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DORCHESTER, MA 01901

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING OF APRIL 8, 2009**

**Members present:** Jim Devellis, Gary Whitehouse, Lauren Bitar, Robert Garber, Brian Walton, Michael Fitzmaurice, H Hardie, Jeff Rudd, John Dustin and Tim Kenneally.

**Absent:** Thom Freeman and Jenna Strickland.

**Others present:** Andy Gala, Town Manager, Cindy Khalifa.

**Article 15:** Amended Sewer Act.

Bob Garber does not like language requiring mandatory connection; he wants a provision that permits some people a delayed connection. Bob is not comfortable with the article as drafted.

Andy Gala points out that this Article does not create the sewer district, but is merely the framework for a future district to be voted on by the town.

H Hardie says he is against provision because he wants everything spelled out at the same time. H does not like the multiple step process.

Brian Walton says he does not believe this article prevents voters in the future from allowing delayed connections. Brian does not want to lose the opportunity to participate in the regional plan.

Gary Whitehouse is against the article. Gary says he does not want a sewer district in town. Gary believes any system failures in town relate to lack of maintenance.

Lauren Bitar says people in town are afraid of the cost. At start of the meeting, she was in favor of the article. Having heard the arguments against the article, she is unsure about the article.

Brian Walton and John Dustin both agreed that it is too wordy and complicated. Andy Gala points out that they are trying to keep the regional issue moving forward.

Jim Devellis noted that he read everything he could find, sat through meetings and he does not see a critical need in town. Therefore, he does not support the article. He does not believe downtown is equipped for the development that will come with sewer. He believes that too much money has been spent with nothing to show for it. Jim notes that one can likely build one's own septic for the same cost as the betterments called for under the sewer plan.

Andy Gala points out concern over escalating costs if not approved and the likelihood that the regional plan will fail if this does not pass.

H Hardie says the language of the article is too broad to simply create a framework for the sewer system. Jim Devellis does not believe the Town needs sewer and Gary Whitehouse agrees.

Andy Gala asks us to hold off on the vote for one week to allow counsel to come in and answer questions. H Hardie, Gary Whitehouse, John Dustin and Brian Walton are prepared to vote. The other members of the Committee express agreement. The general sentiment is that the article is not going to change in a week, so there is no reason to have counsel come in to answer questions and provide the same information as before.

Cindy Khalifa has questions: What benefit does the Town get from the article? Is this more beneficial to businesses on Route 1 than to the town? Jim Devellis answers saying that the intent of the article is to permit those people who are in need of sewer an opportunity to get sewer. The people in need may own businesses, but there are residents who may need it also.

Brain Walton says this by-law enables the Town to stay with the regional plan. We can get cheaper flow, and our rates may increase if we do not pass the by-law.

Gary Whitehouse moves to approve Article 15. H Hardie seconds the motion. **Three (3) votes in favor, seven (7) votes against (3-7-0).**

Jim Devellis mentions that there may need to be a dissenting opinion. Gary Whitehouse asks if anyone wants to present a dissenting opinion.

Bob notes that he is not voting against the regional concept he is voting against the article as written.

Brian Walton makes a motion to approve a dissenting opinion, which is seconded by Bob Garber. Vote: **Approved the dissent - 10-0-0.** Jim Devellis confirms that there will be a dissent included.

### **Article 16: Bridge over Route 1.**

Andy Gala notes that an application for a grant was filed. He says the Town may need easements because bridge will be anchored on Town land. Andy is not sure if the Town or Massachusetts Highway will own the bridge. Kraft will have to maintain it.

There was a discussion about Town liability. B. Walton, Andy Gala and Tim Kenneally pointed out that Town Counsel said that they would build in protections for Town to in the lease /easements.

H Hardie asked if there would be no cost to Town, and Andy Gala agreed. Jim Devellis points out that the bridge will likely benefit the Kraft organization but it may also have some benefit to Town.

Gary Whitehouse moved motion to approve Article 16. Lauren Bitar seconded the motion. **Vote was 10-0-0 to approve Article 16.**

**Article 18:**

Andy Gala circulated a written copy of the Article. After the Committee read the Article, there was some discussion about it. Then, Lauren Bitar moved motion to approve Article 18. Gary Whitehouse seconded the motion. **Vote was 10-0-0 to approve Article 18.**

**Articles 29-32:**

Andy Gala points out that 4 streets were removed from the Warrant: Kendall, Cutler, Truax, and Hutchins. Work still needs to be done on those streets.

**Article 4: Operating Budget.**

Andy Gala walks the Committee through changes in the budget and explains the basis for the changes line by line. Jim Devellis then asks questions about the state aid process, and Andy Gala explains how we deal with a shortfall caused by a reduction in state aid.

Andy Gala notes that the School Committee voted to reduce transportation costs by \$69,044 and salary reductions of \$29,696. Jim Devellis asks if there were other significant changes to the budget since we last reviewed it. Andy Gala notes some minor adjustments – Library budgets \$5,000 and some equipment reductions for Police Department and Fire Department. Andy Gala notes that there were a lot of people who worked to balance the budget, and he gives them kudos.

John Devellis asked Andy Gala to explain the components of general insurance. Andy Gala briefly discusses the issue.

Gary Whitehouse moved to approve Article 4. No second, as people express the need for more discussion, particularly a discussion about the Water & Sewer portion of the Budget.

H Hardie points out that he wants the water and sewer to reduce their budget but he wants suggestions how we can recommend a change to it. H questions the Committee's method or basis for a reduction. There is a discussion about not approving the truck and additional personnel. Jim Devellis points out his frustration over the fact that Water & Sewer has not cut budget where others have. Bob Garber notes that Leo Potter does a good job of running his department. Bob says that they do not need the truck, but they do need the new person. Bob note that they are adding a new well site. The new person is needed for the new facility. Bob believes they are running a lean operation.

Jim Devellis responds – What department does not need more people? Gary Whitehouse and Brian Walton point out that we are disputing about \$38,000 in a significantly larger budget, so it seems we are micromanaging.

Lauren Bitar notes that the Inspections Depart could use more people too, and she is unhappy about the Water & Sewer budget. Tim Kenneally points out the Water & Sewer should tighten its belt like the School Department and others have done.

B. Walton notes a discrepancy between Selectman recommendation number of \$53,893,282 and the FY10 request of \$53,914,610. Andy Gala acknowledges the issue, and points out that the Planning Board salary number approved by Selectman is lower.

Jeff Rudd asks if Water & Sewer has reported back on signage revenue. He was told no by Jim Devellis.

John Dunston also notes a discrepancy on the page showing the revised budget FY10 - \$54,158,686. A discussion followed about what the reasons might be for the apparent discrepancy. Andy Gala reviewed the notes from Randy Scollins and stated that the number that is supposed to go to the printer is \$53,893,282, which the Selectmen voted to approve.

H Hardie again asks how do we can make the reduction in the Water & Sewer budget, and then asks Andy Gala how we convey what we are seeking to do relative to a reduction for Water and Sewer only.

B. Walton believes we need to vote on \$54,158,686 because that number includes union and non-union estimated contract of \$265,406.

A discussion followed about what we want to deduct from Water and Sewer Budget.

H makes a motion to approve Article 4 with the exception of a reduction \$18,018 wage/salary and \$18,000 capital outlay for Water and Sewer. Seconded by Gary Whitehouse. **The motion carried - 10-0-0.**

#### **Assignments for Articles:**

Jim Devellis led process of assigning Articles.

Article 4:	Jim Devellis
Article 5:	Jim Devellis
Article 6:	John Dustin
Article 7:	John Dustin
Article 8:	Tim Kenneally
Article 9:	Bob Garber
Article 10:	Bob Garber

Article 11: Jim Devellis  
Article 12: John Devellis  
Article 13: Mike Fitzmaurice  
Article 14: Lauren Bitar  
Article 15: H Hardie  
- Dissent: B. Walton  
Article 16: H Hardie  
Article 17: Jeff Rudd  
Article 18: Jeff Rudd  
Article 19: Tim Kenneally  
Article 20 to Article 25: Brian Walton  
Article 26: H Hardie  
Article 27: Jeff Rudd  
Article 28: Jeff Rudd

Andy Gala asks that write-ups go to Jim Devellis and then Randy and Andy.

Jim Devellis therefore asks for write-ups by next Monday. Jim Devellis agrees to send them to Andy by Wednesday of next week.

There is a discussion about moving the meeting with the Charter School to the fall and it is decided to do so.

Minutes of past meeting (4-1-09) are reviewed.

Discussion followed about possibility that we did not vote on Article 6, the High School renovation. Bob and Brian believe we never voted on it. Lauren Bitar moved motion to approve Article 6. H Hardie seconded the motion to approve. Ms. Khalifa asks why we have to raise taxes to pay for the High School. There is an attempt to explain the reasons for the project and why we need to pay for it now. **Motion to approve then carries 10-0-0.**

Gary Whitehouse moves to approve minutes of 4-1-09 meeting. Seconded by Jeff Rudd. **Approved 10-0-0.**

Jeff Rudd moves to adjourn. Lauren Bitar seconded motion to adjourn. **Approved 10-0-0.**

End of meeting.

*Date of meeting 5/13/09 Vote 10-0-0*  
*James D. ...*

*Timothy Kenneally*