TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
April 23, 2015

Present: Kevin Paquette
         Brad Hibbard
         Phil Landine
         Lori Loughlin (late)
         Tom Long
         Richard Gobi

The meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Gobi at 6:15 p.m.

MINUTES: Kevin Paquette made a motion to approve the minutes of April 16 and 21, 2015. Phil Landine second. Vote was 5 to approve the minutes of April 16, 2015 as presented. Vote was 4 to approve, 1 abstain (Brad Hibbard) the minutes of April 21, 2015 as presented.

BUDGET REVIEW:

Budget #35 Landfill: John Frizzell, Melvin Dorman, Jason Paquette were present to discuss the landfill budget. Line item W&G Monitoring/Mowing/Maintenance has increased $10,000 and this is due to increased cost of testing the wells. Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the Landfill Budget. Phil Landine second. Vote 4 to approve, 1 abstain (Kevin Paquette). The Landfill Budget was approved as presented.

Budget #37 Board of Health: Board of Health Members John Frizzell, Melvin Dorman, Jason Paquette and Administrative Assistant Sarah Allen were present. The budget has increased 8.81% with Title V Health Agent Fees increased $3,000. Members explained that this is due to increased house inspections of which two are in court. Sarah Allen said the Town gets reimbursed for all court costs. Richard Gobi said they should show the income generated by the Board of Health fees. In FY13 the BOH generated approximately $11,295 in miscellaneous fees. These fees go directly to the General Fund. Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the budget. Tom Long second. Vote 4 to approve 1 abstain (Kevin Paquette). The Board of Health Budget was approved as presented.

General discussion held on the Warrant Article for the New Braintree Road water line extension. The line will be extended to include the cluster of homes beyond the Sportsmen’s Club. It is anticipated that tie in boxes will be placed in front of houses with an incentive to have residents tie in at that time. Residents will be responsible for the cost of piping to tie in from the road to their house. Final details of the plan will be negotiated between the BOH and Water Department. John Frizzell said the Town should adopt the Betterment Act. Richard Gobi suggested a special town meeting before the annual town meeting to do this.
Budget #9 Town Clerk:  Town Clerk Sarah Allen was present.  The budget is level funded.  Brad Hibbard asked if bulk mail would be an option and the answer was that it would not because the envelope has a specific address on it.  Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the budget.  Phil Landine second.  Vote was unanimous to approve the budget as presented.

Budget #10 Elections:  Town Clerk Sarah Allen was present.  She said she turns money back and the amount depends upon the number of elections and town meetings.  She said she is reimbursed from the State for elections and Marie puts this money in a special account.  She increased the Election Workers line item from $2,296 to $4,000 not knowing how much the increase in the minimum wage would be.  Sarah agreed with the Advisory Committee recommendation to reduce the amount from $4,000 to $3,000.  Tom Long made a motion to approve with budget with the reduction of $1,000 from the line item Election Workers.  Kevin Paquette second.  Vote was unanimous to approve the budget with $1,000 reduced from line item Election Workers.

Budget #51 Water Department:  Water Commissioners Bob Benson, Barry Nadon, Sr. and Lester Paquette were present.  Richard Gobi thought $1,450 for two wireless phones was a lot of money and asked if they were under the Town Plan.  Water Department did not know and Bob Benson will check on this.  Phil Landine cautioned the Water Department to have only salaried employees carry a phone.  The Advisory Committee questioned the line item of $5000 for Ronald Marchessault. The Commissioners explained that an employee left and they needed two people with operators licenses to run the plant in accordance with DEP regs. and they asked Ronald Marchessault if he would be willing to assist them. Commissioner Benson said he just learned today that newly hired James Boos has received his license and should be qualified to get a license.  The Water Commissioners will revise the budget, eliminating the line if Mr. Boos is in fact qualified. The Advisory Committee will follow up on this before Town Meeting to see if the $5,000 for line item Ronald Marchessault can be eliminated. Line Item Telephone was explained that it was also for the alarm system.  They will change line item to Telephone/Alarm.  Question asked what was Line Item Department Truck used for and the answer was that it was for stickers and vehicle maintenance.  Question asked why reduction in chemicals was only $20,000 and the answer being that the well has not been in operation for a year and hope to see more savings in future.  Lights, Power & Fuel has increased and this is due increase in electricity.  The Commissions said they are no longer with the Town electric.  The Advisory Committee recommended they explore options and the Commissioners will have Jeannie talk to Johanna.  They have looked into solar but not suitable for buildings due to their orientation and cannot place solar farm in the field adjacent to the wells as they may need to use the fields for a lagoon in the future.
Insurance: The Commissioners agreed to pay for insurance including dental for employees. The amount is expected to be approximately $16,664 and will get exact figure from Marie. Going forward the Water Department Commissioners agreed to be responsible for the payment of their employee health insurance as well as those of future retirees. Phil Landine made a motion to approve the Water Department Budget. Brad Hibbard second. Vote was unanimous to approve budget as presented.

Tom Long asked what the status of the road was. The Commissioners said they will talk about this at their next meeting but they have a price of $13,000.

Barry Gillogly has questioned why he has to attend an Advisory Committee meeting as he reports to the Selectmen. The Committee explained to Sarah Allen that they have questions such as what equipment is kept at home and is it signed out. Sarah will call him.

Sarah Allen questioned the Advisory Committee approving the raise for the Selectmen’s Executive Secretary, stating a step raise should not equal a 4% increase. The Advisory Committee explained that it appeared to be a grade/step raise that had already been approved by the Selectmen since the Executive Secretary works directly for them. Sarah said she had not seen or approved the budget. Sarah will send a copy of the grade/step to the Advisory Committee. There was also discussion regarding the 1% longevity increase for employees with 18+ years of service. The longevity stipend is not automatic and must be approved by the BOS or Personnel Committee. Sarah will check on that issue as well and advise our committee.

The Advisory Committee asked Sarah Allen why the articles on the warrant for the fire department were listed as coming out of available funds when it was agreed to take the funds out of the Fire Truck Stabilization Fund. She did not know it had been written this way and said it could be amended at Town Meeting. Tom Long asked that the BOS forward the amendment at Town Meeting.

The next meeting will be on Monday, April 27, 2015 at 6:15 p.m. The Assessors will be in at 6:30 to review their budget and Barry Gillogly at 7:00 p.m. Local Access.

The meeting following will be on Thursday, May 7, 2015 at 6:15 p.m. We will ask the Fire Department to attend to review the Fire Department and Hazardous Waste Budgets.
Kevin Paquette made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Long second. Meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary