TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
February 24, 2016

Present: Phil Landine
         Tom Long
         Lori Loughlin
         Pam Griffing
         Robert Blozie

Absent: Brad Hibbard
        Richard Gobi

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lori Loughlin at 6:15 p.m.

AUDIT DISCUSSION: Pam Griffing said she is waiting for an answer from Marie
regarding a three million dollar difference in net assets.

BUDGET REVIEW: The Advisory Budget will be level funded. The Reserve Fund
will stay the same as last year’s appropriation of $50,000.00.

6:50: At this time the Advisory Committee met with the School Officials and
Selectboard.

Present: Dr. Bret Kustigian, Superintendent of Schools
         Cami Lamica, Director of Finance and Operations
         Colleen Mucha, Principal, WBES
         Leanne Pierce, School Committee Member
         Selectboard members Diane Vayda and Jack Tivnan

Bret Kustigian did not bring his power point presentation with him tonight but will e-mail
it to us. He provided us with Chapter 70 literature to include FY17 Preliminary Chapter
70 Aid and Net School Spending Requirements, FY17 Chapter 70 Foundation Budget
figures per pupil, FY17 Chapter 70 Summary, FY17 Chapter 70 Regional District
Enrollment and Contributions, FY17 Determination of Town Total Required
Contribution and FY17 Apportionment of Local Contributions Across School Districts.
Bret presented “Who is the Best Bang for the Buck” a comparison of ten area Towns and
Quaboag is the lowest per pupil at $11,776 at District Level 2. Bret Kustigian reviewed
the Revenue and Expense Summary and the “Governor’s Version FY2017 Level
Service” revenue and expense budget. The above Minimum Contribution for West
Brookfield is $445,739. Selectman Jack Tivnan said we cannot meet our own budget.
We are short $108,000 and we may go bankrupt. He stated that the Town has a revenue
problem not a spending problem. Cami Lamica said they repackaged the bus contract
routes differently and changed to a five-year contract went out to bid and the prices were
not any better and all bids were rejected. She said health insurance is estimated to
increase by 12.8%. Teachers’ contracts are expiring this year and will be 1% higher next
year, which includes prior contracts with 1% cola on 08/31/16, steps, lane changes and
estimated 1% for other employees. Bret said it would be a “tough sell” to cut things to reduce the budget. The School should be prepared with an alternate budget if an override fails. Bret said School Committee voted on the Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission’s Recommendations. Bret said bringing in another Town to our district may help. He has been talking to North Brookfield and they are looking at regionalizing. Pam Griffing said she is 100% for an override. Jack Tivnan said the override would leave nothing for the Town except we would not go broke. He said maybe a debt exclusion might work. Phil Landine said we need an override and we need to educate the public. Lori Loughlin said we need a plan and this must come from the Selectboard. Warren’s Town Meeting is before ours. The Selectboard and Advisory Committee will meet with Warren Selectboard and Finance Committee. Tentative dates are March 9 or 10 at Quaboag Library at 6:30 p.m. Lori will check with Warren.

8:15: Resumed Advisory Committee Meeting.

Advisory Committee asked Diane Vayda how can we address insurance issues and she said she will check with the unions. Diane Vayda would like the Town to hire someone part time for the accountant’s office and the Committee agreed that this would be a good idea.

The Advisory Committee reviewed budgets and would like the following Department Heads to meet with the Advisory Committee:


Next meeting will be Wednesday, March 2, 2016 at 6:15 p.m. Secretary will be absent. The Committee would like to meet with the following to review budgets prepared by them: Johanna Swain, Tree Warden Jim DiMaio, Teri Roberts Treasurer, Police Chief Tom O’Donnell, and Cemetery Commission. Secretary will notify.

Motion made by Robert Blozie to accept the Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission’s Recommendations. Pam Griffing second. Vote was unanimous to accept Resolution.

Lori Loughlin will bring Article for Town Manager to next meeting.
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Pam Griffing made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Phil Landine second. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary