

HAMPDEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting
February 1, 2016
Hampden Town House

Approved February 22, 2016

Meeting opened at 6:04pm.

Members Present – Carol Fitzgerald & Doug Boyd, Co-Chairs, Heather Turcotte & Matt Fisher

Members Absent – Jeff Smith

Also Present –, Eva Wiseman, Town Clerk, Registrar and Tax Collector, Mindy Meeker & Tim Connors, Cemetery Commissioners, John Matthews, Planning Board chairman and Wendel Hulbert, Building Inspector

FY17 Budget Process –

Carol and Doug discussed and agreed that both Parks & Recreation and the board of Assessors should go before the Personnel board for their multiple step increase requests. Doug also summarized that the BOA had submitted a level service budget with a multiple step increase for the clerk and a restoration of service budget with the BOA not taking a raise.

Doug made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 25, 2016 meeting. Matt seconded, all in favor 4-0.

ConCom:

The Conservation Commission submitted a request for an additional hour per week for their clerk. They currently have about 25% of their salary line left for the year. Clerk to reschedule chair to attend meeting on February 29.

Registrar:

Eva informed the committee that there will be four elections this year and that since the minimum wage increase her payroll costs will also increase as will her hours due to the presidential primary with no incumbent. She said that she would rather return monies than not have enough to cover her costs. Also adding to her costs will be the new voting regulations that allow early voting. The voter booths are still holding up and she tries to avoid using those with splinters.

Tax Collector/Town Clerk:

There were 20 properties that went into tax title; of these 7 belonged to the same owner, 2 were owned by persons now deceased and 1 owner was now in a nursing home.

Eva is still using the prison for printing. Salary increases were reviewed and the clerical line has training time factored in.

Doug asked if there were any big ticket items needed besides the voting booths.

Eva is still using the same software programs which help with computer expenses. She uses her revolving account for computers and buys more than one at a time so that the operating systems are similar.

Cemetery:

The commission would like Dana and the highway department to take over mowing and plowing the cemeteries. Maintenance request increased by \$1500 to cover anticipated increase in spring and fall clean up of cemeteries; appropriated \$15,000 for FY16 and currently have \$5800 remaining. Computer and office expense requests remain the same as FY16. Clerical increase from 6/5 to a 6/6 for an average of 19 hours requested.

Doug asked if there were any big ticket items, ground sonar and grave marking were mentioned. Mindy stated that you don't have to put in a headstone when someone is buried so having a 'map' of where caskets are would help them in clearing up their files.

Tim mentioned the mausoleum door needing repair and finding out what would be required to operate a mausoleum. Doug recommended finding out the cost of the repair prior to town meeting to see if it is something that could be covered by CPC

Planning:

John Matthews stated that nothing much has changed with the budget except for the yearly salary increase. Carol asked if things were slowing down and they are currently working on used car dealers in residential areas and that as licenses are renewed public hearings will be held. He went on to say that he doesn't foresee HCC doing much this year or next and that there is the potential for cottages to be built at some point. Carol asked about bylaw changes and John said they have one for the dismantling of solar facilities at end of life and another that was requested by Dana for rain water runoff and that at fall town meeting there will be a bylaw pertaining to cell towers. There are substantial changes and documents are now being reviewed by Verizon attorneys.

Discussion:

Wendel Hulbert stopped in to ask to be added to the schedule so he could speak to the committee about his clerk.

Heather asked with regards to state funding if there is a shortfall or overage in the district budget, what happens – Doug replied that once the budget is set the district spends. If they have an overage they keep the excess and if they have a shortfall they cannot come back to the towns for more funding.

Carol suggested moving the school district to the February 29th meeting. The school committee voted to add the Middle School unification to the warrant for ATM. This will have to be added to the May election ballot as well.

With no other business, Doug motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:31pm, Matt seconded, all in favor 4-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Cindi Connors, Clerk