising them that the process was done backwards and in the future should be handled differently; so voted. Mr. Barnes abstained.

It was further noted that the Commissioners have requested a $1.00 an hour increase in addition to the 3% increase which was approved by town meeting vote. However, the Personnel Board and the Selectmen have not approved the additional $1.00 per hour. Wage authorizations have been signed so reflecting.

Selectmen – Transfer request for $1,511.00 from the Elections Salaries Account to the Municipal Telephone Account. These funds are being requested to pay the Chambers Advisory Group for saving the Town money for the telephone account by reviewing and reworking the system.

The Municipal Finance Law was reviewed and it was noted that the law allows that only 3% of a department's total budget be used to transfer funds to another account. The amount of $1,511.00 exceeds this 3% figure and thus cannot be done.

There are sufficient funds in the Group Insurance Account to make this transfer. Mr. Burnham moved; Ms. Lund seconded to transfer the funds from Group Insurance; so voted. Mr. Burnham moved; Ms. Lund seconded to approve the transfer of $1,511.00 from the Group Insurance Account for this purpose; so voted.

Treasurer – A request for a transfer of $350.00 from the Elections and Registration Wages to the Treasurer's Clerk's Wages was received due to the numerous hours that the Treasurer's Clerk had to work as a result of the break in to assemble and coordinate the mailing of identify theft packets to the affected employees as well as to assist in the recovery of the payroll system. The additional hours utilized consisted of approximately 35 hours. Mr. Allen represented Mr. Dunbar at the meeting.

Due to the fact that the $350.00 exceeds the 3% figure as allowed under MGL, this transfer cannot be done from the Election and Registration Wages Account.

Mr. Burnham moved; Mrs. Lemieux seconded to transfer the sum of $350.00 from the Group Insurance Account to the Treasurer's Clerk's Wages Account for this purpose; so voted.

Fire Department - There were two transfer requests for the Fire Department:

$884.00 from the Fire Wages Stipends to the Brush, Special Duty Account. It was noted that there are insufficient funds in the Fire Wages Stipends Account to fund this transfer. He advised that this account is short approximately 106 hours and this is an estimated amount of hours which can increase based on the number of brush fires.

Mr. Burnham moved; Mrs. Lemieux seconded to transfer the sum of $884 from the Group Insurance Account to the Brush, Special Duty Account; so voted;

$394.00 from the Fire Testing/Recertification Account to the Fire Expense Account due to the cuts that were made to the FY09 expense budget. This will allow the Department to purchase a couple of minor items this year that will not be able to be purchased in FY09. It was noted that based on the amount that was appropriated for next year, the budget will be short and will need to be looked at in the future.

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to transfer the sum of $394 from the Fire Testing/Recertification Account for this purpose; so voted.

Highway Department – Mr. Chaffee was present and had the following requests for municipal relief transfers:

$8,000 to be transferred to the Tree Warden Account from an account recommended by the Selectmen. It was noted that there were insufficient funds in any account to cover the amount of this transfer. Mr. Chaffee advised that due to the recent storm, it was necessary to hire a tree service to remove damaged trees. The sum of $1,600 has been spent to date. The Advisory Committee suggested that the remaining work be put off until the next fiscal year at which time Mr. Chaffee can approach the Committee for a Reserve Fund Transfer. It was also pointed out to Mr. Chaffee that funds should not be expended if there are insufficient funds in the account to cover such expenditures. It is necessary that the Advisory Committee be approached prior to the expenditure with estimates before the work is done. Mr. Chaffee has sufficient funds in next year's Tree Warden Account to cover the additional expenditure.

Ms. Lund moved; Mrs. Lemieux seconded to approve the transfers of $1,600 from the Group Insurance Account to the Tree Warden Account. It was noted that Mr. Chaffee was also looking for $242 to be transfer to the Highway Expense Account to cover a blown tire during the storm and $548.00 to cover Highway Department Overtime for work on June 22 due to a second storm. Ms. Lund moved to amend her original motion to allow the transfer of $2,390 from the Group Insurance Account as follows: $242.00 to the Highway Expense Account; $548.00 to the Highway Overtime/Other Account and $1,600 to the Tree Warden Account. The amendment was passed by a unanimous vote. The original motion with the amendment was then voted favorably.

RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS

Highway Department – Due to the increase in the cost of diesel fuel, Mr. Chaffee is requesting that the sum of $6,000 be transferred to the Municipal Fuel Account from the Reserve Fund. This being an unforeseen expense; Ms. Lund moved; Mrs. Lemieux seconded to transfer the funds for this purpose; so voted.

MUNICIPAL RESERVE FUND TRANSFERS cont.

Cemetery Department - Mr. Seery was present and requested that the sum of $254.00 be transferred from the Cemetery Improvement Account to the Cemetery Expense Account to cover a few outstanding bills. He suggested that next year the Advisory Committee look at combining the Cemetery Improvement Account with the Cemetery Expense Account to eliminate the need for these types of transfers.

Mr. Burnham moved; Ms. Lund seconded to approve the transfer of $254.00 from the Cemetery Improvement Account to the Cemetery Expense Account for this purpose; so voted.

MINUTES – JUNE 4, 2008

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to approve the minutes of June 4, 2008; so voted.

APPOINTMENTS

Mrs. Wilson brought up the issue of the new appointments to the Committee. Mrs. Lincoln will be asked to provide the Committee with appointment slips. The by law allows the Selectmen 30 days from the Annual Town Meeting to make the appointments. If not made, it becomes the responsibility of the Advisory Committee. The appointment dates will be verified upon receipt of the information.

NICK THOMO ATTENDANCE

It was noted that Mr. Thomo has missed five meetings in a row. A meeting was tentatively scheduled for May 9 prior to the Annual Town Meeting should one be necessary. Mr. Thomo was present at the Annual Town Meeting but an Advisory Committee meeting was not held.

As required under the by law. Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to send a letter to Mr. Thomo advising him that if he wishes to remain on the Committee, he must reapply to the Advisory Committee; so voted.

CERTIFICATION VOTES ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

The Secretary was advised to contact the Town Clerk to request a certification of the votes at the Annual Town Meeting.

REPORT MARC CHARPENTIER – TRANSFER STATION OPERATION

Mr. Charpentier advised the Committee that he has looked into the North Brookfield Transfer Station operation and has learned that they make a profit from their landfill. He is currently printing the guide to costing municipal services and will have it for the members at the next meeting.

GIS INSURANCE

Mr. Charpentier questioned whether or not the Town should be looking at insurance through GIS. Mrs. Lemieux advised the Committee that the Town of Barre had looked into this and found that if the Town is not changing coverage there would be not cost savings.

STATE DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL SERVICES

Mr. Charpentier suggested that the Committee look into the financial review of the various departments within the Town. This is provided at no cost by the State. The questions were whether or not the Advisory Committee could request such a review.

Ms. Lund moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to authorize Mr. Charpentier to look into this matter further with the State Department and report to the Committee at the next meeting; so voted.

PERSONNEL BOARD

Mr. Burnham brought up the subject of the recent appointments to the Personnel Board which consisted of two town employees; one holding two paid positions for the Town and the other holding at least three if not four paid positions for the Town. He stated that as an Advisory Board Member he has some concerns regarding these appointments. Mr. Charpentier also voiced some concerns due to the fact that town employees will be serving on a board that sets wages, steps and grades for their positions, departments and peers.

Although the Board felt that the new appointees could be unbiased and must remove themselves from discussion and votes dealing with their positions/departments they believed it to be a possible conflict of interest or at best an appearance of a conflict. It was suggested that the Committee contact the Ethics Commission for an opinion. It was the consensus of the committee that the Board of Selectmen be notified of the Committee's intentions.

There was also some concern due to the fact that there are now four members of this committee that receive pay from the Town: one elected official; one clerk to a board; one employee that holds two positions and one that holds at least three or more.

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded that a letter be sent to the Selectmen advising them of the Committee's concerns and intention to contact the State Ethics Commission; so voted. The Secretary was directed to put a letter together and send it to the committee for approval.

BILL SCHEDULE

Ms. Lund moved to approve a Bill Schedule to reimburse Mr. Burnham for his fee for the class he attended as well as mileage to the class; Mr. Charpentier seconded; so voted. A bill will be submitted in the amount of $68.80; $50 for the class and $18.80 for travel.

Mr. Charpentier also attended this class and will submit his paperwork for reimbursement as well.

CORRESPONDENCE

On a motion by Ms. Lund and a second by Mrs. Lemieux the following correspondence was acknowledged:

Certification Town Clerk – Notification that Mrs. Lincoln has been certified as a Municipal Town Clerk;

Kopelman and Page Memo – Attorney Client Privileges;
Memo – Town Accountant – Transfer Station receipts – Mrs. Benoit advised the Board that when the report was presented to the Advisory Committee in March, the posting was not up to date and that the Board of Health does not break out the various receipts. She has talked to the Board of Health Clerk and additional buttons have been added to the adding machine at the landfill and the items such as tires, mattresses, television, etc. will be broken out in the future.
Legal Expense Report – Update;
Gas Report – Highway Department – June, 2008.

CONTINUATION OF MEETING

Mr. Barnes moved; Mr. Burnham seconded to continue the meeting beyond 9:00 PM/ so voted.

RESIGNATION – ROSS ACKERMAN

Letter of resignation from Ross Ackerman read. Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Charpentier seconded to acknowledge receipt of the resignation and to send a letter to Mr. Ackerman thanking him for his services to the committee; so voted.

BOARD OF HEALTH TRANSFER STATION

It was the consensus of the group to look into the operation of the landfill. Questions will be presented by Mr. Burnham, Mr. Charpentier and Mr. Holdcraft at the next meeting for a brainstorming session.

NEXT MEETING DATES

The next meetings will be held on July 9 and August 20, 2008.

BUDGET CALENDAR

Last year's Budget Calendar was provided to the members for their review and suggestions. These will be discussed at the next meeting.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

A general discussion followed and included such items as the Landfill Operation, the loader purchase with regards to Chapter 90 and a five year contract and the combining of line items into one general expense account for the upcoming budget process.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Burnham moved; Mr. Holdcraft seconded to adjourn the meeting; so voted. Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly A. Lund, Secretary

Date approved by Advisory Committee: July 9, 2008
Date submitted to Selectmen: July 10, 2008