

Budget Coordinating Group Minutes

Date: January 7, 2016
Locations: Jones Library Trustees Room
Start time: 8:35 a.m.
End time: 9:30 a.m.

Attendance:

Andy Steinberg, Select Board - Co-Chair
Kay Moran, Finance Committee - Co-Chair
Sonia Aldrich, Comptroller
Katherine Appy, School Committee Chair
Maria Geryk, Superintendent of Schools
Peter Hechenbleikner, incoming Temporary Town Manager
Sean Mangano, Business Director, Regional and Amherst schools
Claire McGinnis, Treasurer
Mike Morris, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Tim Neale, Finance Committee
Robert Pam, Library Trustee
Sandy Pooler, Finance Director
Austin Sarat, Library Trustees Chair
Sharon Sharry, Library Director
Dave Ziomek, Assistant Town Manager and outgoing Interim Town Manager

1. Steinberg and Moran chosen by consensus to be co-chairs.
2. Budgets
 - A) Pooler reported that the FY17 municipal budget to be presented in mid-January would not add any FTE positions. There will be a list of things to add in case of unexpected revenue, including money to continue the neighborhood community police officer position currently funded by a grant.
 - B) Geryk and Mangano said they will present an elementary schools budget with a 1% increase and a regional schools budget with a 2.5% increase in Amherst's assessment. The problem is that the current regional school assessment method is disputed by one town, and the final outcome won't be known until after Annual Town Meetings in all four communities have concluded. Net charter school assessments are increasing in both the elementary and regional school budgets.
 - C) The total FY17 library budget increases by 2.34%, with the proposed Town appropriation up by 2.5%. Funding from state aid and reserves increases because the amount of support from the endowment is 4% for the second year, a reduction from earlier percentages used. The budget heavily relies on fund-raising; \$42,000 has been raised so far out of a goal of \$70,000.
3. Review budget calendar: A budget development calendar dated 1/7/16 was distributed. A four-towns meeting will be held Feb. 27, and BCG should meet soon after in light of potential changes to regional school assessments. A tentative date of Feb. 29 was set for that meeting.

Decisions made/actions taken:

**Amherst Budget Coordinating Group
Summary Points – January 7, 2016**

At our January 7th meeting, the members of the Budget Coordinating Group agreed that the following points would be conveyed to our home boards and committees:

- 1) After presentations about the budgets that the town, schools and library are developing for FY 17 in accordance with the Finance Committee Preliminary Budget Guidelines and current revenue estimates, we are comfortable with the October 15 projections presented by the Finance Director.
- 2) As in any other year, the initial budget projection is based upon assumptions that need to be assessed as the budgets are developed, including the Governor's local aid recommendation for FY 17, the Regional School proposal for an assessment methodology, and the Library's fund raising efforts.
- 3) Everyone should continue to advise Sonia Aldrich and Claire McGinness regarding changes in budget dates for the master calendar. We scheduled the next meeting for the BCG for 8:30 am on Monday, February 29.

Member preparing minutes: Kay Moran

Documents used at the meeting:

FY17 Financial Projections dated 1/7/16

FY17 budget development calendar revised as of 1/7/16