

FREEMAN'S REPORT ON THE SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF MAY 16, 2012 AND BUDGET HEARINGS

Note: (1). These are not official minutes -- -- just notes taken by me. Official minutes will be available from the Town Office and will be posted on the Town web site and at the Town Office and other places following Board approval at the next meeting.

(2). If anyone wishes to stop receiving these reports, they may simply hit "Reply" and request to be deleted from the list or say "Unsubscribe."

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www.singingbridge.net

Last week was busy with a brief meeting of the Selectmen on Wednesday, May 16, and hearings on the municipal budget on the 16th and on the school budget on the 17th.

THE SELECTMEN'S MEETING: The Board met at 6:45 to conduct a public hearing on the application of the Osprey Restaurant to renew its liquor license. There was no public comment and the license application was approved.

THE MUNICIPAL BUDGET HEARING: The Selectmen recommended a total expenditure (including the schools) of \$4,273,179, up \$42,712 (1.0%) over the current year. The amount to be raised by property taxes will actually be less by about \$15,000 (-0.5%) in large part because the Town can take as much as \$375,000 from the Undesignated Fund Balance. This has been made possible because of the recovery of legal fees and expenses in the Haddock-Montgomery case, reimbursement from the State retirement fund, and the control of costs at the Transfer Station.

The most controversial item in the budget is a request from "Fields for our Future" for a contribution of \$5,000 toward the installation of an artificial surface on McMahon Field in Bath. This item will be placed in a separate article in the Warrant so it can be voted on at Town Meeting. This artificial surface would allow for much greater use of the playing field. But Fields for our Future is seeking contributions from other sources because the voters of the City of Bath rejected a referendum to authorize the City to issue a bond for the project.

THE SCHOOL BUDGET HEARING: The School Committee recommended expenditures of \$2,085,326 for the coming year. This is an increase of \$10,008 (0.4%) over the current year. Taking account of State aid and tuition revenues, this will require an increase in the local appropriation of almost \$49,000 (+2.74%). Changes in staffing and allocation of funds among various categories of expenditures were described.

The next meeting of the Selectmen will be at 7 PM on Tuesday, May 2 at the Town Office.
Prepared and distributed by Rick Freeman.