TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 17, 2010

Present:
Al Collings   Marie Arsenault, Accountant
Tom Schnare   Tom Long, Selectman
Phil Landine   Barry Nadon, Selectman
Roy Roberts   Peggy Walker, Assessor
Jack Tivnan   Terry Barrett, Tax Collector
Diane Vayda   Keith Arsenault, Treasurer
Nicole Vongratsamy

The meeting was called to order by Chair Al Collings at 6:30 p.m.

Jack Tivnan made a motion to accept the minutes of March 10, 2010 as presented. Diane Vayda seconded the motion. Voted 7-0 to accept the minutes.

Budget #41 Library: The Library is scheduled to come to our meeting next week. Al Collings said he asked them to talk about other funding, trusts and computers. Al Collings said he has received five letters from library patrons and they are available to read.

Budget #51 Water Department: Al Collings met with Ronnie Marchessault and Bob Benson and they went through the budget again. They have water receipts for two quarters and are processing the third quarter and estimated that the revenue for next year will be $373,000.00. They looked at salary figures and all articles subject to final review by Marie Arsenault and the surplus will be 80,000.00. Their budget will be ready for next week.

Discussed combining the Water Department, Highway Department, Cemetery and Common into a Department of Public Works with one person in charge. Al Collings asked if other towns did this. Phil Landine thought that Spencer did. It was felt that this would need structuring, analyzing potential problems and talking to other towns. Also need to look at the original document of the Water Department. It was felt that the Selectmen would be in charge of making changes.

Budget #7 Tax Collector & Budget #20 Parking Clerk: Terry Barrett was present to answer questions. Al Collings said that things were looking good in that collections were ahead this year. Terry Barrett said that looking at last year and this year that there was not much change. She said that banks are making more payments now with foreclosures. She stated motor vehicle excise tax was the hardest to collect but eventually get collected by the deputy collector. Parking Clerk fees are up this year. She is working with the Police Department to have the deputy collector collect demand fees. Al Collings asked how the lockbox system was working. Terry Barrett stated that this works very, very well.
with 80% usage. Jack Tivnan asked what account this comes out of and what is the charge. Terry Barrett stated that they charge between .05 and .15 cents each and this comes out of her regular expense account. She does not know how much has been paid to this date. She stated that she uses the lockbox system for three weeks during her busiest times and has the post office forward the checks to the bank and they in return the disc in a day. She said she used to enclose envelopes but they were not used. Jack Tivnan suggested putting the correct address on the bill so that they would go directly to the bank.

Al Collings said there has been some discussion about using one software system so everyone could share the same information. Peggy Walker said her computer system was compatible with everyone and is running okay except for the server. She would like to see a hosted server. She has separate backup in her office. Marie Arsenault received quotes from Vadar. We are currently paying $8,400.00 for the Tax Collector, Accountant and Treasurer each year for separate systems. Using Vadar on a six-year program, the cost would be $3,893.62 if we had in-house network and $5,093.62 for hosted solution per year. Marie would like to see a hosted solution. There was a question of one-time set up charges of $4,970.00. Terry Barrett said she looked in Vadar about five years ago and at that time they did not have everything she needed and there was no pricing for the lockbox system. She said she would revisit Vadar and see what is now available. Al Collings worry was with conversion and training. Marie said they give three days of training and unlimited phone calls. Marie said she would run parallel for six months. Peggy Walker said she would like to see abatement and exemptions on the system. It was suggested that maybe the Water Department could benefit from this system. Al Collings suggested finding the answers to the questions and report back in a couple of weeks.

School: Bret Kustigan will be present at our next meeting at 7:30 to discuss the operating budget. Al Collings asked that Keith Arsenault be present. Keith Arsenault presented a chart showing the school debt over the years. In the year 2013 the Town will receive MSBA State Construction Aid monies. The question was raised if this could be spread over 3-5 years. Keith Arsenault said this would be a good time to start a new project as there would be interest savings and project savings.

MTBE Settlement: Keith Arsenault said the Department of Revenue has ruled that the MTBE monies are classified as general fund type monies. Keith stated that there is a new law that we could set up a trust fund for post retirement benefits. Keith suggested setting aside $263,000.00. If we do not set up a trust, the money will stay in free cash. Keith
will get a copy of the statue and see if it makes sense to do this now. Al Collings said that any information would be worth looking at to help make a decision.

Warren has moved their Annual Town Meeting to June 8, 2010.

Jack Tivnan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nicole Vongratsamy seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

The next meeting will be March 24, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary