



**OFFICE OF THE  
Advisory Board  
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**February 4, 2019**

Present: Adria Fischer, Eric McKenzie, Kieran Meehan, Bob Nelson, Harold Simmons, Leo Tometich  
Also attending: Town Administrator, Town Accountant, Jennifer McKenzie(GDRSC)

Meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Dunstable FY20 Budget Review

Some overall FY2020 budget discussion and the amount of additional GDRSD funds available within the current levy limit increase.

1. On our FY20 budget overview spreadsheet the FY20 levy limit is the FY19 total permanent tax base (\$8,773,071) plus 2.5% (\$219,327), plus \$125,000 in estimated new growth, plus any override amount (currently \$0), plus excluded debt (\$531,710).
2. For our FY20 budget discussions we have been using the 2.5% increase + estimated new growth + the amount of free-cash in the operating budget (\$75,000) to equal the total FY20 operating budget funding increase (\$419,327) within our levy limit.
3. For reference, in FY19 Dunstable used \$133,967 of free-cash in the operating budget.
4. Prudent long term municipal financial planning suggests reducing the operating budget dependence on free-cash, so we have reduced the amount of free-cash in this initial FY20 operating budget to \$75,000.
5. We anticipate using some additional free-cash for the GDRSD capital needs.

Current FY20 budget status:

1. The revenue side of the Dunstable FY20 operating budget indicates that we can spend \$419,327 more than Dunstable did in FY2019.
2. No specific details at this time, but the current FY20 expenditures result in an approximately \$300,000 deficit.

Dunstable FY20 School District Funding Discussion

There is a FY20 budget summit meeting with the GDRSC, plus Groton fincom and select boards scheduled for Wednesday Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, so one of the goals of this AB meeting is to identify a preliminary desired FY20 funding increase projection from Dunstable to the GDRSD. Hopefully this will be useful information for the school committee when constructing the FY20 GDRSD budget.

1. While we plan to reduce some FY20 non-school expenditures, it is unlikely that there will be any significant reduction. Many departments are within the desired and hopefully sustainable 2% increase.
  2. Jennifer indicated that much of the FY20 school district increases will be driven by state mandated functions, with limited local control over the costs.
  3. The AB is split over school district funding, both in amount and percentage of the town budget.
  4. In an effort to move forward and provide the school committee with a FY20 funding increase projection based on the current Dunstable FY20 budget, the AB received a motion to propose allocating 60% of the Dunstable operating budget increase to the GDRSD FY20 operating budget, or approximately \$240,000.
- Motion - Harold, 2<sup>nd</sup> - Adria. Vote: For - Bob, Harold, Adria, Kieran, Leo. Against - Eric.

Longer Term Dunstable Budget Planning Discussion

As part of working toward a multi-year budget plan, there was some discussion about what level or percentage of the town revenue is appropriate for the various town services. What percentage of the discretionary

revenue should be spent on schools, roads, fire, police, parks & recreation, municipal government, etc. Ultimately and ideally this should probably be decided by the citizens of Dunstable, but an external audit may provide some insight into what other similar communities are doing. Of course, one of the primary obstacles to obtaining this information is the expense of these audits. No firm cost information at this time, but likely several thousand dollars per department.

#### Miscellaneous Topics

1. The FY19 unemployment fund will probably be depleted in February.
2. Water department funds are running low and may need approximately \$50,000 to keep solvent in FY19.
3. Some override versus debt exclusion discussion.
4. Highway Department update from Kieran. More paving money desired. Appreciate pay adjustments.
5. Water Department update by Harold. Operating contract is in place with Small Water Systems. Need to collect overdue bills.
6. Potential field changes and dugout upgrades at Larter Field.
7. High school track and Swallow Union restoration projects under consideration with CPC/Historical commission.

Motion to adjourn at 8:25 p.m. - Harold, - 2<sup>nd</sup> Leo. Vote: Unanimous  
Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.