

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 10, 2014
Hampden Town House**

Approved February 24, 2014

Called to order at 6:02 pm.

Members Present – Carol Fitzgerald, Doug Boyd, Rick Rubin and Jamie Collins
Also Present – Anne Daley, Ed Loiko and John Wilkerson - **Cemetery Committee**, Eva Wiseman - **Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Board of Registrars**, Selectman John Flynn, Chief Jeff Farnsworth and Sgt Michael Cooney – **Hampden Police Department**, Marty O’Shea, Beth Regulbuto and Lena Buteau – **HWRSD**
Absent – Jeff Smith

FY14 Budget Process –

Cemetery Commission:

The Cemetery commissioner is requesting an increase, (FY15 \$14,000) in the clerks’ salary line over the FY14 budget, (\$10,500) as well as a grade change and a \$5750 increase for maintenance. The expense & computer maintenance budgets remain the same at \$550 each. Ed Loiko stated there currently is no job description and that Ann runs the office. Carol asked Ed to contact Don Collins from personnel to schedule an appointment to review the clerks’ position since the board can’t independently change the position grade without first having the job description reviewed by the personnel committee.

Ed went on to explain that they currently pay for snow removal & grave opening out of the revolving fund and that is why they are requesting an increase to the maintenance budget to cover the increasing cost of snow removal.

They estimate that there are approximately 15 burials per year at costs ranging from \$350 to \$1000 plus the cost of the burial plot.

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.

Rick asked if Eva was still doing business with MASSCOR. Eva remarked that she is and that the prices are really good. Doug asked if she anticipated any large expenses to which she replied that the wooden voting booths could be replaced with laminated ones with aluminum legs at a cost of \$200 each. She does have an issue with a substitute ballot box, the rubber stamp wheel imprints Town of Millbury and she hasn’t found anyone who can replace it with one that reads Town of Hampden.

Police:

Chief Farnsworth and Sgt Cooney attended the meeting. The bulk of the increases were due to contractual obligations to staff. There has been a sizeable decrease in the Quinn bill, (down to 5 officers.) and the substantial increase to dispatchers.

Doug question how the new cruiser was working out and Jeff replied that the feedback has been good.

A capital request was submitted in the amount of \$20,000 on behalf of the Police & Fire Departments and the Council on Aging. All of the defibrillators need to be replaced, (PD 5, HVFD 4, COA 1) and they will be better priced purchasing them in bulk.

Selectman Flynn let the advisory board members know that the BOS had asked the solar farm for a bonding type structure, and the estimated revenue to the town would be in the range of 1.27 million dollars over 20 years. This is a revenue stream that was not in the recap before.

HWRSD:

The school committee is proposing level funding for chapter 70 and a 2.32% increase in the \$42 million operational budget. Even with that increase they are still projecting a \$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000 gap. They are estimating that transportation reimbursement will be level funded and that the circuit breaker credit will be reduced. All five bargaining units are under contract negotiations. Without a contract, the cost of step increase alone for teachers is 13% of the budget. The teachers are interested in the GIC for insurance rather than the no deductible plan that they currently have through the SVRHT, (HWRSD is 20% of the SVRHT.). Marty also mentioned that the district offers a 125 plan and that the plan has picked up quite a bit. There are 18 school choice students graduating this year. Doug asked if Marty was going to increase that number of openings and Marty said they will stay with the 18 openings. Rick Rubin asked what was happening with the money that Cathedral is paying to rent Memorial School. Marty replied that the money goes to the Town of Wilbraham. The \$500,000 Safe Schools, Healthy Students grant will be ending and the schools will need approximately \$300,000 to maintain school adjustment councilors and some teaching positions that were funded by the grant. Various options are being considered to help reduce expenses. Marty mentioned that at some point a Proposition 2/12 override may be necessary to 'catch us up' He went on to say that the district is lagging behind neighboring towns. There are 52 students in out of district placements, and the expenditure per pupil in those placements is considerably higher.

Enrollment from has decreased in the Town of Hampden, while it has increased in the Town of Wilbraham.

The assessment for the Town of Hampden is \$200,198.

The assessment for the Town of Wilbraham is \$848,609.

New Business-

Next meeting scheduled for February 24th, 2014 at 6pm in the Melville room.

Doug made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 3rd, 2014 meeting. Rick seconded. All in favor 4-0

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindi Connors, Clerk