

approved 3/30/09

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 23, 2009**

The meeting was called to order at 6pm.

Members present – Doug Boyd, Carol Fitzgerald, Jeff Smith and Jamie Collins

Absent – Timm Marini

Also in attendance – Larry Forrest, Huck House, Bob White, Mark Goossens, Rick Kapinos, Cliff Bombard, Mike Gorski, Dave Markham, Chuck Beaver, Connie Witt, Chrissy Cesan and Al Perusse

Minutes – The minutes from the March 2nd and March 16th meetings were reviewed. Carol made a motion to accept the minutes from both meetings as amended. Jamie seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Parks and Recreation – Larry Forrest presented the level funded and 5% decrease budgets for the Parks Department. A new line item will be added for spray park expenses. The current operating expense line item will be used for all other park expenses. Doug noted that nobody knows what the state is going to come through with yet, and none of the town departments' budgets have been restored to the level they were at prior to the 2004 cuts. After the Parks Director position was cut, the board members filled in taking care of the Park and all sports. Now, with the addition of the spray park, they need some more help.

- Would like to hire a Park maintenance person for the summer to take care of the spray park, restrooms, trash and general maintenance and clean up; protect the investment of the spray park, approximately \$3000 (16 weeks)
- Increased attendance at the summer program and increased pavilion rentals. The spray park brings more activity to the Park.
- Highway used to empty the trash. That service stopped when 2% did not pass years ago. Board members take care of the trash at the Park and at the school fields during the summer.
- Figures will be provided to show what each sport costs to run. Spray park costs were provided already.
- Have looked into other revenues. Tried a snack bar but it did not work.
- The support of RAH helps with uniforms, equipment and improvements.

Fire Department – Chief Gorski presented the Fire Department's 5% decrease budget.

- Nothing was requested for salary or forest fire warden.
- Applied for a FEMA grant for a new tanker. If received the town would be responsible for approximately \$10,000 or 5%. Also applied for and received a fire equipment grant, \$5296 and a SAFE grant, \$3664.

Fire Continued:

- \$3000 FY09 transfer for replacement of the siren.
- Capital Improvements – Communication System overhaul compatible with Police, and a fire engine to replace the 1970 era Maxim.

Town Accountant – Cliff presented a revised revenue budget with everything staying the same except for an adjustment to the snow and ice figure and he removed the supplemental line. Approximately \$9.9 million is available for expenditures. He also handed in his budget requests for his department.

Historical Commission – Connie Witt explained the proposed Scenic Roads Bylaw.

- The bylaw would protect trees and stone walls on designated roadways.
- Only cost would be the advertising for a public hearing if a tree needs to be removed or a stone wall moved.
- Garden Club is interested in planting trees along roadways.
- Approximately 150 towns have adopted this bylaw. Wilbraham has had it since the 70's.
- Preserves the rural character of the town.

Connie noted that National Grid cut down 400 trees in town and the town did not profit from the sale of the wood. This may be prevented in the future with the bylaw in place.

Jeff will have numbers ready for the next meeting. Carol noted her concern about the lack of consistency in the salary lines. Some departments have worked in increases and others have not. Doug also commented on the fact that some work is being done at home and not being accounted for which does not result in a true figure of what that position requires for budgeting. Carol made a motion to adjourn at 7:30pm. Jamie seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Submitted by: Deborah House, Clerk