

Dover Warrant Committee

January 13, 2010

Members in attendance: David Stapleton, Chair; James Kinder, Vice Chair; Peter Smith, Secretary; Kate Bush; James Dawley; Kathy Hall; David Melville; Andrew Waugh; Jane Wemyss

Others in attendance:

Board of Selectmen: Carol Lisbon

Fire and Ambulance: Jay Hughes, Chief; Board of Fire Engineers: Carlton Sherman, Chair; John Sugden

Library: Cheryl Abdullah, Director; Trustees: Beth Paisner, Co-Chair; Cathy Mitchell, Co-Chair; Joan King, Secretary; Holly Collins; Elizabeth Freeman; Joan Stapleton; Friends of the Dover Library: Matthew Schmidt, Treasurer

Mr. Stapleton called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm

1. Review of minutes

Mr. Dawley moved that the minutes of January 6 be approved, seconded by Mr. Kinder. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Smith noted that he had received a correction to the November 10, 2009 minutes from the Park and Recreation Board, pointing out a misstatement. The minutes, as posted, say that the Board discussed raising fees to pay for a study of field redesign. It should have said that the study was paid for out of fees, and that a future fee increase was discussed, but the two matters were not connected. The Committee agreed that Mr. Smith should contact the Town Clerk and determine the proper method for posting this correction.

2. Prior Notices and Reserve Fund Transfer Requests

None.

3. Budget Presentation — Fire and Ambulance

Mr. Smith opened the discussion by noting that the 2011 budget request contains no increases over 2010 except for the recommended 1.9% salary increase plus one longevity recipient. Mr. Sherman stated that his Board was comfortable with this request, but maintenance to the aging rolling stock could necessitate additional expenditures should failures occur. All the trucks except Engine 4 are old. The ladder truck is coming up for replacement in a future Capital Budget.

Chief Hughes noted that the Town is lucky to have excellent retention among the firefighters. The age distribution is broad, so there is no looming retirement crisis. To date he has been able to meet most training needs out of the budgets. He explained the fire stipend for town employees: that rather than be paid by the Fire Department for calls during normal working hours, they receive a stipend from their regular department and only receive fire pay for off-hours calls. This

simplifies accounting and provides a useful incentive for Town employees to become and remain firefighters.

Asked about mutual aid for the ambulance, he noted that all the adjacent towns participate, and that Needham, Westwood, and Wellesley can provide Advanced Life Support service when required. Receivables and write-offs for ambulance fees have dropped greatly since Town outsourced collections to Comstar.

4. Budget Presentation — Library

Ms. Hall outlined the budget request. The only departure from a strict level-service budget is the request to upgrade the assistant position in charge of the Young Adult program to full-time. Ms. Abdullah noted that this will displace 16 hours per week of “floaters”, so the net cost is small. Further, it will likely stem the constant turnover this position has undergone, since those skilled in this demanding work are wont to move to full-time positions in other towns when they become available. She also cited the scheduling advantages, which would allow fuller staffing at times when there are a bare minimum in the building.

Asked about this year’s library usage, Ms. Abdullah said that traffic is up significantly, even in the traditionally slow summer months. The library ranks first in the state and seventh in the nation in Hennen’s American Public Library Ratings of comparably-sized towns, which considers the number of visitors, circulation, materials, and services.

5. Liaison Updates

Mr. Kinder (Park & Rec): The Board has been asked to budget a little less conservatively against unexpected expenses and instead to rely on Reserve Fund Transfers. The date for this budget review has not been set yet.

Ms. Bush (Regional Schools): Some previously cut State transportation aid has been restored. The Superintendent has presented the first pass at the budget to the Regional Schools Committee, showing a 6% increase, attributable to salary and transportation costs. She stated that to achieve the earlier target of 4.2% would require staff and program cuts. A date for a joint meeting with the Sherborn Advisory Committee has not been set.

Messrs. Waugh and Dawley (Capital Budget): The Park & Rec requests were discussed.

Mr. Melville (Police): There will be a tour of the dispatch area for Warrant Committee members Friday, January 15 at 8:00 am to better understand the proposed renovation.

*Mr. Smith moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Kinder;
the motion was agreed by consensus at 8:35 pm
the next meeting will be Wednesday, January 20 at 7:00 pm*

Respectfully submitted,
Peter Smith, Secretary

approved January 20, 2010