Town of Brookline
Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: February 26, 2019


Absent: Ben Birnbaum, Carol Caro, Kelly Hardebeck, Janice S. Kahn, Mariah Nobrega, Stanley L. Spiegel

Also attending: Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; Patrick Ward, Town Clerk; Jeanna Franconi, Finance Director, Michael DiPietro, Comptroller, David Geanakakis, Chief Procurement Officer, and Gary McCabe, Chief Assessor.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:35pm.

Announcements:

On the question of whether an Advisory Committee Members can submit a warrant article to Town Meeting, the Chair noted that after discussion with the Moderator, it was agreed that yes, this is permissible. Of course, if an Advisory Committee member is the petitioner, they should not participate in the debate or vote. Also, in the interest of transparency, if an Advisory Committee member co-writes an article, they should disclose that.

There was a brief discussion of the length of Advisory Committee meetings and a reminder that all members have the right to “call the question” in an effort to terminate debate.

Reminder to subcommittee chairs to notify Department Heads when their budgets are to be reviewed by the full Advisory Committee.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Town Clerk

The budget is reduced because we have one less election and no “early voting” funds in the FY 20 budget.

QUESTIONS

Q: Any early voting for the Town election in May? A: No only for bi-annual state elections.

Q: Do you have enough resources to produce the voter guide? A: We had two elections, early voting. The task was given to someone, but ball was dropped. Generating the publication – in Publisher – is the difficulty due to lack of knowledge of the software.
Q. Regarding Benefits line

A. Estimate based on reports from MUNIS but we don’t have level of information that the question asks for. It is based on current employees to give some sense of the overall costs to a department.

Q. Is there any practical use to reviewing that number?

Comment: If you need proof reading help, the TMMA Board is happy to lend a second set of eyes.

Response: Generating the publication – in Publisher – is the difficulty due to lack of knowledge.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating $662,765 for the Town Clerk FY 20 budget.

By a VOTE 21 in favor, none opposed and 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends on appropriating $662,765 for the Town Clerk FY 20 budget.

2. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Finance Department

The Finance Department is made up of a number of divisions and each will be addressed in turn.

Brookline’s Comptroller Division is tasked with maintaining and administering financial accounting and management information systems pertaining to all financial activities of the Town and School departments.

Brookline’s Assessor Division is tasked with uniformly and accurately valuing taxable (and non-taxable) properties and conducting assessments to ensure equitable property tax levies.

The Assessor is looking at some new software that the Division was testing with the IT department, which would potentially automate a manual process of entering into a database all details of property transfers. The Division administers about 1,200 property transfers each year. If the software is effective i.e. the error rate is within reasonable bounds, this software would significantly reduce the manual effort involved in maintaining the Assessor’s database.

This provoked the question, who is looking at whether this is actually achieving what we set out to receive? No one body that is responsible for this and wonder whether we should be doing something on this point.

Otherwise the Assessor budget is level funded.

Brookline’s Purchasing Division is tasked with the negotiation of agreements providing the Town with supplies, vehicles, IT systems - hardware and software, energy products, general insurance, and other items. The Department also manages the Town’s printing and mailing functions (other than certain School Department items).

The Treasury Division is responsible for billing, collecting and investing Town funds, as well as disbursing monies owed to vendors, employees and retirees, and operating payroll functions.
QUESTIONS

Q: When a department is doing a capital project that isn’t authorized by the CIP, cobbling money from other sources, does the Finance Department have a way to monitor that? The roundabout on Gardner Road was the example sited. A: Conditions of appropriations are sometimes difficult to monitor.

Q: New Amazon Business and School Specialty Online Ordering accounts? A: Effort to impose some controls on purchasing.

Q: How does this jibe with Select Board commitment to using diverse vendors? A: No answer for this.

Q: What is the source behind the income line? Melissa will send that.

Q: Investments – What is the Town allowed to invest in? What are the risks and what is our exposure? A: We have over 100 investment accounts. 55% in equities but quite safe – safety, liquidity, yield. Money was previously kept in a money market account, but we have made some short term investments to keep funds liquid, working with investment firms and planning carefully. We move funds and readjust when we sense risks, move with the market and this is the same on the OPEB Board and the retirement fund. 53 basis points on fees.

Q: Can you clarify online transaction convenience fees? Isn’t it a user fee so why a cost to the department? A: Not all convenience fees cover the true credit card charges so may go back to Select Board to request an increase especially around parking and pay by cell.

Q: Tax rebates for senior citizens and getting the word out, is there any improved user rate? A: Mr. McCabe explained this is still a challenge and not sure why seniors don’t present themselves for relief opportunities. We have increased the activity around making seniors and people that support seniors aware of relief programs – a television show on local cable. We have a new tax aid fund – a check the box donation when you send in your tax bill. There is a committee to oversee that fund.

Susan Granoff noted that the Selectman’s Committee on Senior Tax Policy developed a survey for seniors that queried them about supports and why they are not accessing relief programs.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action for appropriating $3,410,309 for the Finance Department FY 20 budget.

By a VOTE 23 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating $3,410,309 for the Finance Department FY 20 budget.

3. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Budget - Unclassified

Neil Gordon gave an overview of the subcommittee’s review of the Unclassified budget. The Subcommittee discussed with the Deputy Town Administrator (DTA) the line items in Unclassified that seemed to be “classified” but appeared as unclassified. The Subcommittee discussed the Vocational Technical line item and inquired as to why it was not in the School
Budget. The DTA thought that the School Department had had a good reason two years ago when it was put here but could not remember specifically why.

One member of the Subcommittee thought that a number of these line items, such as Travel, MMA dues, printing of warrants, general insurance and possibly vocational technical should be moved to an appropriate department on the basis that these line items related to specific departments who should be held accountable for their management. The Subcommittee thought that this should be a full AC discussion and should be considered for re-classification for the 2021 budget.

Insurance premiums are rising with new buildings e.g. for Coolidge Corner school is an additional $69K. Insurance company says our valuations are below what they should be. (e.g., Devotion was $30M -> $110M). The insurance budget will be rising as we build more schools.

The Assessor pointed out that 7 out of 65 properties are undervalued for insurance purposes.

The Subcommittee asked who sets the Town’s risk management policy (Finance Department) and what should the level of deduction or self-insurance be. The Finance Department had brought in a risk-assessor who thought our insurance program and policy are good.

The Subcommittee noted again that the formulae for driving line items such as the Affordable Housing Trust Fund were producing significant variations from year to year. So, two years ago there was a major (160%?) increase and now, this year, a 63% decrease. The Subcommittee hoped that the new BFAC committee would be looking at all these formulae to see if adjustments were needed to reduce the great variations in budget needs.

QUESTIONS

Q: Does this budget cover all insurance or all insurance? A: Property, fire, boiler, moving stock, high expense building components.

Q: Is it typical for municipalities to self-insure or do they ever have umbrella policies? A: Each community makes its own choices.

There was a brief discussion of insurance rates and risks.

Q: Do you rebid and revisit these relationships every year? A: Every 3-5 years – use insurance brokers and advisors to review coverages and fees.

Q: Is climate change factoring in to any of our policies? A: One of our flood policies is increasing and there is some caution about what may happen in the future.

Q: Does the Town have earthquake coverage? A: Yes we have earthquake coverage.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating $4,108,594 for the Unclassified FY 20 budget.

By a VOTE of 23 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating $4,108,594 for the Unclassified FY 20 budget.
4. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Select Board

The Select Board budget pertains to the Select Board’s staff on the 6th floor. A Subcommittee member questioned why the WA33 (which was passed by TM in May 2018) a Select Board committee hadn’t been established. The Deputy Town Administrator responded that the Select Board activity had been high this year with Select Board members serving on many other committees. Their involvement is not a requirement but a practice.

The Subcommittee was concerned that this situation was not really appreciated by TM and that this could influence a decision to request a Moderator’s committee rather than a Select Board committee. The Subcommittee also noted that the Moderator does not sit on a Moderator’s Committee (other than during the first meeting to give the committee a charge).

Perhaps the Select Board could consider different levels of participation, depending on the committee. The Subcommittee noted that for WA33 the petitioners were not seeking a deep involvement, just the authority to proceed and recommended that the Advisory Committee and Select Board need to discuss this with the new Select Board Chair, at an appropriate time (i.e., post the Town election in May).

Still it is the Select Board’s decision how they wish to organize themselves. We can express our concerns.

Perhaps a resolution should explicitly state whether or not participation by a Select Board member is necessary.

QUESTIONS

Q: Objective 10 what has been done and what do they plan on doing regarding Norfolk County?
A: Do some outreach – first year our assessment has gone over a million dollars – this has been on the list for some time. Agree we are all frustrated.

Q: The Fiscal Policy Advisory Committee may make the suggestion that the Town finds more robust financial planning software – do you have any idea as to what that software is? A: There is a wide variety out there. Many were out to bid but a low cost very user friendly system. $5,000 low end - $230,000 high end. We will work with the IT Department to see if they can identify any resources.

Q: Pilot programs – are we finding more partners? A: No actually losing a partner. But we are looking to see if there are any others with which we can start something but we do not have any new pilot agreements currently.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating $737,511 for the Select Board FY 20 budget.

By a VOTE of 21 in favor, 1 opposed and 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating $737,511 for the Select Board FY 20 budget.

5. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Advisory Committee
This portion of the meeting was chaired by the vice-chair, with the chair presenting the Advisory Committee’s budget request and answering questions.

The budget is essentially level-funded.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on appropriating $28,042 for the Advisory Committee FY 20 budget.

By a VOTE of 23 in favor, none opposed and no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends appropriating $28,042 for the Advisory Committee FY 20 budget.

6. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Budget – Debt and Interest (held over to another meeting)

A MOTION was made and seconded to adjourn; there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.

Documents Distributed at Meeting

- Administration & Finance Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget - Town Clerk
- Administration & Finance Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget – Finance Department
- Administration & Finance Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget – Select Board
- Administration & Finance Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget – Advisory Committee
- Administration & Finance Subcommittee Report on FY 20 Operating Budget - Unclassified
TOWN OF BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING NOTICE

Tuesday, February 26, 2019 at 7:30 pm, Room 103

AGENDA

1. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Town Clerk
2. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Finance Department
3. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Select Board
4. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Operating Budget – Advisory Committee
5. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Budget – Debt and Interest
6. Review and possibly vote on FY20 Budget - Unclassified
7. Other business

The public is invited to attend however this meeting is not a public hearing so public comments will not be taken at the meeting. The Advisory Committee welcomes written comments, which will be circulated to members of the Committee if they are sent to lportscher@brooklinema.gov no later than 12:00 noon on the day of the meeting. Subcommittees of the Advisory Committee hold public hearings on any matter on which the Advisory Committee makes a recommendation to Town Meeting. Members of the public are encouraged to attend subcommittee public hearings if they wish to comment on any item under deliberation by the subcommittee.

Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Chair H: 617-738-6228, W: 617-495-1463, slynn-jones@brooklinema.gov
Carla Benka, Vice-Chair H: 617-277-6102, rcvben@earthlink.net
The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on Wednesday, February 13th, 2019 to review the Unclassified budget. In attendance were John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, and Neil Gordon for the Subcommittee. Also present were Justin Casanova-Davis, Assistant Town Administrator and Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator who presented.

The Unclassified budget information appears in summary form at II-11 and in detail at pp. IV-137 to IV-140 in the FY2020 Financial Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**
By a vote of 3-0-0, the Administration & Finance Subcommittee recommends that the Unclassified budget of $4,108,594 for Unclassified items in the FY 2020 budget.

**Discussion**
The Unclassified budget for FY20 is $4,108,594 a decrease over FY19 budget of $178,098 (-4.2%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COSTS</th>
<th>ACTUAL FY2018</th>
<th>BUDGET FY2019</th>
<th>BUDGET FY2020</th>
<th>FY20 vs. FY19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Out of State Travel</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing of Warrants &amp; Reports / Town Mtg</td>
<td>44,567</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass. Municipal Association (MMA) Dues</td>
<td>12,588</td>
<td>13,222</td>
<td>13,553</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Technical</td>
<td>21,753</td>
<td>92,895</td>
<td>92,895</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Insurance</td>
<td>334,959</td>
<td>420,830</td>
<td>507,952</td>
<td>87,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit and Professional Services</td>
<td>123,252</td>
<td>137,000</td>
<td>142,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contingency Fund</td>
<td>11,874</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liability / Catastrophe Fund *</td>
<td>203,644</td>
<td>456,762</td>
<td>389,700</td>
<td>(67,062)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing Trust Fund *</td>
<td>576,003</td>
<td>545,112</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>(345,112)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stabilization Fund *</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve Fund **</td>
<td>1,939,266</td>
<td>2,547,871</td>
<td>2,689,494</td>
<td>141,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Tax Supported (0.75%)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>1,910,653</td>
<td>2,017,120</td>
<td>106,467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Cash Supported (0.25%)</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>637,218</td>
<td>672,373</td>
<td>35,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</td>
<td>3,268,816</td>
<td>4,286,692</td>
<td>4,108,594</td>
<td>(178,098)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Subcommittee discussed with the Deputy Town Administrator (DTA) the line items in Unclassified that seemed to be “classified” but appeared as above. The Subcommittee discussed the Vocational Technical line item and inquired as to why it was not in the School Budget. The DTA thought that the School Department had had a good reason two years ago when it was put here but could not remember specifically why.

One member of the Subcommittee thought that a number of these line items, such as Travel, MMA dues, printing of warrants, general insurance and possibly vocational technical should be moved to an appropriate department on the basis that these line items related to specific departments who should be
held accountable for their management. The Subcommittee thought that this should be a full AC
discussion and should be considered for re-classification for the 2021 budget.

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$69K. Insurance company says our valuations are below what they should be. (e.g., Devotion was $30M
-> $110M). The insurance budget will be rising as we build more schools.

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should the level of deduction or self-insurance be. The Finance Department had brought in a risk-assessor
who thought our insurance program and policy are good.

The Subcommittee noted again that the formulae for driving line items such as the Affordable Housing
Trust Fund were producing significant variations from year to year. So, two years ago there was a major
(160%?) increase and now, this year, a 63% decrease. The Subcommittee hoped that the new BFAC
committee would be looking at all these formulae to see if adjustments were needed to reduce the great
variations in budget needs.

On a vote of 3-0-0, the Subcommittee recommends Favorable Action on the Unclassified budget.
The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on Wednesday, February 13th, 2019 to review the Advisory Committee’s budget. In attendance were John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, and Neil Gordon for the subcommittee, Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair of the Advisory Committee and Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator.

The Advisory Committee’s proposed operating budget information appears in summary form at II-7 and in detail at pp. IV-29 to IV-31 in the FY2020 Financial Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

By a vote of 3-0-0, the Administration & Finance Subcommittee recommends Favorable Action on the Advisory Committee budget in the amount of $28,042 for fiscal year 2020.

**Discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COSTS - ADVISORY COMMITTEE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASS OF EXPENDITURES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>BENEFITS</td>
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<tr>
<td>REVENUE</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Advisory Committee's budget is essentially level funded at $28,042 for FY20 compared to $27,805 for FY19, an increase of $237 or 0.9%.

Mr. Lynn-Jones noted that the small increase is due to personnel STEPS cost. He also noted that the pizza budget increase approved in FY19 is now baked into the FY 2020 plan. There was a discussion about the Administrative Secretary’s salary, concerning the “hours paid” base versus a straight salary. The Deputy Town Administrator commented that the position is paid on an hourly basis and that the position should be paid for all hours worked.
The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on Wednesday, 13th February to review the Select Board’s budget. In attendance were John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, and Neil Gordon for the subcommittee. Also, in attendance were Justin Casanova-Davis, Assistant Administrator and Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator, who presented for the Select Board.

The Select Board’s proposed operating budget information appears in summary form at II-7 and in detail at pp. IV-1 to IV-5 in the FY2020 Financial Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

By a vote of 2-0-1, the Administration & Finance Subcommittee recommends Favorable Action on the Select Board’s FY 2020 budget in the amount of $737,511.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COSTS - SELECT BOARD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLASS OF EXPENDITURES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BENEFITS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Discussion**

The FY20 budget is essentially level funded compared to FY18 with an overall increase of $5,720 (1%). STEPs accounts for most of the increase in personnel costs.

The Deputy Town Administrator (DTA) noted that there had been a lot of turnover in this office. Justin Casanova-Davis has come on board as the new assistant town administrator. Stephanie Orsini left over the summer so there is a new assistant to the town administrator, Margery Lalli and the Town hired a licensing clerk, from Newton.

A Subcommittee member questioned why the WA33 (which was passed by TM in May 2018) Select Board committee hadn't been established.

The DTA responded that the Select Board activity had been high this year with Select Board member Heller on the high school project and climate action committee, Select Board member Greene on Baldwin project and a just established committee on militarization articles (2 weeks ago), which was also approved in TM in May 2018, Select Board member Hamilton
serves on the land bank committee, Select Board member Franco serves on the BFAC and Override Study committee and Select Board Chair Wishinsky has had his hands full generally, and including the school capacity expansion projects.

In answer to the question, “How many other committees are in the same situation?” the DTA responded that there were none at this point and pointed out that a Select Board committee requires a Select Board member sponsor to set the charge, identify potential members and be a committee member or chair.

The Subcommittee inquired as to whether this level of involvement in general and more specifically with respect to WA33 is necessary, to which DTA responded, “Generally, yes”.

The Subcommittee was concerned that this situation was not really appreciated by TM and that this could influence a decision to request a Moderator’s committee rather than a Select Board committee. The Subcommittee also noted that the Moderator does not sit on a Moderator’s Committee (other than during the first meeting to give the committee a charge).

Perhaps the Select Board could consider different levels of participation, depending on the committee. The Subcommittee noted that for WA33 the petitioners were not seeking a deep involvement, just the authority to proceed and recommended that the Advisory Committee and Select Board need to discuss this with the new Select Board Chair, at an appropriate time (i.e., post the Town election in May).

One Subcommittee member made a suggestion that, since there is always a “report” article on the Annual TM warrant that this should be addressed by speaking to this concern on that warrant article.

The vote to approve the Select Board’s budget was 2-0-1. The member who abstained wished to “make a point” concerning the inaction on WA33.
The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on Wednesday, February 13th, 2019 to review the Finance Department budget. In attendance were John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, and Neil Gordon for the subcommittee. The Department was represented by Jeanna Franconi, Finance Director, Michael DiPietro, Comptroller, David Geanakakis, Purchasing, Gary McCabe, Chief Assessor, and also in attendance was Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator.

The Finance Department’s proposed operating budget information appears in summary form at II-7 and in detail at pp. IV-16 to IV-25 in the FY2020 Financial Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**
By a vote of 3-0-0, the Administration & Finance Subcommittee recommends Favorable Action on the FY 2020 Finance Department budget in the amount of $3,410,309, for the Treasury, Purchasing, Comptroller, and Assessing Divisions.

**Discussion**
Overall Finance Department Budget for FY20:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS OF EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>ACTUAL FY2018</th>
<th>BUDGET FY2019</th>
<th>REQUEST FY2020</th>
<th>FY19 vs. FY20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>2,216,204</td>
<td>2,364,690</td>
<td>2,374,880</td>
<td>10,190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>1,079,627</td>
<td>886,857</td>
<td>913,757</td>
<td>26,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>47,674</td>
<td>46,960</td>
<td>46,960</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>20,385</td>
<td>25,707</td>
<td>29,907</td>
<td>4,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>7,250</td>
<td>24,250</td>
<td>43,430</td>
<td>19,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,372,305</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,349,839</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,410,309</strong></td>
<td><strong>60,470</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BENEFITS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1,437,419</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REVENUE</strong></td>
<td>2,518,347</td>
<td>2,288,753</td>
<td>2,352,532</td>
<td>73,780</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ms. Franconi, the Town’s Finance Director and Treasurer, noted that the overall budget for the Finance Department will increase by $60,470 (1.8%), from $3,349,839 in FY19 to $3,410,309 in FY20.

**COMPTROLLER DIVISION**

**Background**
Brookline’s Comptroller Division is tasked with maintaining and administering financial accounting and management information systems pertaining to all financial activities of the Town and School departments.

**Discussion**
Year-over-year, the Comptroller Division’s proposed budget would increase by 1.8% from $685,500 in FY19 to $697,828 for the FY20 Budget, due to increases in Services and Personnel Steps and Lanes ($4,248) and Munis software licensing ($7,900).

The Finance Director was asked about policy and procedures concerning administration of other department’s inter account transfers, such as had occurred with the School department and a revolving fund. The Finance Director indicated that new procedures for checking appropriate approvals had been received have been put in place, that in the case of the School Departments transfers that the School Committee’s authorization for such a transfer had been received.

A question was raised concerning the approval process for software acquisition. In many cases, the Capital Subcommittee approves a trial based on expectations for cost savings (or other benefits, such as increased efficiencies). Typically, the first months of the trial come out of an IT department budget which is broadly used for this purpose. And then in subsequent budget cycles the specific department (e.g., Finance) puts an item in its operating budget for “increased software costs” reflecting the reallocation from the IT budget. But nowhere in the process is there Advisory Committee oversight as to whether the original goals of the trial were accomplished.

ASSESSOR DIVISION

Background
Brookline’s Assessor Division is tasked with uniformly and accurately valuing taxable (and non-taxable) properties and conducting assessments to ensure equitable property tax levies.

Discussion

The Assessor’s budget is essentially level-funded from FY19’s $720,154 to FY20’s budget of $720,716 an increase of $562 or 0.1%.
Mr. McCabe, the Assessor, informed the Subcommittee about some new software that the Division was testing with the IT department, which would potentially automate a manual process of entering into a database all details of property transfers. The Division administers about 1,200 property transfers each year. If the software is effective i.e. the error rate is within reasonable bounds, this software would significantly reduce the manual effort involved in maintaining the Assessor’s database.

The Assessor was asked to comment on a Newbury College’s land area owned, as there had been voiced in several meetings recently that the College owned either about 10 acres or about 8 acres, and that the Assessors database may be incorrect. The Assessor noted that that the Division had worked with the college closely in the past to ensure the database records are correct. He stated that the records in the database are consistent with what the college owns.

**PURCHASING DIVISION**

**Background**

Brookline’s Purchasing Division is tasked with the negotiation of agreements providing the Town with supplies, vehicles, IT systems - hardware and software, energy products, general insurance, and other items. The Department also manages the Town’s printing and mailing functions (other than certain School Department items).

**Discussion**

Mr. Geanakakis briefly summarized the activities and functions of his Division. The overall Purchasing Division budget has increased from last year’s $717,277 to FY20’s $741,164 or 3.3%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS OF EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>ACTUAL FY2018</th>
<th>BUDGET FY2019</th>
<th>REQUEST FY2020</th>
<th>FY19 vs. FY20 $ CHANGE</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>393,765</td>
<td>404,290</td>
<td>405,977</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>236,492</td>
<td>267,152</td>
<td>266,152</td>
<td>(1,000)</td>
<td>-0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>26,825</td>
<td>23,960</td>
<td>23,960</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,281</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>6,600</td>
<td>4,200</td>
<td>175.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>1,079</td>
<td>18,100</td>
<td>37,100</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>105.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>661,607</strong></td>
<td><strong>717,277</strong></td>
<td><strong>741,164</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,887</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.3%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Personnel STEPs accounts for personnel increase of $1,687. In services, a replacement Pool car for a 2002 and 2009 vehicle ($19,000) is the driver for the increase in Capital line item. All pool vehicles will now be less than 5 years old. Mr. Geanakakis was asked is an all-electric fleet being considered. It has been, but he noted that these vehicles were typically double the price of hybrids and that we would need to invest in a charging station infrastructure.

Mr. Geanakakis commented on the contract price the Division was able to get for gasoline $2.04/gal for the year as well as good prices for other fuel types.

**TREASURER-COLLECTOR (TREASURY) DIVISION**
**Background**
The Treasury Division is responsible for billing, collecting and investing Town funds, as well as disbursing monies owed to vendors, employees and retirees, and operating payroll functions.

**Discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS OF EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>ACTUAL FY2018</th>
<th>BUDGET FY2019</th>
<th>REQUEST FY2020</th>
<th>FY19 vs. FY20 $ CHANGE</th>
<th>% CHANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personnel</td>
<td>793,497</td>
<td>846,108</td>
<td>849,902</td>
<td>3,793</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>607,600</td>
<td>354,900</td>
<td>174,800</td>
<td>19,900</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>17,272</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7,353</td>
<td>8,300</td>
<td>8,300</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>2,469</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,428,190</td>
<td>1,226,908</td>
<td>1,250,602</td>
<td>23,693</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ms. Franconi noted changes to services, mainly software maintenance costs, have resulted in an increase of the Treasurer-Collector Budget of $23,698, from FY19 budget of $1,226,908 to FY20 budget of $1,250,602. Ms. Franconi noted that the Division continues to improve the taxpayer/Town interface and has introduced an IVR line to enable property taxes etc. to be paid by phone or text. Mr. Gordon noted that the Department had achieved a remarkable 6% return on investments (page IV-19).
The Administration and Finance Subcommittee held a public hearing on Wednesday, February 13th, 2019 to review the Town Clerk's budget. In attendance were John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, and Neil Gordon for the subcommittee, and Patrick Ward, Town Clerk and Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator.

The Advisory Committee’s proposed operating budget information appears in summary form at II-7 and in detail at pp. IV-33 to IV-37 in the FY2020 Financial Plan.

**RECOMMENDATION**

By a vote of 3-0-0, the Administration & Finance Subcommittee recommends that the budget include funding of $662,765 for the Town Clerk in the fiscal year 2020 budget.

**Background**

The Town Clerk is elected to a three-year-term. The office has three purposes and sub-programs, more fully described on page IV-32:

- Public records
- Elections
- Voter Registration

**Discussion**

The proposed 2020 budget totals $622,765 a decrease of $129,275 (16.3%) over FY19 budget of $792,040 primarily due to this being a 2-election year, with probably no early voting for the presidential preference primary election. The Budget details as follows:

Mr. Ward discussed with the Subcommittee aspects of the budget as it related to elections and noted that the Town has increased stipends for poll workers so that an election costs an additional $3,500 in staffing costs. In general, an election costs between $70-90K. The Town Clerk was about calling elections and voting days and he responded that the Town has to hold its election between February and the end of May, and the election could be held on any day, including a Saturday or Sunday.

The Committee notes that consecutive prior years budgets for the Town Clerk's office can be misleading and not effectively used for comparison purposes. This is because the chief
variable in the Town Clerk’s budget is the number and type of elections held in a given year.

One member of the Subcommittee, also a constable, inquired as to whether constable postings are a statutory requirement. The Town Clerk indicated that there are no preferences for any particular constable and that the job went to the constable that responded in a timely fashion. He said that he could not speak for other department’s procedures, but the Town Clerk’s office requests are time-sensitive.