The Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Chair Richard Gobi at 6:30 p.m. joined by the Board of Selectmen and Town Accountant.

Johanna Swain said she received the corresponding number for the above minimum contribution to the school, which is $348,800. Warren approved a figure of approximately $556,000 at their town meeting. She also took $5,000 out of the Treasurers budget clerk line as previously discussed and moved some warrant articles from stabilization to free cash. Richard Gobi asked where we stand with free cash and Johanna said that with the current requests it will be completely spent with the need to take an additional $248,841.26 from stabilization. General discussion was held on the above minimum contribution for the school and which items should be taken from stabilization. There was a concern that if the omnibus budget, including the school, is taken from free cash many of the town government articles will need to be funded with stabilization and require a 2/3 vote. It was decided to have Johanna contact Town Counsel to determine the best way to address these issues procedurally. Brad said we need to decide upon an agreeable above minimum funding number for the school. There was considerable discussion with the Select Board. The Committee felt it would be inappropriate for us to support number in excess of $300,000 since the voters rejected the request at the polls. We also discussed the fact that we had committed to a figure of up to $175,000 to $200,000 when we met with the Warren Selectmen and Finance Committee. Consensus on an amount of $200,000 was reached. Brad made a motion to recommend a $200,000 above minimum contribution to the school. Phil Landine second. Vote was 4-1 to approve with Lori Loughlin opposing. The Select Board also voted to recommend $200,000 for above minimum contribution to the school. Johanna Swain will ask Town
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Counsel: Does the Town have to use above minimum amount requested in writing by the school district? Can the Town mandate the above minimum amount to be funded by stabilization, since the $300,000 override failed at election? Is the Town required to use an amount under $300,000? Can the Moderator ask the Town to vote on budgets one at a time? Johanna Swain asked that since the Water Department agreed to pay for health insurance should that money be added to the Water Department budget. Marie responded yes and she will bill the Water Department. The Water Department budget will be adjusted in the amount of $14,293 pending receipt of the FY16 insurance rates.

Johanna Swain said that because the Town does not have a Master Plan we are not eligible for a lot of grants. At some point the Planning Board will look for money ($10,000-$12,000) to do this.

**Longevity Stipends:** Marie Arsenault provided a chart for longevity stipends and step and grade classification schedule. In reviewing town policy it appears that only full time employees are eligible for longevity stipends. Currently there are only two employees eligible for a longevity stipend, Johanna Swain who works 2080 hours and Marie Arsenault who is grandfathered per letter from Board of Selectmen dated February 11, 1992. The Advisory Committee has asked the BOS for clarification on longevity stipends for FY16 so they can finalize this years’ budget recommendations. The BOS will decide at their next meeting (1) if the discretionary stipends will be approved for FY16 and (2) if the stipends are to be added to base pay and compounded annually. The Advisory Committee is in opposition to compounding as it creates a situation whereby salaries do not correspond with the step and grade schedule. There was also a question on whether elected officials are eligible for the stipend and if their salaries correspond to the step and grade schedule. Sarah Allen said elected official salaries are set by town vote and can be amended on the floor at Town Meeting. It was also determined that they are not eligible for the longevity stipend.

**Article #16 Water Line for New Braintree Road:** Board of Health members were present. Richard Gobi said that we asked them to come because there are questions we needed answered before making a recommendation on the article. Melvin Dorman said they are planning on installing the water line beyond the Sportsmen’s Club with tap-ins for residents adjacent to the line. Residents would be responsible for cost of installing a line from the road to their house. The reason for extending beyond the club was to protect the town from future cost and liability should contamination spread. It also saves the town from continued well testing at 20+ residences. The BOH met with the Water Department to see if they would waive the tie-in fee for the impacted residents. The Water Department said they would not waive the fee of $1000 to $1500 per tie in. The
BOH will absorb the tie-in as part of the project cost for those residents who choose to tie in at the time of the project. Those residents who do not tie in would be responsible for the fee in the future. Brad Hibbard asked if there was sufficient funding in the $175,000 request to cover the tie-in costs and the BOH stated there was. Phil Landine asked if someone would be at the Town Meeting to answer questions and the answer was yes. Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve and recommend Article #16. Tom Long second. Vote was unanimous. After a brief discussion with the town accountant on funding, Lori Loughlin made a motion to reconsider and fund the whole project amount by a loan. (The initial article recommended funding the project by a combination of available cash and loan.) Tom Long second. Vote was unanimous. Richard Gobi suggested the town establish a Betterment Act and schedule a Town Meeting to do this.

Health Insurance: Brad Hibbard asked about the status of the health insurance. The Advisory Committee submitted a recommendation to the BOS in December. Since that time the school employees have voted to increase their co-pays and deductibles saving the district and its employees almost $200,000 in premiums. Shouldn’t we be in line with the school and other local communities? Lori said the employees and the Town would both save money. Diane Vayda said that MIIA had come out and made recommendations. There was concern that the town treasurer would sign off on the FY16 rates before the BOS had the opportunity to act since she did so last year. Johanna Swain will ask Town Counsel: Does the Treasurer have authority to renew health insurance, does Town need an Insurance Committee to review changes to insurance and what authority does the Board of Selectmen have over health insurance. Jack Tivnan asked for a copy of the recommendation for review.

Audit: There was serious discussion regarding the findings in the Auditor’s report with respect to the Town Treasurer and Tax Collector. This is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately. Brad Hibbard said the audit should be on the website so that residents are aware of the issues. Lori Loughlin asked if the BOS would put together milestones that the Treasurer needs to accomplish on a month to month basis and suggested they meet with her monthly to insure satisfactory progress is being made. Diane Vayda said she has met with the auditor and is okay with meeting with the treasurer once a month. It is important that the treasurer reconciles her accounts with the accountant on a monthly basis. Diane said the Treasurer is accountable to the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Selectmen is accountable to the Town. Jack Tivnan said there is another audit scheduled for August. Tom Long said to get the audit report on the web as the previous ones are on it.
Generator: Johanna said she met someone from Shepherd Engineering, Inc. regarding the proposal for electrical design services for the proposed standby generator(s) for the Town Hall and Fire Department. The Electrical Engineering Design proposal was $8,000 with additional fee of $3,000 for plumbing gas connection design. This amount does not include the generator or installation. Johanna is waiting to hear back from another contractor with the hope of reducing the engineering costs. BOS needs to decide where to put the generator(s). Richard Gobi said funds have been appropriated.

Time Clocks: Johanna said she has called Harpers Payroll Services but no one calls back. Some employees have been loaded in but Marie says they are not activated in the system. They are waiting for them to be activated and further guidance from Boris, the Harper’s representative. Tom Long said he would contact Boris. The Highway Department is currently on the system. Brad spoke with Jim Daley who is satisfied with its operation. Sarah Allen asked if anyone budgeted for the monthly fees. Brad Hibbard responded budgeting is in the hands of the Select Board.

Lori Loughlin will not be able to come to the next meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2015. Phil Landine will not be able to come until 7 p.m. Secretary will change meeting from 6:15 to 7 p.m. Richard Gobi will notify Fire Chief to come in at 7:30.

Secretary will post a meeting for Thursday, May 28, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

Tom Long made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brad Hibbard second. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary