

Advisory Committee
March 25, 2015
Juliani 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, Mason Smith, Scott Tarbox and Kathleen Woodward.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak at this time.

Budget Update by BOS

Hans Larsen, Executive Director gave the presentation. He was accompanied by Sheryl Strother, Finance Director and Barbara Searle, Ellen Gibbs, David Murphy and Marjorie Freiman, Board of Selectmen.

He discussed the new health insurance changes which will see a \$1.7 million reduction in costs to the Town this year and an anticipated \$2 million per year reduction during the period of coverage. The Board of Selectmen had voted on the plan earlier in the week and it was also being ratified by the unions. Schools will be ratifying on Thursday, March 26. The Town will be continuing the West Suburban Group with consists of 13 towns and 4 educational entities. The insurance is in effect for a three year term until June 30, 2018. Hans reviewed the new policy including the Town's contribution which is between 60-80% based on insurance provider selected. The Town will be prohibited from joining GIC during this benefit period, but could still elect coverage at a later date if desired. Changes in co-payments and deductibles were also reviewed. The changes in the plan incent employees to enroll in the lower cost Fallon options.

The Town will be offering an opt-out program provided the employee has been enrolled at least 2 years. A payment of \$4,500 for family plan and \$2,250 for individual plan will be payable in first June payment period of fiscal year. The Town is anticipating there may be quite a few employees who will elect this option, estimated to provide \$200,000 in additional savings.

Open enrollment will be done during spring 2015 by Human Resources. Bargaining members must attend a 30 minute educational seminar and the Town will meet with union representatives twice annually to discuss insurance issues.

If at any time, West Suburban Health Group is not viable, the Town can join GIC but there would be mandatory contribution percentage minima for the GIC HMO, PPO, POS and indemnity plans.

The change in health insurance coverage, along with other department reductions has eliminated the \$1.7 million deficit presented to Advisory on the first budget review. Schools have reduced their budget by \$425,657; Health Department \$41,128; COA \$20,000 and Health Insurance of

\$1,771,682. These reductions taken in conjunction with an OPEB contribution of \$600,000 has closed the deficit of \$1,657,636.

ATM Articles – Votes

Article 8 – Omnibus Budget

Motion 2 authorizes the appropriation of funds for operating budgets, cash capital spending and debt service of departments/boards.

Thomas Engels made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 8, Motion 2.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Mary Crown and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Motion 3 – appropriates Free Cash to balance the tax-impact budget in the amount of \$2,624,169.

Ann Rappaport made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 8, Motion 3.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Lucy Kapples and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Article 6 – Town Clerk Salary

This Article would appropriate \$85,731 for the Town Clerk salary. This represents a 5% increase and would keep the Clerk's salary at about 95% of the area benchmark towns. The Clerk salary is still at about 50% of market value. The Clerk is elected and not paid as a 50/60 plan employee.

Lucy Kapples made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 6.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Article 7 – Supplemental Appropriations

This Article is being revisited to approve additional snow and ice supplement. The original motion voted on March 11th was for an additional \$800,000. Since that time, due to ongoing inclimate weather, an additional amount of \$225,000 is needed.

Motion 1 requests a total FY15 supplemental appropriation of \$225,000 to BPW for winter maintenance.

Mary Crown made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 7, Motion 1.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Motion 2 requests a supplemental FY15 appropriation of \$472,344 to the School Committee which will address Special Education increases.

Since the original vote taken on March 11th, before the School Committee voted, the vote needed to be rescinded.

Ann Rappaport made a motion to rescind the previous vote on Article 7, Motion 2.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Mason Smith and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Ann Rappaport made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on new request of Article 7, Motion 2.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Lucy Kapples and approved by a show of hands, 11-1.

Motion 4 requests the Town accept and appropriate an insurance settlement payment of \$35,754.60 to BPW. Approval is required by Town Meeting since amount is greater than \$20,000. This settlement will pay for the repair of curbs damaged during winter plowing at the High School.

Mary Crown made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on new request of Article 7, Motion 4.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Article 12 – Water Program

This Article is being revisited since the BPW has decided to not bring forward this motion under Article 21 requesting \$4 million to replace water meters. They plan to bring this item to a future ATM.

The revised Article requests appropriation of the Water Fund FY16 receipts and cash on hand as of June 30, 2015 for payment of the Water Division operating and capital expenditures in FY16, provided the total amount of expenditures in FY16 does not exceed \$7,621,440.

Thomas Engels made a motion to rescind the previous vote on Article 12.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Mason Smith made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on revised Article 12.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Article 22 – Sewer

This Article seeks approval for request to borrow funds of \$242,500 from the MWRA for the purpose of water and sewer line rehabilitation including any necessary equipment or services associated. The Town will also be eligible to receive \$727,000 in grants as well.

Ann Rappaport made a motion Advisory recommend favorable action on Article 22.

Disposition: The motion was seconded by Lucy Kapples and approved by a show of hands, 12-0.

Minutes

Sarah Raveret made a friendly amendment for a name change. Mason Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2015 as amended. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously by a show of hands.

Liaison Reports

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

Old Business/New Business

Ann Rappaport announced that Planning had pulled five articles from the ATM warrant and Article 37 was being removed by the Water Department. Article 15, Motion 7 which deals with the High School Field as well as Article 17 dealing with School security funding are not voted yet and will be addressed before or during the Annual Town Meeting.

The Chair advised he had received a letter from a citizen in opposition to the driveway easement article which has since been pulled from the ATM warrant by Planning. The Chair also received a response from the Historical Society to a citizen letter in opposition to the proposed Standish Road Neighborhood article which has also been pulled from the ATM warrant for further vetting.

The Advisory Committee will meet in special session prior to the Annual Town Meeting at 6:30 p.m. on March 31, 2015 in the Faculty Dining Room of the Wellesley Middle School.

Mr. Patten adjourned the meeting at 9:20 p.m. with no objections.