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

**Police Department/Cruiser Lease:** Police Chief Tom O’Donnell came before the committee regarding the lease/purchase of a new police cruiser. In a previous meeting with the Chief during the review of his FY17 budget, the committee had expressed their support for the lease/purchase of two police cruisers pending receipt of information on the cost of each option. The requested information was not received by the committee prior to the posting of the warrant for the annual town meeting. The Chief said he had provided the information to Johanna in the Selectman’s Office and had forwarded a copy to Chairperson Lori Loughlin. Lori said she never received the information. The Chief said he was surprised that his request for a cruiser was not included in the town meeting warrant, nor did he get a copy of his FY17 budget until the night of the meeting. Brad Hibbard told the Chief his issue was with the Select board as our committee had been in support of his request pending receipt of cost information. The Chief agreed.

The Chief provided documentation on the cost to lease a new cruiser with all required equipment. The total purchase price of the vehicle is $48,740, with a lease option of $17,473.06 for three years and a $1 buy out at the end of the lease cycle. Pam Griffing determined that the finance fee would be approximately $3700. Phil Landine suggested that he use funds in his FY17 expense budget to lease the cruiser. He stated he is hesitant to do this out of concern over a potential shortfall in his budget by year end. The committee discussed potential savings in his salary account this coming year and expressed their support for assisting should there be a need to make up for any shortfall in his expense account at year end. It was suggested he bring his request before the select board.

**Police Department/Body Camera Grant:** Chief O’Donnell informed the committee that he has received a $7,400 grant from the State to purchase body cameras for his officers.

**Emergency Management Account:** Chief O’Donnell explained deficit spending in the Emergency Management Expense Account. The Town Accountant set up the budget to allow deficit spending where items could be purchased subject to later reimbursement.
Police Department/Emergency ATV Response Vehicle: The Chief was asked if the Police Department has access to the recently purchased ATV. The question was asked due to rumors that other departments were considering the purchase of a similar type emergency response vehicle. He responded “in a roundabout” way as currently there has to be a fire department member operating it. The Chief said he will be working with the Fire Chief to resolve the issue so police personnel can have direct access to the vehicle when necessary.

Proposed Changes to Employee Health Insurance: Phil Landine questioned why the Patrolman’s Union did not support the proposed change in health insurance benefits. The Chief said this was a union issue out of his purview. The committee questioned why changes to the health insurance were not addressed during the recent collective bargaining talks since the proposed insurance modifications were provided to the select board nearly two years ago. The committee was also concerned that union personnel had not received adequate information on the proposed changes based upon the short email that was forwarded to them. It was suggested that the select board schedule an informational meeting to provide detailed information on the proposed changes to union representatives and personnel so that they might make an informed decision on the proposed changes. It was suggested that the MIAA Health Insurance representative be present at the meeting to answer any questions on the proposed changes. Lori suggested that she and Brad be present at the meeting since they had worked closely with the MIAA representative on potential health insurance cost saving measures for the town and its employees. Lori will follow-up with Johanna.

MBT Stabilization Account: The Advisory Committee has been questioning when the well contingency funds would be returned to the MBT Stabilization Account for some time. The committee asked Town Clerk Sarah Allen if she would provide the committee with the history on the original receipt of the settlement and if/when there was a vote to place it into a stabilization account. The committee would like to see this issue resolved asap.

Review Special Town Meeting Articles: A special Town Meeting will be held on June 21, 2016 at 7 p.m. at the Elementary School. Lori Loughlin asked members if they would be able to attend. Based upon responses it appears there may not be a quorum of Advisory Committee members present.

Article #1: Vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds in the Treasury a sum or money to be placed in the “Legal Counsel Expense Account”.

Page 2
TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD
ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES
June 16, 2016

Page 3

The Advisory Committee made no recommendation because there was no information available as to the amount of money or where it would come from.

**Article #2:** Vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds in the Treasury a sum of money to be placed into the “General Insurance Account” to pay for medical invoices FY14 & FY15. The amount is $8,100. It is for doctor bills that the insurance company did not pay and we are obligated to pay. It requires a nine-tenth’s vote of approval. Richard Gobi made a motion to approve. Pam Griffing second. Advisory Committed voted to recommend approval of Article #2.

**Annual Town Meeting Review:** There was consensus that the meeting went well and that the voters appeared to consider our comments and recommendations before voting on the articles. The committee will recommend that the Town Building Maintenance Account and Road Maintenance Account be a line item in the FY18 budget. We are hopeful that the Town will be in a position to implement an improved line item budget in time for FY18 budget reviews.

The committee discussed the Town Manager Study Committee and suggested that the select board advertise for members in order to obtain a diverse and objective committee. It was further discussed that we ask the select board if we could have input into the interview and selection of candidates due to its potential impact on future town finances. Robert Blozie suggested there be criteria developed for use in the selection of candidates. Deb Provencher said she would be interested in serving on the committee. Lori Loughlin will follow-up with select board member Diane Vayda.

**Advisory Committee Report:** Tom Long and Robert Blozie said that many people had asked them why the Advisory Report was not sent out before the election and were disappointed in its late receipt. Bob Blozie questioned why the Secretary of State can send out information on state ballot questions and we cannot do the same at the municipality level. The Advisory Committee will request how much it cost to send out the Advisory Report this year.

**School Budget:** Deb Provencher said that Warren has scheduled a meeting on June 20, 2016 to set a date for their Town Meeting. The Advisory Committee discussed how we might assist in providing information to Warren voters prior to the Warren meeting. Lori Loughlin will reach out to Warren FinCom member Barry Mongoose.
Improved Line Item Budgeting Project: Pam Griffing has been working with the town accountant on the development of an improved line item budgeting process. She presented an overview of an early version of the project for our review and will provide an electronic copy for review in the following weeks.

New Business: The Advisory Committee will ask Marie for an accounting of the monies turned back to the town by each department at the end of FY16. These figures will not be available until August at the earliest. Tom Long suggested a “clean-up” meeting in August with the Accountant to go over finances.

Phil Landine asked if we are going to have an October meeting. The committee expressed their concerns regarding scheduling special town meetings unless absolutely necessary. It is the committee’s opinion that non-emergency spending and policy articles be held for the annual town meeting.

Lori Loughlin advised she will schedule our next meeting once Warren announces the date of their upcoming meeting on the school budget. She would like us to meet prior to the Warren meeting.

Robert Blozie made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Pam Griffing second. The meeting was adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long
Secretary