

**HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES
October 19, 2015
Hampden Town House**

Approved January 25, 2016

Hearing opened at 7:05pm.

Members Present – Carol Fitzgerald & Doug Boyd, Co-Chairs, Jeff Smith and Heather Turcotte

Members Absent – none

Also Present – public

Doug Boyd opened the public hearing for the Special Town Meeting next and told the attendees that it was a short warrant prior to starting the reading and review of the warrant articles. Questions/concerns/comments regarding the warrant articles are noted below:

Article 1

This article was requested by the Board of Selectmen. Selectman John Flynn stated that this parcel was needed to complete the drainage project on Bennett road and that it needed to be legally certified in ongoing discussions. The estimated cost is \$500.

Article 2

This article was brought forth by the Highway department to remove dead/diseased trees. The work will be completed by the winter season. Doug commented that this was a proactive approach.

Article 3

This article was requested by the Highway department. The replacement is needed on the 1996 Mack truck. Heather inquired on the useful life left on the truck, which Dana replied is about another ten years.

Article 4

This article is a potential land donation to the Land Trust, who is expected to cover the cost of recording. The twenty acres is located on Minnechaug mountain. It is unclear whether it connects to any current trust land

Article 5

This article addresses an informal request for CPA funds to be used for work needing to be done at Academy Hall. CPC has not yet received a formal request for this work.

Article 6

An additional appropriation of \$20,000 to the reserve fund is being requested. Only \$5,000 was appropriated at the ATM Selectman Flynn question the Advisory Committee if they wanted to go higher on the amount. Doug responded that this money was supposed to be used for unanticipated requests and that the committee had discussed this and wanted to keep it at \$25,000.

Article 7

Discussion between Advisory Committee, Treasurer Richard Patullo, Town Accountant Cliff Bombard and Selectmen John Flynn and Norman Charest in regards to the amount of money to apply to reduce the tax rate. Norman estimated the new town value was now at eight million dollars higher than expected. Doug asked if there were any retroactive assessments. Norman replied that there is the possibility for more values next year, assessments as of 01/01/2016.

Article 8

The amount of money available will be dependent upon article 7. There is approximately \$831,000 in the stabilization account and the state likes to see 5-10% of the yearly operating budget in the account. Currently it is at 6.6%.

Cliff offered if we don't increase at the full 2 ½% the state says we can, then next year could see a much larger increase. Dick stated that in 2018 the infrastructure note and the first year of the police department note will overlap. Cliff and Doug will get together over the next week and come up with options for the Advisory Committee to review prior to STM

With no further comment, the Public Hearing was adjourned at 7:25pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Cindi Connors, Clerk