

Approved 4/25/11

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
April 21, 2011
Town Hall**

Called to order at 6:05pm.

Members Present – Carol Fitzgerald, Acting Chair, Doug Boyd and Rick Rubin.

Absent – Jeff Smith and Jamie Collins

Minutes – The minutes from the April 11th Public Hearing and regular meeting were reviewed. Rick made a motion to accept the minutes from the Public Hearing as presented. Carol seconded. Rick made a motion to accept the minutes from the regular meeting as presented. Carol seconded. Both votes were unanimous 3-0.

The meeting was attended by Selectmen John Flynn, Rick Green and Vinny Villamaino, Pam Courtney, Assessors Bob Makuch and Stan Witkop, Dawn Barnes, Town Clerk Eva Wiseman, Accountant Cliff Bombard, Treasurer Dick Patullo, Moderator Bob Howarth and School Committee member Peter Salerno. The purpose of the meeting was to finalize warrant article figures and see what we have for available funds. The Advisory Board will also vote on their warrant article recommendations.

There was some discussion about Article 22 – Reducing the Tax Rate. One option is to take no action and revisit this in the fall. The figure of \$144,000 will be used to reduce the high school bond amount.

Article 13 – Town GIS Mapping is now \$9000, down from \$20,000.

The Advisory Board will recommend putting \$5000 into the Reserve account now and anticipates putting more in the Reserve account in the fall at the Special Town Meeting.

The Advisory policy has always been to take care of regular business at the Annual Town Meeting and take care of housekeeping items at the Special Town Meeting in the fall.

Article 17 – Renovations and Improvements to the Fire Station; the current estimate is \$100,000. More estimates are still coming in.

Peter Salerno from the School Committee explained that \$1.5 million had to be cut from the school budget. Some potential sources of funds would be:

1. Ask for additional monies from the two towns.
2. School Committee can take \$100,000 out of projected increases (non-union).
3. Union negotiations – the unions are meeting on 4/25 to consider whether or not to open the contract which was signed in 2008 and is good through 2013. Peter feels that he will have an answer by Monday evening as to whether or not they will negotiate.
4. School choice and E&D money

Everyone will have to work together – teachers, unions, towns – to make this work. The School Committee will meet Monday evening to vote on a new assessment. A new lower assessment will be delivered to Hampden by the School Committee. Hampden has the choice to agree to it or not.

Group meeting ended at 7pm. The Advisory Board continued their meeting.

The new article figures are; Article 13 - \$9,000, Article 16 - \$25,000 and Article 15 - \$10,469. All articles will be “raise and appropriate” now; money can be transferred in the fall to cover some of the articles. Free cash can also be used in the fall for the fire truck purchase.

Vote on Warrant Articles:

- Art. 1 Town Reports – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 2 Budget – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 3 Previous Bills – recommends favorable action on no action.
- Art. 4 Revolving Funds for FY12 – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 5 Revolving Fund Reports – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 6 Enterprise Fund Transfer Station – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 7 Community Preservation Committee – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 8 Conservation Fund – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 9 Highway State Aid – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 10 Library Additional State Aid – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 11 Assessors – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 12 Assessors – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 13 Town GIS Mapping – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 14 Dare Program – recommends favorable action on no action.
- Art. 15 School Resource Officer – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 16 Highway Dept.-Vehicle Replacement – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 17 Fire Dept. Renovations – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 18 Fire Dept. Pumper/Tanker – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 19 Fire Dept. Truck – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 20 Reserve Fund – recommends favorable action.
- Art. 21 Stabilization Fund – recommends favorable action on no action.
- Art. 22 Reducing Tax Rate – recommends favorable action.

Carol made a motion to adjourn at 8:05pm. Doug seconded. The vote was unanimous 3-0.

Submitted by: Deborah House