

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 4, 2013
Hampden Town House**

Approved March 11, 2013

Called to order at 6:00 pm.

Members Present – Doug Boyd, Rick Rubin, Jamie Collins and Jeff Smith

Absent – Carol Fitzgerald

Also Present – Anne Daly and Ed Loiko, Cemetery, Dianne Reigner and Kathy Hutchinson, Library, Eva Wiseman, Board of Registrars, Tax Collector and Town Clerk, Bob Makuch, Stan Witkop and Norm Charest, Assessors, Richard Patullo, Treasurer, Sherry Himmelstein, Hampden Land Project, Marty O'Shea, HWRSD, and Bonnie Geromini, Conservation

FY14 Budget Process –

Cemetery:

The Cemetery commissioner is requesting an increase, (FY14 \$10,500) in the clerks' salary line over the FY13 budget, (\$4000) and a \$7500 increase for maintenance as well as the creation of a new line item for computer/software maintenance in the amount of \$550. The expense budget remains the same at \$550. There is an anticipated capital expense request for repairs needed to the door of the tomb. Fees associated with burials are used for opening/closing of graves and shortages for plowing and grounds maintenance. The fee for plots has now increased to \$800.

Library:

The library submitted both a level serviced budget and a pre-closing staff addition budget. They are requesting funding for the addition of a young adult librarian and a second page. They are currently open 25 hours per week and would possibly be able to open a few extra hours per week with the additional librarian position.

Board of Registrars/Tax Collector/Town Clerk: The collector and town clerks budgets were submitted with step increases in salaries and level funding in all other line items. The registrars' budget decreased due to only a town election expected for FY14.

Board of Assessors:

The board submitted a 2.5 % increase for the elected assessor's salary. They have created a new position of principal assessor and are changing the grade from the current grade nine to a requested grade 10 step 10. They will post this position and eliminate the assistant assessor position. They have requested a step increase for their clerk who was hired at a grade and step less than the position was originally created at and will be 'returning' the difference in FY13 salary. Expense line has also increased due to continued schooling, as has the software line. Field review has decreased by \$500 with a new consultant.

Treasurer:

The treasurer submitted increases for salary and clerical lines, both 2.5%, and an increase of \$500 for payroll services. A new line item is being created for records management, the requested amount to fund this line item is \$1000.

The treasurer and advisory committee reviewed the current debt, bonds, interest rates, VA benefits, and the anticipated employee benefit rates through SVRHT.

Hampden Land Project:

Sherry Himmelstein reviewed the completed purchase of the 22 acres north of Memorial Park. The HLP is looking to purchase an additional 11 acres on the east side of the brook. It is the southernmost estate lot at the foot of Mountain road and abuts the recently purchased 22 acres. Once they have met with the CPC, they will be presenting a warrant for the \$105,000 asking price of the land.

HWRSD:

Marty O'Shea attended the meeting. The school committee is proposing level funding for chapter 70, and a 2.69% increase on the operational budget, with 1/3 of that total budget being assessed to Hampden. Even with that increase they are still projecting a \$1,000,000 gap. They are estimating that transportation reimbursement will be reduced and that the circuit breaker credit which is currently at 75% reimbursement over \$38,000 will be reduced to 55-60% over monies spent on special education placements costing over \$38,000. All five bargaining units are under contract negotiations. Without a contract, the cost of step increase alone for teachers is \$450,000. The committee is also estimating that there is the potential for \$70,000 in cuts to Title I and Special Education due to the sequestration cuts. This would also result in increases in parking fees, student activity fees and athletic fees. There are currently 119 school choice students. The committee is recommending maintaining this number but could decide to add six to 10 additional school choice openings each would result in \$5,000 income to the district. There is also a proposal to purchase a new math series at the cost of \$130,000. This cost could be stretched over three years.

Conservation:

Bonnie Geromini attended the meeting and presented a level funded and level service budget.

The minutes from February 25th, 2013 regular meeting were reviewed.

Rick made a motion to approve the minutes with one correction. Jamie seconded. All in favor, 4 to 0.

Next meeting scheduled for March 11th, 2013 at 6pm in the Melville room.

Jamie made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:07pm. Rick seconded. All in favor, 4 to 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindi Connors, Clerk