TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
January 25, 2012

Present:  
Al Collings  Marie Arsenault, Accountant
Phil Landine  Mark Long, Selectman
Roy Roberts  Johanna Barry, Executive Secretary
Jack Tivnan  Chief Tom O’Donnell, Police Chief
Diane Vayda  Chief Paul Lupacchino, Fire Chief
Tom Long

The meeting was called to order by Chair Al Collings at 6:30 p.m.

Discuss Possible New Advisory Committee Member:  Al Collings received only one letter from Tom Long.  Jack Tivnan made a motion to appoint Tom Long to serve until the close of the next annual meeting.  Diane Vayda second.  Voted 5-0 to appoint Tom Long to fill the vacancy.

Review Department Budget Requests:

#4 Accountant:  Marie Arsenault was present to discuss her budget.  She said her budget had been prepared as requested with her salary at a 3% plus 1% longevity increase.  Everything else has been level funded.  Phil Landine asked about the line item Meetings.  Marie Arsenault said this was fees for registration of classes and mileage.  Suggested changing the line item to read Meetings/Registration.

#18 Police:  Police Chief Tom O’Donnell was present to discuss his budget.  The budget was level funded wherever it could be with increase under 6%.  Article items are now part of the budget.  His concern is the cost of fuel.  His budget is consistent over the past few years.  Storm-related:  He has filed for Irene and the October snowstorm and will get 75% reimbursement.  The total storm cost was $8,000 and will recover about $6,000.  So far he has been able to use money from his budget but will know next quarter how things are going.  Marie Arsenault asked when I add the items that used to be articles, should I do them on a separate line.  It was agreed that this was a good idea for tracing purposes and will be able to see if the money was spent or not.  Al Collings asked if he had looked into grants or other available funds.  He said that he will get 50% back on vests purchased.  Chief O’Donnell said that grants are not for offsetting the regular budget but for other things.  Phil Landine asked about the sign.  Chief O’Donnell said that he does not know if he will have the funds to purchase the sign and will wait until the end of the year.  This sign is used to display the rate of speed an automobile is going and to alert the driver.  It is portable weighing 12 pounds.  The cost for this “top of the line model” is $7,000.  It will also do a modified car count.  Chief O’Donnell provided literature and a quote from All Traffic Solutions.
#28 Emergency Management: Police Chief Tom O'Donnell was present to discuss the Emergency Management Budget. He said that he did not use the 3% for increase in salary but instead he put that money into equipment. Al Collings asked if purchases and/or grants are subject to regionalization and the answer was that some of them are. The Chief stated that we have no emergency shelter in West Brookfield. The Elementary School does not have a generator but we do have an agreement with North Brookfield and Quaboag Regional High School to use their shelters. Jack Tivnan said the Housing Authority has a small area and they have a generator. Al Collings said that Sarah Allen had a request for a trailer last year. Is this a “dead issue?” Chief O’Donnell said that she has not said anything about it.

Phil Landine asked about the Harbormaster Budget. Al Collings said there is none. Chief O’Donnell said he is not in charge. The Harbormaster Association is sending Al Collings information. The question is who is in charge of problems on the lake: The Harbormaster may “yell” at them and he can also call the Police Department. Dave Pierce is on the lake a lot and he will talk to people and also Tom Ford. Chief O’Donnell said if there is a problem to call 911 and not the local number as they may not get the message right away. Tom Long reminded them that we have local by-laws. Al Collings said there is a sign at the launching area for summer rules and then winter rules. They are printed in the Lake Association Newsletter and on the web. The Harbormaster is supposed to deal with problems with docks.

#21 Fire Department: Chief Paul Lupacchino was present to discuss his budget. Al Collings said he had met with Paul in the past several days and asked what he needed. Protective Breathing Equipment: Cost: $5,600.00, which includes 5 cylinders, 35 cylinders hydro test, flow test, fit testing, and repairs. Chief Lupacchino is again requesting stipends for line officers. Discussed training programs for firemen and various certifications. Town does not pay for mileage. Phil Landine wanted to know what officers in other towns with same responsibilities make and the answer was that it is similar. Paul Lupacchino said that he could be gone tomorrow and wants to train his officers to be able to step up and run the department in the future. Jack Tivnan asked do inspectors fees cover the cost of the inspection and do we charge the amount allowed for fees and the answer was “not at the rate allowed.” He said he was not putting in for compensation for the inspections but a new person could. Al Collings said we should get all the money we can. The State has a schedule for fees but not applications. The people doing the inspections should get paid. Paul Lupaccino says all department crews on duty have to be certified by April 2012 and do continued education. Jack Tivnan wants a piece of paper to look at and where the authority came from to institute this law. Paul Lupacchino says he is National Certified but the Fire Marshall wants him to be State Certified. Jack Tivnan said he will call and ask the Fire Marshall. Tom Long asked are
these existing laws. Jack Tivnan asked if he was given any written material and the answer was no. Jack Tivnan asked are your people competent to do inspections and the answer was “no, only Benny and I.”

The 457 program is proposed as a Recruitment Retention Program. Al Collings said last year we asked you to offer the program without a match and see how many would sign up. If we offered this to the Fire Department, we would have to offer it to all Town employees. Paul said that one-half of the department would sign up if a percentage would be given from the Town and the others said they did not make enough money. Marie Arsenault and Johanna Barry said that they put money in a program and the Town does not match. Discussed getting certification and increase in hourly rate versus a flat rate. Al Collings said more work needs to be done on this and told Paul Lupacchino we would revisit this in March.

Phil Landine asked about the car sign. Paul Lupacchino said it was given by Home Land Security. We do not own the sign but must maintain it. Discussed the need going forward to regionalize. Al Collings asked if this had been talked about at regional meetings and Johanna Barry said that it has been discussed. Paul Lupacchino said that area fire departments are looking at regionalizing trucks. The next fire truck that our Town purchases may not be like the one we are replacing but will it be a better fit for the Town. We have mutual aid for structure fires as well. Johanna Barry said some segments can be regionalized like inspections.

**Minutes:** Minutes of November 9, 2011 not available. Jack Tivnan made a motion to approve the minutes of January 18, 2012. Roy Roberts seconded. Voted 5-0 to approve the minutes as presented.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary