

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2015
Hampden Town House**

Approved March 2, 2015

Called to order at 6:09 pm.

Members Present – Doug Boyd, Carol Fitzgerald, Rick Rubin and Jeff Smith

Members Absent –Jamie Collins

Also Present –Planning Board Chair John Matthews, Library Trustee Kathy Hutchison, Library Director Ellen Moriarty, Town Accountant Cliff Bombard, Highway Superintendent Dana Pixley, Selectmen Vinnie Villamaino, Norman Charest and John Flynn, and BOS Admin Pam Courtney

Minutes:

Rick made a motion to accept the February 9, 2015 meeting minutes as presented Carol seconded. All in favor, 4-0

FY15 Budget Process –

Cemetery: Will be rescheduled

Planning Board:

John Matthews stated that nothing much has changed with the budget except for the yearly salary increase and that all but one abutter has settled with HCC and that legal costs should now decrease. They have no new project or computer needs as of now. They will be coming to ATM to try and clean up their bylaws.

Library:

Kathy stated that they have basically submitted a level serviced budget although it is a little up from last year with salary increases and the 19% mandated for materials. She told the committee that they did take out the trust monies from the budget since those funds cannot be counted on and that the MEG money has been going down every year. They are using the extra money they were given last year as extra staffing and not for an extra person and will still be looking to have a Young Adult Librarian with a four year degree for 12-16 hours per week and know that they will need to go through personnel Doug inquired about the activity at the library and Ellen told him that circulation numbers are up from last year and that she does have a way in reports to track new patrons.

Town Accountant:

Cliff told the board that there needs to be a software upgrade to cloud storage and that there would be a onetime charge for this. If approval is received then Cliff will be asking SoftRight if they will install and then wait for payment of their upgrade fee although he is hoping to find money somewhere in this year's budget to squeeze in the cloud migration. Rick asked if there is a monthly maintenance fee and Cliff told him that there is an annual fee of \$2300 that is part of the BOS budget. Carol asked if the money has to come out of a similar line and Cliff replied that every department uses this information and that he would like to do this at a quiet time of the year. Cliff also informed the commission that he will not be attending school this year but will be attending again next year to continue his certification.

Highway Department:

Dana informed the committee that he is currently \$100,207 overdrawn on snow & ice budget line and that he is anticipating \$45,000 in bills. He thinks that he has enough salt in the shed to make it through the end of this year. He went on to review current pricing and contract with Morton Salt. Doug asked if it was a function of demand that the price is now so high and Dana told him that it was and that Morton had stopped delivering on January 26th. It will cost \$75,000 to fill the salt shed and Rick asked where that money will come from. Dana told him that any shortage will go against free cash.

Dana continued to review his budget and talked about changing Street Sweeping and Basin cleaning contractors.

Carol inquired as to the salary adjustments and Dana replied that this is the third and final year. There are more salaries in general highway than in highway maintenance account and with this new budget he will be fully funded for labor.

Selectman John Flynn thinks that the highway building utility budget should be increased by \$1000 to \$1200. The well testing cost is unknown at this time; they are waiting for an estimate. This action should not be at the detriment of something else in Dana's budget under building utilities.

Rick asked about mowing for Parks & Recreation, Schools and Cemetery. Dana informed him that town properties are mowed 27 times per year and that both the schools and Cemetery had gone elsewhere for services and that many times when his staff arrives at Memorial Park the grounds have already been mowed by Parks staff.

Cliff interjected that the Cemetery is stocking up their revolving account and informed the committee that the balance is at \$12,000.

Capital requests were reviewed. Highway may be asking for dump bodies and a sander at STM. Dana stated that the loader is holding up well for the time being.

Rick asked who does maintenance on the trucks and Dana informed him that the Highway department does.

Doug asked about road paving and Dana told him it had been a good year.

Board of Selectmen:

Selectman Flynn reviewed line items on the BOS budget. Water District Operations is now at \$8,000, a transfer to law & claims is anticipated and the \$1800 in Mapping Maintenance can become part of 015292 or become its own separate line item. An increase is expected in both Town House utilities and street lighting.

The building inspector will be retiring in April, as will his clerk. The BOS have negotiated a salary with the assistant building inspector who will also assume the clerks duties. This position may be revenue neutral as inspections generate a revenue stream which could be swept at the end of the fiscal year to cover the salary for the upcoming year.

Next meeting scheduled for March 2nd, 2015 at 6pm in the Melville room.

Doug made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05. Carol seconded. All in favor, 4 to 0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindi Connors, Clerk