



OFFICE OF THE  
Advisory Board  
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September 8, 2015

Attending: Harold Simmons, Dana Metzler, Ron Mikol, Christine Muir, Amie Stevens  
Absent: Pam Crocker

Also attending: Town Administrator Tracey Hutton

Meeting opened at 7:10 p.m.

#### Town Accountant Revenue Forecast

Lorraine did not attend our meeting, perhaps because it was held on a Tuesday rather than a Monday night. Lorraine is not usually in the building on Tuesday nights.

#### GDRSD Regional Agreement Update

Tracey expects the first regular meeting of this committee to occur in late September or early October. We are waiting to find out which Dunstable representative on the School Committee will be a member of this committee. Hopefully the School Committee will choose a member at their meeting on 9/9/2015.

#### Water Department Update

The Board of Selectmen are holding an open forum on Thursday, September 10 at 6 p.m., with the Water Department and the Advisory Board. Tracey was asked if the boards would consider putting forth alternative plans, since the current proposal has failed at the ballot box twice. She said that the BOS and Water Dept are not currently considering that path. Dana suggested that the boards consider addressing the largest problem – the tanks – first; at a cost of approximately \$750,000, this could be borne by the water users themselves, thus overcoming what is likely a major obstacle in getting public approval for the entire project. After another year or two, the town could address the issue of replacing pipes.

As part of this discussion, we talked about televising and rebroadcasting public meetings. A new camera is needed, and Tracey will ask Charter and/or Verizon about providing that. It was also noted that someone should review the contract with Charter regarding revenue per house due to the town. Charter says we were paid a one-time, upfront amount, but board members recall hearing that the revenue would be recurring annually.

#### New Business

Tracey had several new items to put before us.

The Highway Dept has plans to purchase a new plow truck with Chapter 90 funds. They cannot use Chapter 90 funds to purchase a plow, though, so they are asking the Advisory Board to consider how the town might make that purchase. The cost is about \$26,000. The truck is about \$150,000. The Advisory Board thought it would be helpful to have a report from the Capital Planning Committee, listing an inventory of Highway equipment.

The boiler in Town Hall must be replaced; there is a leak over the boiler that has created layers of rust over the years. Ron is not certain that it would be safe to start the boiler this year. Tracey has written a request for bids that she can put out relatively quickly. She does have a quote for fixing the current boiler, at \$10,000, but fixing the boiler could actually result in further damage. Tracey expects it may cost about \$44,000 to replace. We have \$10,000 set aside in the budget already. It could take one month to get bids, 4-5 weeks to order and receive the new boiler, and three days to actually replace. This puts us into November, when the heat would likely be necessary in the building. The Advisory Board suggested putting out the bid so that we might know actual costs in time for the anticipated Special Town Meeting, currently scheduled for Tuesday, October 27. We may be able to cover this cost from free cash, although we do not yet know the amount to be certified.

The Fire Department needs a new tower site for their radio communications. The tower (two antennae, actually) used to sit on the Trask property at the top of Forest Hill, but new owners have asked that it be removed. Without this tower, the reach for communicating by radio does not even cover all of Dunstable, and certainly doesn't reach into neighboring towns, where many of our volunteer firefighters live. The Fire Chief has had a company scope out potential new sites, and Sky Top Lane is considered the best option. It would take 3-5 weeks to complete the tower installation, and would cost between \$50,000 and \$70,000. The project requires FCC licensing, which can take time. Dana suggested that this might be funded by free cash.

Tracey suggested that the town needs to modify its current process of paying inspectors. They must be paid within the current fiscal year for work done within the fiscal year. Essentially, we need to put their payment schedule on a fiscal year schedule rather than a calendar year schedule. We expect to be able to manage this relatively easily.

Finally, Tracey noted that our current practice of leasing vehicles, rather than buying them with a short-term debt note, is costing significantly more money because of high interest rates. She suggested we take this into consideration when planning next year's budget.

The Advisory Board wrapped up the evening by reviewing potential items for the Special Town Meeting warrant. This currently includes an item for the Planning Board regarding the stormwater regulations, a bylaw on permitting, and the financial items just discussed. Dana mentioned that we also need to consider excluding certain debt items currently covered by our operating budget, including the middle school roof and the GLRVTHS renovations.

We adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

