TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
May 15, 2017
6:15 p.m.

Present: Brad Hibbard
Tom Long
Richard Gobi
Lori Loughlin
Pam Griffing
Robert Blozie
Others: Johanna Swain, Exec. Secretary
Phil Landine, Selectman
Diane Vauda, Selectwoman
Linda MacCoy, Senior Center Director
Water Commissioners
Wes Cassavant, Water Superintendent

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

MINUTES: Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2017. Pam Griffing second. Vote was unanimous to approve the minutes of May 9, 2017 as presented.

BUDGET #38: Council on Aging. Director Linda MacCoy presented her budget. She has met with the Selectboard and they have addressed wage increases. She is working with Brookfield to merge formula grants. The Outreach worker works eight hours a week in West Brookfield and 120 hours a year for Brookfield and Brookfield will pay for this service as well as for Medicar drivers for Brookfield. Tri Valley pays $1,500 to use the kitchen to provide Meals on Wheels for area towns. She has increased her Program Expense to provide more programs. Linda says she sees approximately 100 different people a week with many participating in multiple programs.

WATER DEPARTMENT: The Advisory Committee asked the Water Department to attend our meeting to discuss their Articles on the Annual Town Warrant. Attending were Water Commissioners Barry Nadon, Sr., Lester Paquette and Bob Benson. Water Department Superintendent Wes Cassavant was present. Question: Has a bid been received for the painting of the water tank and the answer was no. McClure Engineering has given them an estimate of $390,000. The last time the outside of the tank was painted was in 1999 and the cost was $200,000. Water Commissioners stated that it must be done this year mandated by DEP. The tank must be inspected every three years and was last done August 2016 for a cost of $3,500. The Advisory Committee recommends taking $100,000 from Water Department Surplus and the remainder up to $290,000 from Water Stabilization. Question: Why underground electrical for Long Hill Water Tank. It was explained that every year the Water Department spends $500-$1000 maintaining lines and cutting of trees. By putting line underground this will eliminate this expense. The Advisory Committees recommended that because the painting of the Water Tank is a recurrent expense, money from Water Surplus should be put in a separate account. Commissioners explained that they cannot have too much surplus or they will
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have to reduce rates or return money to the users. They will look into the procedure to
establish a separate account. The Advisory Committee thanked the Commissioners for
coming in and told them they did a nice job preparing their budget.

REQUESTS FOR TRANSFER FROM THE RESERVE FUND:

1. The Assessors request $1,507.92 from the Reserve Fund to be transferred to
Assessor Clerk account for revaluation year/property reviews and training for
newly acquired software. Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the transfer.
Tom Long second. Vote was unanimous to transfer $1,507.92 from the Reserve
Fund to the Assessor Clerk Account.

2. The Advisory Committee request $700.00 from the Reserve Fund to be
transferred to the Advisory Clerk for additional meetings. Brad Hibbard made a
motion to approve the transfer. Pam Griffing second. Vote was 5 to approve and
one abstain (Tom Long).

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING:

Brad Hibbard prepared a handout to be given out at the Annual Town Meeting. This
handout explains how the meeting will be conducted to facilitate effective use of meeting
time and provides information to assist voters in making decisions.

REVIEW OF REMAINDER OF TOWN MEETING WARRANT ARTICLES:

Article #11: Tax Title $10,000. Advisory Committee recommends approval.

Article #21: Transfer $12,750 from Water Surplus Account for engineering costs for
painting Long Hill Water Tank. Advisory Committee recommends approval.

Article #22: Transfer $13,700 from Water Surplus Account for installation of
underground electric line to Long Hill Water Tank. Advisory Committee recommends
approval.

Article #23: Painting of Long Hill Water Tank. Advisory Committee recommends
taking $100,000 from Water Surplus account and up to $290,000 from Water
Stabilization Account. Johanna will get the amount of Water Surplus.
Article #24: New Braintree Water Line Extension Project: Discussion held regarding payment in full of loan or interest only this year. Advisory Committee recommends interest payment of $3,000 to be taken out of free cash.

Article #26: Medical Invoices from 2014 & 2015. Town Counsel will speak on this article. Johanna will find out percentage of vote needed to approve the article.

Articles #29 & 30: Discussion held: Strong Fire Chief versus Weak Chief. The Advisory Committee recommends having legal counsel at the meeting explaining the articles and a statement of the “Towns Best Interest.”

Article #32: Purchase from Fire Truck Stabilization a Crew Cab. The Advisory Committee recommends moving this article after the Strong Chief/Weak Chief Articles and passing over.

Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the recommendations of the remaining articles on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant as discussed. Tom Long second. Vote was unanimous.

Pam Griffing reported that the Town is able to fund the omnibus budget not including Warrant Articles without taking any money out of stabilization. The Warrant Articles will be taken out of Free Cash leaving a balance of $29,000.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS: Our Acting Accountant Justin has told Pam Griffing that the entire general ledger is “antiquated” and would like to set up a new system. The old system works but needs to be updated. The Advisory Committee would like him to come to one of our meetings. Sandy Buxton, onsite acting accountant, does payroll on Mondays. Johanna said she is working with her on new payroll and expense sheets.

The Advisory Committee will meet again on Thursday, May 25, 2017 at 6:15, Monday, June 5, 2017 at 6:15 and June 6, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

Brad Hibbard made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pam Griffing second. Motion was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary