

Long Range Financial Planning Committee Meeting
May 10, 2017 8:00am
Selectmen's Meeting Room

Attending:	
Nancy Hyde, Board of Selectmen	Mike Krone, Board of Assessors
John Antonucci, School Superintendent	Bruce Montgomery, At Large Member
Barbara Delisle, Fincom	Mike O'Hara, Fincom
Pam Dukeman, Finance Director	Emily Parks, Schools Department
John Hickey, Board of Selectmen	Heath Petracca, Schools Director of Business and Finance
Josepha Jowdy, Schools Committee	Al Wisialko, Town Collector
Mike Jaillet, Town Administrator	

Fiscal Year End Wrap Up

As Fiscal Year '17 comes to a close, Pam reviewed some of the financial accomplishments from the past year. These include progress on OPEB, contributions to the Budget and Capital stabilization funds, furthering financial education for residents and continuing with Tax Relief.

The renovation and redesign of the Senior Center, which was approved at Town Meeting, will be paid with the proceeds from the PILOT agreement with the Brigham and Women's Hospital. These funds are expected to be available once the permit is pulled for the building project at University Station. The final agreement is up for approval at the May 23 Selectmen's meeting.

Municipal Facilities Task Force

This group started as the Public Safety Task Force, but with the Fire and Police station projects being near their conclusions, needs to transition to focusing on the other municipal facilities in town. There are many other buildings that need evaluation and improvements, including:

- Town Hall
- Obed Baker House
- Fire House 1
- Islington Tennis Courts
- Islington buildings, including Branch Library, Youth and Family Services

It was noted that the schools should be included in this review as well, as the possible consolidation of elementary schools is slated to start within the next five years. This project would impact buildings town wide.

The Islington Task Force recommendation is being presented to the Selectmen at their next meeting. The BOS plans to discuss this at their May 31 meeting, and will proceed from there.

Financial Policies Review Project

The town's financial policies were last updated in 2014. The Finance Department plans to review the policies over the summer. Many will not need changes, but there are a few that need updating, including the policies regarding OPEB, Capital Stabilization Fund. The policies regarding the Amount held in Free Cash v. the Amount in Reserves is another area to look at.

The review will include investigating what other peer towns have for policies, and how relevant our policies still are.

Another area for review is the Municipal Budget, specifically, the voting levels for departments. This year, the public safety departments had their budgets voted at a higher level than previously. Need to review whether this would work for other departments as well.

It was asked that these items be reviewed, and recommendations are brought back to the group.

Other Business

The Aid to the Elderly fund is currently being reviewed because of new rules from the state, allowing towns to contribute to these funds. After doing research into how other towns treat these funds, the Aid to the Elderly committee is currently undergoing a review of Westwood's program. Some questions they are looking into include:

- The possibility of getting additional funding from meals tax revenue
- The idea of the town matching resident donations in order to continue resident participation
- The idea of broadening the fund to also serve a broader audience, not just the elderly

The vetting process was discussed as well.

The Long Range Planning Committee agreed to adjourn for the summer, and will plan to meet again in September.