

SELECTMEN'S MEETING
TUESDAY, JANUARY 22, 1991
SECOND FLOOR MEETING ROOM
TOWN HALL, MAIN ST., AYER, MA.

7:30P.M. OPEN MEETING

The Board met with Chairman Slarsky, Selectman Jones and Selectman McKinney.

The minutes of January 7, 1991 were read and amended to reflex motion stating " to wait until further inquiries had been made concerning the direction of the water flow", page 4, 3rd paragraph. The Board approved the minutes with amendment.

The weekly warrant was examined and approved in the following amounts:

payroll: \$413,806.87
bills: \$335,305.00

The Board met with the Town Accountant, Advisory Board, and Executive Secretary regarding FY-92 Revenue Projections. The Board turned over the discussion to Mr. Higgins.

Mr. Higgins presented to the Board a revenue forecast re: State Aid - property tax levy -local receipts -free cash - impact aid-overlay surplus reserve - and other available funds.

Mr. Higgins went through his presentation and distributed comprehensive packets re: background reference to the Finance Committee, Selectmen and School Officials in attendance. Mr. Higgins addresses each forecast separately beginning with State Aid:

STATE AID:

Programs the Town presently receives compensation from State Aid were identified: Chapter 70, -School Aid, Transportation, Highway, Library, Lottery Equal Education Opportunity stating all above programs are General Fund money.

State Aid constitutes 26% of the Town of Ayer's revenue. The Town of Ayer expects to receive \$3,883,027 in State Aid which reflects the the 8/90 in the Town's state Aid of \$302,033. Mr.

Higgins elaborated on the State's deficit projected at between \$500 million and 1 billion, stating the State commitment is somewhat in doubt. Mr. Higgins updated the Board to the latest word coming in from the Mass. Municipal Assoc. is that Gov. Weld has pledged not to cut the FY-91 State Aid to Cities and Towns. The impact of Question #5 requiring the State to return 40% of growth back to the municipalities.

FY-92 State Aid to begin this month with the MMA to lobby the administration to increase Local Aid in accordance with the will of the voters. FY-92 State Aid Projection appears to be level funding or \$3, 883,027 or worst case another reduction of 10% (\$388,303).

Mr. Higgins alerted the Board to local municipalities warning not to budget for a reduction in local aid because it may become a self-fulfilling prophecy, budgeting for less would only serve to reduce the pressure on the legislation.

RECOMMENDATION: BUDGET FOR LEVEL FUNDED LOCAL AID.

Property Tax Levy:

The Board was advised that a firm new growth number has not been received from the Board of Assessors and that the FY-91 Levy Limit is projected at \$5,063,692. This figure includes the N. E. Power project which came on line in 1989 and the best estimate the Assessors have for calendar year 1989 growth will be \$1.2 million.

FY-92 New Growth estimate is \$227,600 the Town is awaiting a figure from the Assessors for the recently concluded calendar year 1990.

The Board was given a copy of the Pro-Forma Recap Sheet including estimated levy limit including a new growth estimate of \$1,200,000.

Local Receipts:

Includes: Water & Sewer receipts, Motor Vehicle excise, Licenses & Permits, Investment income, Shirley tuition, etc.

Fy-91 estimate is \$2,624,953-within the next few weeks receipts for the last several months will be entered into the computer. When this is completed a contrast of the past 6 months actual will provide a basis to make FY-92 projections.

Mr. Higgins provided background re: all the above receipts, stating Shirley tuition enrollment figure is down in Fy-91 by 9% representing a substantial decrease from prior years. Mr. Berberian, Business Manager for the Ayer School Dept. expects enrollment to remain constant in Fy-92.

Local receipts are projected to decrease by \$125,000 or 5% over FY91.

Free Cash:

Mr. Higgins informed the Board that in FY-92 the Town should have \$1,224,287 available in free cash this amount has been certified by the Dept. of Revenue.

Mr. Higgins advised the Board the Ayer School Com. was requesting the FY-90 School Dept. Balance of \$314,151 which was made apart of the above total of free cash, be deposited back into the P.L. 874 account. Mr. Higgins requesting a meeting be held at the next Selectmen's meeting with the School Dept., Advisory Board, and Town Accountant to resolve this issue.

Impact Aid:

Mr. Higgins announced to the Board the Town will receive \$3,000,000 from the Federal Government in PL-874 Funding. Mr. Berberian advised the Town that Impact Aid is still frozen at the 1987 level. Mr. Higgins advised the Board that PL-874 funds again will not cover the cost of educating military dependents in Ayer schools. Mr. Higgins advised the Board that he requested an updated student enrollment to be able to identify the exact shortfall for FY-91.

Overlay Surplus:

Overlay surplus constitutes the accumulated amount of overlay for various years no longer needed. The Board of Assessors estimates there will be \$100,000 the Board to await confirmation.

Other Available Funds:

Mr. Higgins stated this source of funding is generated from the closing balances left in Special Article Accounts, some of the articles were raise and appropriates others borrows.

Upon closing of the FY-92 Projection status Mr. Higgins opened the floor for a brief question & answer period.

Mr. Charles Miller, Chairman of the Advisory Board presented the Selectmen with the Advisory Board's recommendations to the FY-92 budgeting process.

1. Request a level service budget from each department head.
(explain increases & decreases accordingly.)
2. Advisory Board upon receiving all budget will calculate, if

the budget exceed revenue forecast the Advisory Board will work with the Treasurer.

3. The Advisory Board will work with the Accountant & Selectmen to help determine numbers for Stabilization & Reserve Funds.
4. The Advisory Board will work with Department heads to align their depts. with revenue projections and disclose specific impacts to their depts.
5. Review all Dept. budgets and determine priorities. Investigate alternate sources of revenue.
6. Evaluate debt exclusion provisions in key areas of the budget.

Chairman Slarsky recommended the freezing of all employment to current levels, no additional personnel forecasts. Mr. Higgins stated that Budget packets were to be distributed the week of January 22nd and returned no later than the middle of February 92.

Chairman Slarsky requested from Supt. Markham the possibility of School Committee meeting with the Board on February 4, 1991 to discuss the School Dept.'s issue with regard to the closing of the School Dept.'s FY-90 balance to free cash, the School Committee disputing this closing to free cash requesting the funds be transferred back into the PL-874 Fund Account.

Mr. Markham to get back to Mr. Higgins re: confirmation of date.

Chairman Slarsky requesting at this time the status of the Regionalization issue. Chairman Slarsky requesting a written report as to where the Town stands with this matter.

PUBLIC HEARING: Underground Storage Tanks-Exxon Station-Park St.

Present for the Hearing was Thomas Sisson, representing Ayoub Eng., Henry Wysk, proprietor of the Exxon Station and Building Commissioner, William Halligan.

PETITION: to remove the existing underground steel tanks and replace them with new double wall fiberglass tanks and increase the storage tanks to:

- 40,000 gal. motor oil
- 1,000 gal. F.O.
- 1,000 gal. W.O.

Chairman Slarsky opened the hearing by reading the Legal Notice which ran in the Nashoba Publications for the periods of 1/10 & 1/17/91. Chairman Slarsky stated that he was an abutter to the Property in question and if the Board desired he would step off the table. The Board determined that Chairman Slarsky posed little concern to them regarding sitting in on this petition.

Chairman Slarsky stated the Fire Chief had approved the Permit and requested Mr. Halligan to elaborate on the petition.

Mr. Halligan reviewed the application with the Board and answered all questions and concerns the Board posed. Mr. Halligan stated he had no objection to the Permit and stated that he would check the aquifer area to determine impact if any.

Chairman Slarsky requested if there were abutters present for or against the petition, no one came forward.

The Board based on this voted to approved the petition based upon the recommendation of all Town officials & boards to allow the replacement of the tanks. Selectman Jones moved this motion, seconded by Selectman McKinney, VOTE: UNANIMOUS, SO MOVED.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT:

1. Mr. Higgins opened the discussion by advising the Board to Patrolman Murray cancelling his grievance thus avoiding the Executive Session planned for later in the evening. Mr. Higgins stated the Chief had worked out a remedy to the grievance.

2. The Board was advised the IBPO provided written confirmation relinquishing the right of first refusal on dispatch shifts, thus providing the Chief to begin hiring of part-time dispatchers.

3. Mr. Higgins reported back to the Board concerning the groundwater flows in the vicinity of F.D. landfill and motor pool. Mr. Higgins stated that specific information was not available and stated it would be available after the EPA superfund analysis progresses. Mr. Higgins advised the Board that F.D. has there own monitoring wells in this area, and that they were showing no signs of contamination.

4. The Board was advised that the Annual Town Report invitation to Bid has been published. Notice has gone out to all Town Depts. to submit their reports no later than Feb. 28, 1991.

5. The Board was advised that Mr. Higgins, Russ Smith and Selectman Slarsky attended the meeting at Atlantic Union College on 1/10/91. A written statement on behalf of the Towns to be presented to MAC at their 1/15/91 Public Hearing. Unfortunately the Public Hearing was cancelled by MAC.

6. The Board was advised that there has been no contact from Daniel McCarthy Assoc. re: Park Plaza concerning the agreement at the last Selectmens Meeting.

7. The Board was advised that a meeting was held last week with the Police Chief, Fire Chief and Chairman Slarsky re: 911. The Board was advised this service would be available to the Town in late April 91. The Board took under advisement whether to separate this function from Police & Fire and have 911 Center Alone.

8. The Board was advised the Mass. DPW that the removal of

crosswalk signs from Town streets was only a recommendation, Town not mandated to comply.

9. The Board was advised of MMA Conference material being made available in their Books this week. Conference date: 1/25-1/26/91.

SUPT. REDFIELD'S REPORT:

1. The Board reviewed the Jan. 15, 1991 draft plan to end the State of Emergency declaration by DEP.

2. The Board was advised to Hydro Group removing Spectacle Pond Well #2 pump AND MOTOR ON 1/17/91 and starting the cleaning and redevelopment of the well. The Water Div. has been monitoring the water level in the standpipes. The Board was also advised that the Grove Pond Wells have had to be continually operating during this time to keep up with the daily demand.

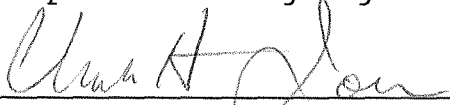
3. The Board was advised of Joseph Zadrozny's resignation. Effective date for Mr. Zadrozny's resignation being 1/21/91. Selectman Jones Moved the Board accept Mr. Zadrozny's resignation with regrets effective 1/21/91, seconded by Selectman McKinney, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

4. The Board was advised of security checks being conducted at all DPW facilities due to proximity to Ft. Devens during the UN forces attack on Iraq.

The Board reviewed with Supt. Redfield projects being worked on by the Supt. and Public Works staff.

9:40p.m. Selectman Jones moved the Board adjourn the meeting Seconded by Selectman McKinney, VOTE: unanimous, so moved.

9:40p.m. meeting adjourned.



CHARLES H. JONES, CLERK
AYER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DATE: 2/4/91