The meeting was called to order by Chair Al Collings at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes: Jack Tivnan made a motion to accept the minutes of March 3, 2010 as presented. Phil Landine seconded the motion. Vote 6-0 to approve minutes.

Library: Al Collings said that Librarian Lisa Careau attended a regional meeting where they suggested writing letters to the Advisory Committee. To date he has received one letter.

Annual Report Draft: Nicole Vongratsamy suggested that we add that we held an informational meeting at the Senior Center before the Annual Town Meeting last year and we will do it again this year. Al Collings has revised the report to include this.

Budget #38 Council on Aging: Cindy Norden and Jim Pierce were present. Al Collings said that they had level funded their budget but wanted to give the Council an opportunity to go over the budget. Al Collings asked about repairs and maintenance to the Senior Center. Cindy Norden said that a pipe broke in the kitchen to the septic and the cost to repair was $1,000.00 and pump the septic. Al Collings asked if there was a warranty. Cindy Norden said no and that she did not receive any information on the building when she took over. Cindy Norden said that they now have a maintenance schedule to change the filters in the heating system and this has cut the gas bill in half. She said they will need to paint the inside of the building. Johanna Barry said that she should contact the prison and the prisoners would do the painting for her and her only cost would be the cost of the paint. She will need to write a letter and get put on a list. Tom Schnare questioned the money from grants/trusts and Friends of the Council on Aging and that there were outside transactions going on that the Advisory Board did not know about. He wanted the Council to know that this was a concern not only for their budget but other budgets in town as well. One concern is that if these funds dry up that they may need additional money in their budget. Cindy Norden stated that they had $7,000.00 in the Medicare Fund and this was used to pay the drivers and was funded by donations from riders. She
now has been able to get the Elder Bus to go to Mary Lane Hospital and this is funded by individuals. The Car Show held in August pays for the Veteran’s Dinner. Al Collings asked Cindy Norden if we could hold the Town Informational Meeting on April 28, 2010 this year. Cindy Norden said yes and stated she was very proud of this Board.

**Budget #6 Treasurer:** Keith Arsenault was present to answer questions. Al Collings asked him to comment on his budget. Keith Arsenault said that basically he had level funded the budget. He does note postage increases. Jack Tivnan asked if we could do more by e-mail. Keith said that some places are set up to pay excise taxes on line. Al Collings asked where we stand on the GASB 45. Keith stated that he had bids of $3,900.00 and $6,000.00 and is not happy with these numbers. Phil Landine asked what number is he looking for and he replied $2,000.00. Al Collings asked for a list of town owned properties and should have asked for a list of properties that might be sold. Al asked are there foreclosures that might have market value. Keith said there is property on Wigwam Road but now is not a good time to sell and suggested waiting 3-5 years until the market gets better. Al talked about longevity stipend. Keith is eligible for this as he has been employed by the Town for 18 years. Al Collings asked about past issues with the tax collector; are we collecting and reconciling on a timely basis. Keith Arsenault said that the turnovers are not received on a timely basis and the information can be six weeks late. What time frame would you recommend? He stated less than three days. Is she using the Lockbox system? It is felt she is not using this too much. Barry Nadon said that we gave her money in her budget to do this. Her computer software is Point and she seems to be happy with this. Keith would like to see a system that ties in all three departments together, tax collector, treasurer, and accountant). Al Collings suggested we continue this discussion next week when the tax collector comes in.

**Budget #49 Group Insurance:** The budget request is for $297,100.00 and this includes the employer’s share of Medicare. We have one elected official on the Fallon plan and the remainder are on Blue Cross. If the selectmen instructed him to eliminate the Fallon Plan, there would be a $6-7,000.00 savings. He has been able to keep at 0% increase by increasing the amount of co-payments.

**Budget #50 Worcester County Retirement:** Keith Arsenault stated that there is nothing that we can do about the amount. He does take advantage of the prepayment discount.

**Budget #51 Water Department:** Barry Nadon, Sr., Lester Paquette, Bob Benson and Ronald Marchessault were present to answer questions. Al Collings asked them to comment on their budget. They stated that they had level funded wages but expenses were up 5% due the increase cost of chemicals. At their next meeting, they will be having a hearing to increase water rates from $1.70 to $2.00 per 100 cubic foot effective
July 1, 2010. Research shows that this amount is comparable to other towns our size. Ronald Marchessault will be retiring this year and it is estimated that the cost of his replacement will be $15,000.00 lower. It forecasted that with the rate increase, the projected revenue will be $345,000.00. The Water Department stated that they plan on keeping the truck for a few more years. Tom Schnare asked about the well project and does the money have to be spent before June 30, 2010. The answer is no and that this is a five-year project.

**Water Department Warrant Articles:**

1. Vote to authorize the Water Commissioners to employ their Licensed Water Commissioners at Grade 1 Step 1 (10.19 per hour) for standby duty and emergency work in the absence of the Superintendent in the Fiscal Year 2010/2011.
2. Vote to take $7,297.50 from the Water Surplus Account and place in Water Expense Account for unexpected Lawyers fee for the Long Hill River Project.
3. Vote to take $2,000.00 from Water Surplus Account and place in Water Expense Account for unexpected furnace replacement at the plant.
4. Vote to take from Water Surplus Account $10-15,000.00 (out to bid) for East Main Street Account to install 80’ feet of 10” DT11 C906PE3608, Horizontal Directional Drillings & appendages.
5. Vote to take from Water Surplus Account $5,621.64 for replacement of Well #1 &2 pump controls stations for KOH at the plant.
6. Vote to take $29,836.80 from Water Surplus to be placed in the Sick Leave Benefits Account.
7. Vote to take from Water Stabilization to Water Expense Account $184,000.00 for replacement for new meters throughout the whole system. This is an estimate for meters and Water Department will do the labor themselves over a two-year period. This represents 900 meters.
8. Vote to take $5,000.00 from Water Stabilization to Water Expense Account for Engineer Fees for East Main Project of 80’ of 10” DT11C906PE3608, Horizontal Directional Drilling & appendages.
9. Vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of $263,977.17 from MTBE settlement to be placed in Water Stabilization Account.

Vote on these articles will take $49,000.00 out of Water Surplus Account. Al said that with these articles we need to revisit the Water Department Budget. Johanna Barry will work on these and get copies to the Water Department and the Advisory Committee.
Johanna Barry said there will be an article on the warrant for private roads. Barry Nadon said there may not be enough Chapter money for roads and may need an article for this. Polling Hours Grant/Town Clerk Budget. This money is reimbursed for elections and can only be spent on elections.

School Meeting March 8, 2010 at Quaboag Library with Selectmen, Advisory Members and School Committee from Warren and West Brookfield: The day after the meeting the State is now talking about a 3-5% cut in State Aid to Schools. Al Collings said the bottom line if the State cuts one-half million dollars, we will have to make up the difference. They learned that they had suggested level services and ask for $130,000.00 from Towns but due to increase in health insurance, $18,000.00 football team and because of school choice could need at teacher at $43,000.00 and this could mean asking for $190,000.00. We will not know the real numbers until the State puts a budget out.

Al asked Johanna how the Police contracts were coming along. She said they had a draft counter and were moving along.

Motion was mad by Phil Landine to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Roy Roberts. Voted 7-0 to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

The next meeting will be March 17, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary