

### Call to Order

Chairman Stumpf called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. in the Cormier Youth Center. In attendance were S. Jon Stumpf, Linn Anderson, Margaret (Peggy) Kruse, Eugenie (Janie) Moffitt (arrived at 6:05p.m.), Joanne Marden, Bojay Taylor, and Bonnie Zahorik (arrived at 6:25p.m.). Also in attendance was Town Manager Andrew Flanagan. Absent was Greg Serrao. The meeting was audiotaped but not live cablecast.

### Update on Chairs' Weekly Meetings

Mr. Stumpf updated the Committee and the Town Manager on the Chairs' meeting of February 23, 2016. The Town Manager was not in attendance at the Chairs' meeting:

- 1) Superintendent Berman was the first to speak and most of his time was taken up with special education costs, especially out-of-district costs; he also had charts comparing regular and special education costs;
  - a) Ms. Moffitt and Mr. Serrao will follow up on the cost of out-of-district placements which is increasing to \$900K. Circuit breaker reimbursement numbers are estimated to go down by \$200K from FY16; this is inconsistent since out-of-district has been consistent over the last several years, but the Superintendent confirmed that number;
  - b) The amount requested in FY16 was \$5.8 and for FY17 is \$6.6M (FY10 was about \$6.5).
  - c) Funding sources for SPED is through circuit breaker, Article 4 and the special reserve fund.
- 2) The Board of Selectmen approved a decrease in the unused levy capacity from \$1.2M to \$321K. The Board of Selectmen Chair noted that this additional revenue would not be used for operating expenses but only for capital improvements;
  - a) The \$900K in new available revenue will be used for plan and design of the proposed new town yard at 5 Campanelli Drive.
- 3) Other possible sources of funds for closing the \$1.8M School budget gap and going to town meeting with a balanced budget are a) health insurance; b) new growth; c) TIF; d) local receipts; d) spend down the remaining \$500K in the Special Ed reserve fund; and e) lowering of school request.

### Presentation by Town Manager

The Town Manager indicated that the town yard was the #1 priority of the Board of Selectmen. He discussed that best practices advice is that the plan/design phase be funded separately from the land acquisition/construction. He anticipates that design will take six months and then a special town meeting will be held to appropriate funds for the second phase of land acquisition and construction. The first phase will be allocated at \$900K and the second phase of bond authorization/structuring debt will be decided as the project moves forward.

**OPEB**

Mr. Stumpf indicated that OPEB funding strategy and reform will be a controversial issue this year. Retirement eligibility and healthcare contributions are heated topics of discussion. The Town Manager reported that a 50% reduction in healthcare contributions would amount to approximate \$1.3M in potential savings, and this would not need a vote of Town Meeting. The Retirement Board and its role and makeup is under discussion, and a greater accountability is being asked. Discussion ensued on the fiduciary responsibility and viability of the retirement board and the need for reform.

The Town Manager also noted that design plan changes for active employees also need to be considered. The Board of Selectmen voted affirmatively to adopt the Town Manager's recommendations on Section 22 of Chapter 32B which would establish the PEC and its role in negotiations of healthcare plans. The first statutory deadline for agreement on proposed changes is March 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Other**

Ms. Anderson received an email from Mr. Hartwell and she will forward to members regarding the opinion about this year's proposed OPEB funding. She would like the email included in the minutes.

Mr. Stumpf opened a general discussion of TIF (tax increment financing) and distributed documentation from Schneider Electric, a prior TIF development. Ms. Marden is the Fincom representative to the discussion on the proposed Pfizer TIF..

**Adjournment**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Kruse and seconded by Mr. Barry, it was unanimously voted to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford  
Recording Secretary