

Advisory Committee
January 15, 2014
Felix Juliani Meeting Room, Town Hall

Marjorie Freiman called the meeting of the Wellesley Advisory Committee to order at 7:30 p.m. Those present included Robert Capozzi, Mary Crown, Thomas Engels, Becky Epstein, Tom Frisardi, Ann Marie Gross, John Hartnett, John Hussey, Lucy Kapples, Andy Patten, Ann Rappaport, Deb Robi, and Mason Smith.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak.

Budget Guidelines Update

Hans Larsen, Executive Director, gave the update. He explained how the target FY15 budget and goals were established. He cautioned that there were several union contracts still outstanding and the budget would be incomplete until those negotiations were done. Variables such as Free Cash, revenues and assumptions in department reductions were also a concern in the final numbers. He said an override would be needed, currently at \$3.6 million. The goal is to keep the override amount at or below this figure despite the pending settlements. A supplemental appropriation would be sought if the override is not approved.

School Operating and Cash Capital Budget Presentation

KC Kato, Chair of the Wellesley School Committee, gave the presentation. She was accompanied by Dr. David Lussier, Superintendent; Salvatore Petralia, Assistant Superintendent; Dean Blaise, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Linda Waters, Director of K-12 Student Services; Judy Belliveau, Director of Finance and Business Operations; Kathy Dooley, Director of Technology, and Wendy Paul, Vice-Chair of the School Committee.

Cash Capital components include FF&E costs of \$163,562 and Technology costs of \$660,296 for a grand total of \$823,858. This represents a difference of \$20,000 from FY14.

The core values, established by the School Committee, were incorporated into the budgetary process: academic excellence, commitment to community, respect for human differences and cooperation and caring relationships. The budget was developed with the strategic plan as a guide. Administrative goals included focusing on every child, investing in educators, providing broad based learning opportunities and aligning resources with educational needs. A significant change in this year's budget is the incorporation of a full day Kindergarten program with staffing costs expected to be approximately \$760,000.

The budget includes consideration to mandates, salaries and fixed costs including educational supplies and materials. Class size, enrollments, and configuration of the middle and high schools also were considered. Historical budget increases were reviewed with the FY15 budget guideline of a 1.75% increase over the FY14 budget. The total operating budget is \$64,314,945 million. Review of staffing salaries included steps, lanes and cost-of-living increases. Stipends, longevity costs and professional development were also assessed. Personnel expenses are 88% or \$55.8 million of the \$63.7 million total budgeted amounts. The cost to educate students is closer to \$70 million dollars in aggregate. This total expense is offset by some reserves including Chapter 70 funds, Special Education Reimbursement (aka "Circuit Breaker"), student fees, Metco grant, and other grants and gifts. District-wide enrollment projections show a decrease in K-5 students, no change in middle school enrollment and an increase in high school grades.

Review and Discussion of the ATM Warrant

The Chair advised that all budgets should be reviewed and if there are any which need clarification or more information, those boards/departments should be asked to return to answer any questions still outstanding. We will be reviewing budget presentations each week to elicit further questions. Liaisons should advise their boards/commissions of this possible meeting.

Liaisons should begin their Article write-ups now and any suggested changes or corrections should be raised at an Advisory meeting and not discussed through Dropbox to avoid any conflict with the Open Meeting Act.

Ann Rappaport has volunteered to handle the Revolving Fund write-up.

The Chair advised 35 days must pass from the date of Town Meeting vote before an override vote can be taken. Any warrant Article appropriation which might possibly be included in an override must be voted at Annual Town Meeting on or before April 8th in order to hold the override vote on May 20th. Delays in those votes would push the override date back.

Liaison Reports

None were given at this time.

Approval of Minutes

Lucy Kapples made a motion to approve the minutes of January 8, 2014. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by a show of hands.

Announcements

Ms. Freiman announced the next meeting of Advisory would be on Wednesday, January 22, 2014 in the Juliani Room of Town Hall.

The Inter-board Meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. in the Great Hall on January 30th.

Calendar Review

The Chair advised all reports would be due by February 28th. The tentative January 18th meeting was cancelled. It is possible a meeting might be held on February 8th and March 8th if needed. There will be no meeting on February 19th.

Any motions for the Annual Town Meeting articles are due in the Board of Selectmen's office by March 10th.

New Business/Old Business

Lucy Kapples made a motion recommending Advisory vote approval of a supplemental appropriation of \$200,000 for the Department of Public Works to cover additional costs of winter storm maintenance due to inclement weather. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously by a show of hands.

Ms. Freiman adjourned the meeting at 10:58 p.m. with no objections.