The meeting convened at 6:42 P.M. in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room in the West Bridgewater Town Hall.

Committee Members Present: Chairman Ms. Meredith Anderson, Vice Chairman Ms. Jeri Scerenci, Ms. Janice Fox, Mr. Maurice McCarthy, Ms. Melissa Burns, and Mr. Scott Weatherbee.

Committee Members absent: Ms. Cheryl Adams.

Also present was Town Administrator David Gagne.

Ms. Cheryl Cambria, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee entered the meeting to present the Community Preservation Committee Budget.

Ms. Cambria advised that the committee met on March 19th to discuss 5 project applications, and that all of the projects were approved unanimously.

Ms. Cambria stated that the first application was a request for $15,000.00 from the Town Clerk to continue the work on preserving vital records.

Ms. Cambria stated that the second application was a request for $10,000.00 from the Assessor to continue the work on preserving vital records.

Ms. Cambria stated that the third application was a request for $25,000.00 from the Mass Division of Marines and Fisheries to conduct an improvement study on the fish passage at War Memorial Park.

Ms. Cambria stated that the fourth application was a request for $125,000.00 from the Department of Public Works Forestry Department for continued engineering work at War Memorial Park.

Ms. Cambria stated that the fifth application was a request for $20,000.00 from Old Bridgewater Historical Society to conduct a building and document preservation assessment for both the Old Bridgewater Historical Society Building and the Keith House. Ms. Cambria noted that the Old Bridgewater Historical Society also requested $20,000.00 from the Town of Bridgewater.

Ms. Scerenci Scerenci asked how the town vital records are preserved. Ms. Cambria advised that a company comes in, scans the records and preserves them. She also stated that she believes the town then receives a booklet of the records and a disc.

Ms. Cambria also mentioned that paperwork has been submitted to get the Old Bridgewater Historical Society and the Keith House on the National Historic Register.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had any additional questions for Ms. Cambria.

Ms. Cambria exited the meeting.

Mr. Gagne presented budget 1220 (Board of Selectman Budget). Mr. Gagne stated that there is
a new line item in this budget with regards to cars for the Town Inspectors. He noted that they would like the retired cars from Police Department to be used for the Town Inspectors. Mr. Gagne continued to discuss all of the changes to this budget in detail, and stated that overall the budget went down $2,300.00.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had questions regarding this budget.

Superintendent Dr. Patricia Oakley as well as members of the School Committee entered the meeting to discuss budget 3000 (Education.)

Dr. Oakley advised that the budget for 2019 is $14,907,899.00 and of that amount the committee is asking the town for $12,648,064.00. She noted that operating budget had an increase of 2.9% and that the overall budget had an increase of 4.7%

Dr. Oakely noted that they had 9 retiree’s which is a large number and unusual.

The committees discussed the changes and increases in the budget including the Step and Track Increases, Transportation Costs and Service contracts.

The committee also discussed the $25,000.00 they had budgeted to fund a School Resource Officer. Dr. Oakely stated that the Selectman encouraged the school committee to not put this in the budget, but to do a warrant and put it in the police budget for future years.

Ms. Screnci asked who will be paying for the Resource Officer. She stated that she thought it should be in the School Departments budget, but that the school budget is already increasing.

Chairman Anderson asked how much we are receiving for school choice. Dr. Oakely stated that we are receiving $1,441,000.00 and noted that the town is not having a problem attracting school choice, and that the students are not leaving.

Dr. Oakley discussed how ELL and FEL numbers have gone up in the budget due to multiple families coming in this year who did not speak English. She believes this increase is going to continue, and that they are going to need an IEP.

Dr. Oakley also mentioned that due to Legal Requirements they needed to add an additional Pre School room.

Chairman Anderson asked about the change in the Transportation line item, and Dr. Oakely stated that, that was due to a bus that needed to be added.

Ms. Screnci asked about the increase in the Services line item, and the School Committee stated that major repairs need to be done at the Howard School and that all of the warranties are up.

Dr. Oakley passed out a packet that she put together for her first budget meeting. The packet discussed how in West Bridgewater only 25% of the school budget is funded by Chapter 70. She noted that West Bridgewater does not get the state funding that most other towns get.

The committee continued to discuss the changes in this budget and Chairman Anderson asked whether anyone had any additional questions.
The School Committee exited the meeting.

Mr. Gagne presented budget 1310 (Finance Committee Budget). Mr. Gagne explained that this budget was level funded. Mr. Gagne discussed the idea to purchase iPads or Tablets in the future to replace the large Finance Committee Binders. Committee members were in support of this idea.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had any questions regarding this budget.

Mr. Gagne presented budget 1320 (Finance Committee Reserve). Mr. Gagne stated that there is $67,000.00 in this account, and that they have been very careful with their money.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had any questions regarding this budget.

Mr. Gagne presented budget 8200 (State/County Assessments and Charges). Mr. Gagne stated that this budget is for what the Town we will be receiving from state aid and charges from the State as well.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had any questions regarding this budget.

Chairman Anderson asked if anyone had any additional business they would like to bring before the committee.

Chairman Anderson advised that the next meeting would be on April 5, 2018 and that they would be hearing the rest of the budgets at that time.

Mr. McCarthy made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Screnci seconded, and the committee voted unanimously in favor of this motion.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin E. Leahy, Secretary