

Advisory Committee
January 22, 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, Lucy Kapples, Andy Patten, Ann Rappaport, Deb Robi, Mason Smith and Scott Tarbox.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak.

Town Clerk Operating Budget

Kathy Nagle, Town Clerk, gave the presentation. The Clerk's office currently has three FTEs; a part-time employee was hired by the Treasurer's office. Ms. Nagle is trying out a different staffing model to see if they can manage without replacing the part-time position, but is budgeting for the full 3.8 FTEs in case the new model does not work effectively. The FY15 budget includes a request of \$249,314 for personal services and expenses of \$49,790, for a total tax-impact request of \$299,104. Ms. Nagle explained that the FY15 budget was greater than FY14 because of three elections being scheduled and included in the budget, each of which costs about \$20,000,

Ms. Nagle mentioned that the amount of dog licenses (handled by her department) has greatly increased over the last 10 years, requiring more dog tags to be purchased at higher costs annually, while the license fee has not changed.

A question was raised about the timing of town elections and whether they could be combined with state elections. All cities have elections in the fall on odd years and state elections are held in the fall on even years. Towns have elections in the spring in order to approve their annual budget. This election schedule is statutory and cannot be altered.

Facilities Maintenance Department FY15 Operating Budget

Joe McDonough, Facilities Maintenance Director, gave the FMD budget overview. The FY15 operating budget includes personal services requests of \$3,619,002 with expenses of \$2,937,778, for a total budget request of \$6,556,780 (a 1.92% increase). The personal services portion shows an increase of 2.26% which is comprised of cost-of-living allowances, net salary changes, overtime and salary adjustments. The expenses portion shows a 1.51% increase which is due mainly to a significant increase in natural gas prices. Energy conservation is a major operational challenge facing the FMD budget planning. There are a total of 64.3 employees in the FMD.

Board of Selectmen FY15 Operating Budget

Terri Tsagaris, Chair of the Board of Selectmen, and Hans Larsen, Executive Director, provided the overview. The FY15 Operating Budget includes Personal services of \$398,708 and expenses of \$30,550, for a total operational budget request of \$429,258. Staffing includes six employees.

Police Chief Terry Cunningham gave the review for the Police Department. There are 57 employees in the department. The operating budget request for FY15 shows personal services amount of \$4,889,626 with expenses of \$636,494, for a total of \$5,526,120.

Fire Chief Richard DeLorie presented the FY15 Operating Budget for the Fire Department. There are 57 employees. The Personal Services request is for \$4,593,169 with expenses of \$262,749, for a total tax impact of \$4,855,198. Training and leadership development were discussed.

Sheryl Strother, Finance Director, provided the FY15 Operating Budget for the Finance Department. Staffing includes six employees. The personal services request is for \$380,314 with expenses of \$8,000, for a total budgetary request of \$388,314. The Town's debt service and insurance were also discussed.

Other BOS budgetary highlights include the following:

The Sustainable Energy Department currently does not have a coordinator. The FY15 request of \$15,033 is for SEC expenses.

The Treasurer/Collectors Department is staffed by four employees. The FY15 budget shows personal services of \$265,011 with expenses of \$123,863, for a total tax impact of \$388,874. There is no change from FY14.

The Information Technology Department is staffed with eight employees. The FY15 Operating Budget request shows personal services of \$468,454 and expenses of \$209,119, for a total tax impact of \$687,463 (.58% decrease from FY14).

The Fair Housing Committee budget request is for \$200 for office supplies.

The Council on Aging budgetary request for FY15 shows sources of transportation funding which include revenues from grants. Staffing includes 6.1 employees. Personal services are \$236,455 with expenses of \$122,438, for a general tax impact of \$358,893.

The Youth Commission FY15 budget shows personal services of \$73,309 for 1.5 FTEs with expenses of \$17,190, for total tax impact of \$90,499.

Budget Discussions

The Chair asked for feedback regarding the FMD, BOS and Schools budgets and questioned whether any follow-up was needed with the department heads. Discussion followed regarding utilities costs and green initiatives, FMD project costs handled by other departments, structuring of override votes, disparity between school and Town custodian contracts, vetting of the FMD projects list including staffing needed, 10-year plan for rest of Town departments and documentation of processes. The BOS budget discussion included the feasibility of Advisory making any budgetary cuts to keep overrides within an established amount. Staffing needs for FY16 need to be considered in order to avoid having another override next year. A consolidated list of all projects, town and school, under consideration for the next 6-10 years would be beneficial in the planning of resources for the Town. The Schools' budget discussion included concerns about full-day kindergarten and hiring of teaching assistants including pay scales, definition of achievement gap, future kindergarten enrollment, hiring of a new Assistant Principal at the High School, and Superintendent initiatives. There was also a discussion of Advisory's responsibilities to Town taxpayers. The Chair asked the liaisons forward these concerns to their boards for clarification.

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 29, 2014 in the Juliani Room of Town Hall. The public hearing on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m., prior to the regular Advisory meeting on January 29th.

Calendar Review

The Advisory meeting on January 29th shows the agenda will include the Board of Assessors operating budget request, review of the Town Wide Financial Plan and discussions of the DPW, MLP and Recreation budgets.

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

Advisory will meet on Saturday, February 8th, March 8 and March 15 at the Police Station.

Liaison Reports

None were given at this time.

New Business/Old Business

The ATM Warrant and Articles should be finalized tomorrow. The list now has 44 items instead of 45.

Ms. Freiman adjourned the meeting at 10:34 p.m. with no objections.