

Selectmen's Meeting
Tuesday, March 18, 2004
Ayer Town Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room, Main St., Ayer, MA

FY-05 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

7:00P.M. Open Session

The Board met with Chairman Fay, Selectman Bresnahan, Selectman Morrison, Selectman Sullivan and Selectman Maxant.

Chairman Fay opened the Hearing by requesting the Legal Notice be read into the record. Selectman Morrison read the FY-05 Public Hearing Legal Notice into the record which ran in the Nashoba Publications Newspaper the weeks of Feb. 25, 2004 & March 3, 2004 and advertised for March 16, 2004 but rescheduled to March 18, 2004 due to snow storm.

Chairman Fay reviewed with all present the Agenda -beginning first with Town Accountant Lisa Gabree's presentation of projected State Aid/Local Revenues and then with the Town Administrator presenting the FY-05 Omnibus Operating Budget (attached). The Town Administrator to review each budget line item with items questioned or to be discussed being passed upon until all other items have been reviewed. The Board will then come back and revisit the passed on budgets and take questions from the audience when recognized by the Chairman.

Projected State Aid/Local Revenues: Lisa Gabree-Town Accountant

<u>State Aid-</u>	<u>Fy-04</u>	<u>Fy-05</u>	<u>Change</u>
State Aid to Schools	\$3,588,964	\$3,588,964	-0-
All other State Aid	726,093	726,741	<1%
TOTAL STATE AID	\$4,315,057	\$4,315,705	<1%

Property Taxes

Tax Base	\$10,251,781	\$10,886,465		
Statutory Increase (2 ½%)	256,295	272,162		
New Growth	378,389	100,000		
Unused Levy	(6,263)			
Sub Total	\$10,880,202	\$11,258,627	3%	\$378,425
Debt Exclusion	1,458,367	1,099,083	(25%)	(359,234)
Total Taxes	\$12,280,443	\$12,357,710,	<1%	19,191

Charges

State Cherry Sheet Charges	55,993	64,000
School Choice Assessment	383,799	371,565
Overlay Account	161,233	180,000
Reserve Fund	130,000	130,000

Overlay Deficits

Appropriation Deficits 117,475

Total Charges	848,500	745,565
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Summary	Fy-04	Fy-05	%-Change	\$-Change
State Aid	\$4,315,057	\$4,315,705	<1%	\$648 (+)
Taxes	\$12,338,519	\$12,357,710	<1%	\$19,191
Local Receipts	1,353,053	1,420,000	5%	\$66,947
Free Cash	211,068	817,526	287%	\$606,458
Other Funds	12,872	115,046	794%	\$102,174
Total Revenues	\$18,230,569	\$19,025,987	4%	\$795,418
Charges	(848,500)	(745,565)	12%	\$102,935

Available for

Appropriation	\$17,382,069	\$18,280,422	5%	\$898,353
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Ms. Gabree cautioning the Board to Free Cash extremely/unusually higher than normal-287% increase.

Omnibus Operating Budget: Town Administrator Anita Scheipers

Ms. Scheipers stated Town Departments/Boards/Committee were requested to submit Budgets reflecting 5%, 10% & 15% cuts. Ms. Scheipers advised to Salary's reflecting 0 COLA and only Step increments as reflected by the Town's Personnel Policy.

Budgets Passed Upon:

Dept. 100 –Board of Selectmen- <1.34% Salaries only, -0- COLA-Selectman Sullivan requesting the Board utilize their stipends to justify wage increase.

Town Clerk-<6.40%Salaries only-bringing staff up to 40/hr.Parity with other Town Hall staff., currently at 37.5/hrs per/wk

Memorial Day-Doug Friedrich requesting budget be brought back to Fy-03 Budget of \$1,403.00 due to needs of Parade/ cost increasing ie bands, buses

4th of July Celebration-Marion Smith Committee Member urging the Board to reconsider funding this appropriation stating this is 2nd year 4th of July Budget not funded, and there is not enough funds left to fund the fireworks/parade.

Ms. Smith urged the Board give the Townspeople back something with water/sewer bills up, taxes up, permits increased. Can't keep hitting businesses in Town- Fireworks cost \$6K requesting this amount be funded.

Dept. 200 – Finance- Town Accountant <2.24%-wages only- herself and staff (1 full-time, 1 part-time) Step increments.

Computer<9.97%-Munis upgrades, change over from COBOL

Assessors-<8.84% Consulting serves 10 Yr Revaluation

Tax Collector <5.95%-Wages staff hours inc. to 40/hr-parity w/Town Hall

Treasurer-<0.46% wages

Insurance-Health & Life<premium increases based upon enrollments

Unemploy Comp-<premium increase

Insurance (Fire/Police)<16.67 experience based

FICA/Medicare <19.7% experienced

Dept. 300 – Police<4.06% wages-new cruiser-Officer returning from IRAQ

Fire<28.86%-wages-3 new firefighters

Animal Control>.5% budget cut in half

Tree Warden<\$4K stipend

Dept. 400 - Public Works-level funded

**Care of Graves-<101.34% maintenance of Woodlawn/St. Mary's
Cemeteries to include pauper's graves**

Dept. 500 - Council on Aging-Level Funded

Board of Health - >\$10K Lipton Mental Health not contracted Fy-05

Parks-<1.04% Wages/Step

Pop Warner->Not funded-Fed/State Grant funded-look into

Little League-Not funded

Veterans Agent-wages

Library-<1.98 State Certification mandated

Disabilities Com-level funded no budget received

**Dept. 600 - Education (\$88K) assumes \$281K override, \$80K Medicaid, \$20K
Choice & Tuition interest & no staff reductions**

Vocational-<\$80,961 increase

Dept. 700- ZBA-<13.93% Increase in staff hours (5)

Conservation Com.<15.45% increase in staff hours (5)

Weed Control-\$15K/\$30K every other year

Planning Board-<12.54% increase in staff hours (5)

**Printing>(15.96%) # of town reports decreased –looking to computer
to develop/web page**

The Board stated tonight's review of the Omnibus Article was informational only-
budgets not set.

Enterprise Accounts-Town Accountant Lisa Gabree-Ms. Gabree ran through a brief
twelve year history presentation of Water & Sewer rates from 1993-2004. Enterprise
Funds reviewed with the Board: Water & Sewer, Water Expenses from 2003-2005

Ms. Smith urged the Board give the Townspeople back something with water/sewer bills up, taxes up, permits increased. Can't keep hitting businesses in Town- Fireworks cost \$6K requesting this amount be funded.

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including wages, expenses, regular debt, debt exclusion, minor capital, indirect costs totaling \$1,338,486 for Fy-03, \$1,402,876 for Fy-04, and 1,342,931 for Fy-05.

Water Miscellaneous Revenues-Ms. Gabree presented Fy-03 actual, Fy-04, & Fy-05 Budgets-depicting revenue generated showing slight decline projected for Fy-05. Ms. Gabree reviewed Water NET Required from rates from 2003-2005 reviewing the Sewer Expenses, Revenues and NET required from State leading up to Water & Sewer proposed rates for Fy-05 which reflected a 17% increase of \$3.73-\$4.36 for residents, \$4.28 -\$5.00 commercial and \$4.87-\$5.70 for SIU's. The Board requested a separate Water & Sewer Rate hearing be conducted and invite industry.

Solid Waste Enterprise Fund-depicted a \$341,402 General Fund subsidy required for Fy-05.

9:45p.m. Chairman Fay called for a motion to close the Fy-05 Budget Public Hearing due to the late time and reconvene the continuation of the Fy-05 Public Hearing to Thursday, March 25, 2004 at 7pm. Motion made by Selectman Morrison, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

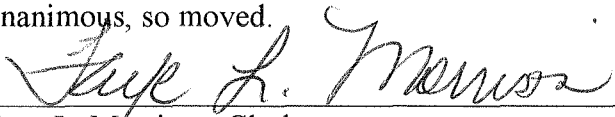
Fire Station Ballot Question – The Board approved the Following Ballot Question to appear on the April 26, 2004 Town Election Ballot-Shall the Town of Ayer be allowed to exempt from the Provisions of Proposition two and one half, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued to cover the additional cost to the Fire Station Project? Motion to approve made by Selectman Bresnahan, 2nd by Selectman Morrison, VOTE: Selectman Bresnahan aye, Selectman Morrison aye, Selectman Maxant aye, Selectman Fay aye, Selectman Sullivan no 4-1, so moved.

Park Dept. Sign Request-The Board approved the Park Dept.'s request to place a sign in front of Town Hall re final sign up dates for soccer. Motion to approve made by Selectman Bresnahan, 2nd by Selectman Morrison, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

Selectman Morrison-updated the Board to High School Voting Registration held at the High School this week and having a wonderful turnout, thank you extended to Ann Callahan and Susan Sullivan for going up to the High School to help students register. Selectman Morrison also updated the Board to Government Class to conduct a Town wide Voting Registration Day in April 2004 date to be announced.

Selectman Sullivan requesting the DPW clear tree that fell down on the corner of Central Ave. and Sandy Pond Rd... Ms. Scheipers advised to DPW aware of tree and attempting to determine if tree is on Town property or private property.

10:00p.m. Selectman Morrison moved the Town adjourn from Open Session and enter into Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 39 Section 23b, Exemption #3, re: Contract Negotiations IBPO, DPW Clerical Staff Union and JSRoberts-Town Hall Change Orders, and to adjourn from this Executive Session to re-enter into Open Session for the sole purpose of adjourning the meeting, 2nd by Selectman Sullivan VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

 DATE: 5/7/04
Faye L. Morrison, Clerk
AYER BOARD OF SELECTMEN