TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 30, 2016

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

Absent: Richard Gobi

Present: Diane Vayda, Selectboard

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lori Loughlin at 6:15 P.M.

MINUTES: Phil Landine made a motion to approve the minutes of March 23, 2016 as presented. Pam Griffing second. Vote was unanimous to approve the minutes of March 23, 2016 as presented.

BUDGET REVIEW:

Budget #49 Treasurer: Teri Roberts was present to review her budget. Pam Griffing and Teri went over calculations of % of increase in premiums, number of employees on plan and % employee pays % Town pays. Line item “Medex” requested amount of $22,600 will be changed to $25,311.69. Line item “BC/BS HMO Blue” requested amount of $263,500 will be changed to $239,670. Line item “BC/BS Preferred” requested $6,324 changed to $14,831. These amounts are calculated on what we know today and may change if employee status changes. Dental Insurance is part of the School Plan. After much time and discussion with the Treasurer the Committee was unable to reconcile totals. In the interest of time Pam Griffing stated she would contact Teri before next meeting to reconcile figures.

Budget #4 Accountant: Marie Arsenault was present to review her budget. A line item for an Assistant of $12,480 will be added. This amount was decided upon in able to support an assistant for 16 hours a week, if needed. The Selectboard would like Marie to train the assistant to take over in her place should she leave in the future. The line item for “Audit” was changed from $13,000 to $13,570. Brad Hibbard asked the accountant if she could change the Department Appropriation Balance Sheet to include the line items as presented in the budgets instead of the general categories of wages and expenses. This was previously discussed by the Committee and recommended to provide a more accurate accounting of expenditures. Marie Arsenault said this would create additional pages to her reporting and would need to be published in the Annual Town Warrant in this form. The committee agreed the change was worth the additional effort. She said changes to line items could only be made at the end of the year. Pam Griffing will work with the accountant on an implementation plan.
Budget #38 Council on Aging: The new Director Linda MacCoy was present to introduce herself and review her budget. “Tri Valley Reimbursed Kitchen” expense line item $1500 changed to $600. This line item will be changed to read “Other.” Tri Valley now reimburses the Senior Center $1500 a year for use of the kitchen to prepare meals for the “Meals on Wheels” program. The Director wants to use this money for related expenses. Phil Landine questioned the Assistant Director’s 12.56% raise. Linda MacCoy said she did not know the answer and that the figure was provided by Johanna. Lori Loughlin will reach out to Johanna for clarification on the Assistant Director salary. Line item “Margaret Goudreau” to be deleted and “Out Reach Worker” to be put in place. Phil Landine asked how much traffic does the Senior Center get and the answer was anywhere from 20 to 100 a day. The Director says she is in the process of reaching out to the local assisted living facilities in town to coordinate programming. She has been able to get computers and a TV from a grant. She has requested two computers from the Technology Committee. This year the Volunteer Appreciation day will be held at the Ye Old Tavern.

Article #19: Richard Rossman was here on behalf of concerned citizens asking for their support of 5 Foster Hill Article. General discussion held. Brad Hibbard asked who owns the building and was advised there were multiple owners and the bank had paid the taxes. Richard Rossman said the Military Highway goes through the house and barn. Brad Hibbard asked if the Town had any liability should someone enter the property and questioned why the property owner shouldn’t be responsible for making the structure safe. Mr. Rossman said his initial estimate for removal of a portion of the structure and fencing off the property was $20,000. He said costs could go higher if lead paint and asbestos were found. Lori Loughlin suggested we take this under advisement and that the issue is in the hands of the Selectboard. Selectboard member Diane Vayda said she would talk to the building inspector.

Budget #26 Hazardous Waste: Hazardous Waste Coordinator Brian Charron was present to answer questions. He responded last year to 23 motor vehicle accidents, one mutual aid and one submerged boat. Of these, 9 motor vehicle accidents required minor cleanup which he described as placing sand or an absorbent on a small quantity of non-hazardous antifreeze. He stated the Town can bill the insurance company if the spill is large enough, however there was not enough quantity for the recent cleanups. He has requested a tablet from the Technology Committee to use apps for weather data, train contents in a train derailment, etc. Line item in the amount of $450. recommended for
approval by committee contingent on receipt of the tablet. Brian Charron would like to secure a dry, safe, secure building for his materials to be located near his hazardous waste trailer and presented proposal for $3,239.13. Phil Landine questioned if there would be a zoning issue and he did not know. Committee suggested he speak with Selectboard relative to an article on an upcoming town meeting.

**Budget #21 Fire Department:** Fire Chief Paul Lupacchino was present to answer questions. The Advisory Committee said that a 2% cost of living increase across the board for hourly rates was approved by the Selectboard. The committee recommended a 2% cost of living increase on all hourly wages, an increase to the minimum wage for junior firefighters and an hourly wage or $11.90 for new recruits (NR). The Chief was advised we did not have the authority to increase stipends and that he should discuss stipend increases with the Selectboard. The Chief said the fire department recently began using the Town Hall’s custodian for janitorial duties at the fire department three hours a week. Prior to this the firefighters did this once a month. Committee recommended approval of an increase of $$962.22 in the janitor line item. Line item “Recruitment and Retention” of $15,000 will be deleted as the Selectboard did not support this request. Lori Loughlin asked why he has so much money left in his budget for expenses with 9 months passed. He said he waits until the end of the fiscal year to make repairs to FD equipment and that one fire truck was going out for valve intake replacement within a week. He said he waits to go to a Fire Fighters Trade Show in June when venders’ prices are lower and the department gets more for their money. Brad Hibbard said he was disappointed that the Fire Vehicle Exhaust System approved at the annual town meeting last June had not been installed. The Advisory Committee had supported this request as it was an alleged safety hazard for the fire fighters. The Fire Chief said the firemen had taken down some walls to hang the exhaust system and have been waiting for a mason to finish work in the area before the system could be installed. Committee questioned the number of cell phones paid for by the Town. The Chief said Bob Benson has a phone on the Town’s plan and three other phones are partially funded by stipends. Fire Chief will follow up with a corrected budget.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Resident/educator Deb Provencher attended our meeting. She said she had attended the Selectmen’s meeting and wanted to provide alternative language for the upcoming Proposition 2 ½ override. The committee advised that we have not made a recommendation on the wording pending further review of revenue and budgeting figures. Ms. Provencher provided the committee with alternative language she had downloaded from the Department of Revenue website.
ANNUAL REPORT: Lori Loughlin provided draft copies and asked Brad to review and edit the report for next meeting.

Our next meeting will be Monday, April 4, 2016 at 6:15 p.m. Lori Loughlin will ask Johanna for clean and revised copies of all budgets for review at the next meeting.

Pam Griffing made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Phil Landine second. Meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary