

Advisory Committee
March 4, 2015
Felix Juliani Meeting Room, Town Hall

Andy Patten called the meeting of the Wellesley Advisory Committee to order at 7:00 p.m. Those present included Mary Crown, Thomas Engels, Chad Harris, John Hussey, Lucy Kapples, Michael Mastrianni, Frank Pinto, Ann Rappaport, Sara Raveret and Kathleen Woodward.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak at this time.

FY16 Budget Update

Hans Larsen, Executive Director, Sheryl Strother, Finance Director, as well as Barbara Searle, Ellen Gibbs, and David Murphy of the BOS were present to provide budget updates.

The Town is currently assessing and evaluating various options to close the \$1.6 million deficit in the working FY16 budget. Departments have been notified to make budget reductions and the BOS is waiting to hear back on their proposals. The Town continues to work on reducing health insurance costs by actively discussing possible changes with various unions. A rate increase of 9-14% for health insurance premiums is anticipated for the next year. The Town could also decide to migrate to GIC plan on July 1, 2016 without the need for union agreement. Hans Larsen stated he felt confident the budget would be balanced by ATM.

Sheryl Strother reported that several boards and commissions would be able to reduce the budget by decreasing debt, gaining grants funding and reducing line items in the budget. Advisory will not be able to vote on the budget until a later date prior to or during the ATM.

School Security Overview

Chief of Police, Terry Cunningham and FMD Director Joe McDonough gave the update. They were accompanied by Sgt. Brian Spencer and David Lussier, Superintendent.

Article 17 of the ATM requests appropriation for design funding of security upgrades throughout the school district under the direction of PMC. Review of the Sandy Hook tragedy showed a need to upgrade and tighten security procedures at all of the schools. After a review, some minimum standards were developed and implemented: having key control (all master keys were collected), installation of cameras and intercoms, landscaping alterations and installation of silent alarms. Article 17 would allow for further design funds.

ATM Article Discussion and Vote

Article 4 – Amending Job Classifications

This article would allow for new classifications for Accounting Specialist (DFS), Wetlands Administer (NRC), Engineer A (DPW) and Director of Special Projects (NRC); reclassification of Animal Control Officer (POL) and Engineer A (DPW); deletion of Assistant Town Accountant (DFS), Office Assistant (MLP) and Engineer A (DPW). There is no budget appropriation needed.

Some members of Advisory felt that the HRB should review any changes and provide a cost difference prior to making any modifications and sending to ATM for approval. Some of these job classification changes result in an increase in pay for the employee.

Mary Crown made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 4.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved unanimously by a show of hands, 10-0.

Article 5 – Amending Salary Plan – Pay Schedule

Article 5, Motion 1

This motion would give approval to amend Schedule B: Salary Plan-Pay Schedules for Series 40 employees. It would set the rate of pay for all Town employees who are non-union and non-management except for School Department personnel, MLP employees, Retirement Board staff and managers with employment agreements with the BOS. The new rates represent a 2.5% increase. The total budget impact is \$56,000 and is represented in the individual department costs.

Advisory considers the proposed increase reasonable and appropriate at this time.

John Hussey made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 5, Motion 1.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved unanimously by a show of hands, 10-0.

Article 5, Motion 2

This motion would give approval to amend Series 50/60 employees by adjusting the salary ranges. The new rates represent a 2% increase to the midpoint in each job group salary range, but there would be no automatic salary increase unless the employee would fall below the minimum of his/her range. The increase also provides for any increases under the Merit Pay Plan. These rates would allow for market competitiveness.

Advisory considers the proposed increase reasonable and appropriate at this time.

Tom Engels made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 5, Motion 2.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved unanimously by a show of hands, 10-0.

Article 5, Motion 3

This motion would give approval for appropriation of \$160,000 to fund a \$145,000 Merit Pay Plan for Series 50/60 eligible employees and \$15,000 reserve fund for mid-year adjustments. Salary increases are not automatic and are based on position within the pay range and annual performance rating.

The reserve fund allows for incremental salary increases for any position deemed below market comparable, below market rate or affected by mid-year promotion not funded by department budget.

Advisory considers the proposed increase reasonable and appropriate at this time.

Tom Engels made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 5, Motion 3.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved unanimously by a show of hands, 10-0.

Approval of Minutes

Mary Crown made a motion to approve the minutes of February 25, 2015. The motion was seconded and the minutes were approved unanimously by a show of hands.

Liaison Reports

The Chair asked for liaison reports, especially budget updates and various members of the Advisory Committee provided their reports.

New Business/Old Business

The Chair initiated a brief discussion regarding Article 8 which appropriates funds for operation and expenses of several Town departments, special capital projects, unexpected maintenance or other budgetary items passed by referendum. Motion 1 authorizes acceptance of a \$1 million payment from MLP. Motion 2 seeks appropriation of funds for specific boards and departments. Motion 3 appropriates free cash to balance the tax-impact portion of the budget.

Some members of Advisory have concerns regarding the increases in the BOH and COA budget proposals and additional information may be required prior to voting on this item.

The Advisory Committee will meet in special session on Saturday, March 7, 2015 at 8:00 a.m. and Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Kingsbury Room of the Police Station.

The Advisory Committee will meet in regular session at 7:00 p.m. on March 11, 2015 in the Juliani Room of Town Hall.

Mr. Patten adjourned the meeting at 10:01 p.m. with no objections.