

**Advisory Committee
Town of Hanover
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339**

Meeting Minutes of March 14, 2012

Committee Attendees: Brian Barthelmes, David Bond, John O’Leary, Florence Grady, Jerry O’Hearn, Helen Graves, Jim Van Arsdale, Joan Young, Wayne Moores

Others: Jennifer Petit, Finance Director, Steve Rollins, Town Manager, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Kristine Nash, Business Manager, Joanne McDonough, School Committee Members: Les Hayward, Libby Corbo, Michael Cianciola, Selectmen, Susan Setterland, Joe Salvucci, Joe O’Brien, and John Barry.

Brian Barthelmes, Advisory Committee Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Large First Floor Hearing Room.

School Department FY2013 Budget:

Les Hayward, School Committee Chairman, distributed a copy of the School Committee’s FY2013 budget presentation and reviewed the following items:

- Per pupil expenditures comparisons
- Educational needs versus amount funded
- Make up of Special Education costs
- Negative impacts of a level funded budget

The School Committee has composed a list of budget reductions for FY2013 but these are not expected to be necessary, based the Town Manager’s budget recommendations.

School enrollment has increased by 43 students, mainly in the Middle and High schools. There has been an increase in the number of students using the school lunch program. Some of the Food Director’s salary will be paid out of the revolving fund for school lunches.

Maintenance salaries and expenses will be transferred to the Centralized Maintenance budget.

Advisory Committee member, Jim Van Arsdale asked Dr. Nash to provide the Advisory Committee with a multi-year presentation of school district headcount, administration, teaching staff, and support staff.

The SPED transportation contract was not put out to bid, because the School Department wanted to be able to select an appropriate vendor for transporting students.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of the School Department’s budget is salary. Their FY2013 budget request includes step increases, but not cost of living increases.

A discussion about School audits took place. The School department gets audited annually along with the Town.

John O'Leary asked about the School Department's legal expenses, and whether there could be any cost savings to using Town Counsel. Les Hayward said that the law firm that the school retains had decreased their fees this year.

The School's systems and technology budget were discussed. The School currently uses a home grown system but is converting over to the Town's new payroll and accounting system Brian Barthelmes asked if the School Department currently tracks computer usage, and if there are any programs that are not be utilized by staff. The Schools do not currently track computer usage.

The May 2012 Town Meeting article about a feasibility study on the Sylvester School was discussed. A recent feasibility study along with revised enrollment numbers would be required before the Town could apply to the state for funding for renovations or an addition to the Center School. Brian Barthelmes requested a copy of the study that was completed on the Center and Sylvester School several years ago from the Town Manager.

May 2012 Town Meeting Articles:

The Advisory Committee met with Susan Setterland, Joe O'Brien, Joe Salvucci, and John Barry, from the Board of Selectmen, regarding town meeting articles they had submitted to the May 2012 Annual Town Meeting warrant. Members of the Board of Selectmen have not voted yet on their recommendations for Town Meeting articles.

The Town Meeting article regarding a proposed meals tax was discussed. It was discussed, that because revenue from a meals tax might be a one-time income, it would be beneficial to earmark this revenue for a specific item such as a reserve fund for capital expenses.

Legislation has not yet passed for a senior citizen property tax exemption.

The Town Meeting article requesting a School Audit was discussed. It was discussed that it may be beneficial to include all Town departments in this audit as well.

Motions for May 2012 Town Meeting Articles:

The Committee reviewed proposed motions for May 2012 Town Meeting articles. David Bond made a motion to accept the proposed motions on Articles 1 through 9, 12, 13, 14, 31, 33, 53, 54, 55, and 57. Helen Graves seconded the motion. All others were in favor.

Meeting Minutes:

Helen Graves made a motion to accept the Advisory Committee meeting minutes of March 7, 2012 as written. David Bond seconded the motion. All others were in favor.

Meeting Schedule:

The Committee agreed to meet on Monday, April 2, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. if needed.

Florence Grady made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 p.m. Joan Young seconded the motion. All others were in favor.

Prepared by: Audrey Barresi, Advisory Committee Secretary