TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
September 10, 2008

Present:  Al Collings  Marie Arsenault, Accountant
          Tom Schnare  Johanna Barry, Executive Secretary
          Phil Landine  Tom Scanlon, Jr., Auditor
          Roy Roberts  Tom Long, Selectman
          Jack Tivnan  Barry Nadon, Jr., Selectman
          Diane Vayda  David Eisenthal, Selectman
          Nicole Allen  Jason Benoit, Highway Superintendent

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Al Collings at 6:30 p.m. This was a joint meeting between Selectmen and Advisory Committee.

Highway Superintendent, Jason Benoit could not meet with the Selectmen last evening and the meeting was continued until this evening. The Advisory Committee listened in. Jason Benoit stated his Road Construction and Maintenance accounts were out of money because of the cost of recent storms which was approximately $7,000.00. He could limp along until Special Town Meeting using general highway funds if they are replaced as he will run out in the spring. Al Collings wants Jason to come to the next Advisory Committee meeting on September 24th with all details worked out of where the funds would come from and add the total of various other moneys needed to bring him to spring for a Special Town Meeting Article.

Corrections to the minutes of August 27, 2008 by Al Collings: In the paragraph beginning Review of FY 2008 estimated free cash: Change the wording “the Fleet Account has been closed down by DOR” to “may be closed down.” Same paragraph beginning “She was able to keep $24,000 encumbered for the police cruiser” to “may be able to keep $24,000 encumbered for the police cruiser.” Correct original minutes and e-mail to members. Motion was made by Jack Tivnan to accept the minutes as corrected. Diane Vayda seconded the motion. Vote to accept was 6, abstain 1.

The Committee received an official quote from MHQ for the Fire Chief’s 2009 F-250 pick-up truck for $28,114.00 plus purchase of a new light bar and lettering and striping for approximately $1,800.00. Tom Schnare stated there was nothing in the quote for radios and installation. Al will ask the Fire Chief about this.

Marie Arsenault, accountant, stated 2008 free cash certified was $587,194.00.

Auditor’s Fleet Account comments: Tom Scanlon, Jr. was on hand to discuss the Fleet Account. The amount of dollars in the Fleet Account is too high now at $487,000.00. Discussed possibly putting $350,000.00 in stabilization for the fire truck to lower the Fleet Account. This would take a two-thirds vote to take money out of stabilization. Articles at town meeting need more detail telling voters what they are going to purchase.
Tom Scanlon wants us to have a separate article for each vehicle. We want to include a number of vehicles. This issue will be resolved when we draft an article and give it to Tom Scanlon for additional discussion. Jack Tivnan asked what we would do if we needed to purchase a vehicle immediately. The Auditor said we contact the Director of Accounts and he could give an emergency authorization deficit to spend until the next Town Meeting. Selectman, David Eisenthal suggested special legislation to be able to do as we had before.

Revenue Projections: Accountant, Marie Arsenault presented a detailed list of projections. This was reviewed and Jack Tivnan said that it looks like at this point that next year’s budget has to be flat and suggested that all departments make level funding a goal. At next meeting, look at spending forecast and set the stage for what we want to tell the department heads for next year and review how they did with last year’s budget. Review audit report and management letters. The question was asked if the Town Barn has been completed. There is $40,000.00 left in that account that could be used if the project was completed.

School Reports: Read reports and will discuss at next meeting. Mark questions. Send questions by e-mail. If enough, may ask to respond in writing or come to meeting. Discussed school superintendent’s letter.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Diane Vayda. Seconded by Nicole Allen. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long, Secretary