

The Hingham Town Government Study Committee asks that you, in consultation with fellow department employees or committee members, carefully consider the following questions and answer them as fully as possible. Please return your responses in writing by November 8 to the members of the GSC who are working with your department or committee.

1. Please state your department or committee's charge or job description.

The Advisory Committee is a deliberative body chartered by the Town of Hingham General By-Laws to consider all articles in any Town Meeting Warrant and to make recommendations on each article as it deems to be in the best interest of the Town. The Committee consists of fifteen residents of the Town, appointed by the Moderator to staggered terms. The term of appointment is three years, and each member serves no more than two terms. Membership on the committee reflects a cross section of the Town's residents.

The Advisory Committee has broad review powers and reporting requirements, which are set out in Article 14 of the Town By-laws. The Committee functions as the finance committee for the Town, reviewing all requests for annual operating and capital appropriations. It makes recommendations to Town Meeting on all Warrant articles presented to Town Meeting, including the annual budget. These recommendations, as well as general commentary and background information on the state of the Town, are contained in the Advisory Committee's Report to Town Meeting, which is included in the Town Meeting Warrant.

The Committee conducts its business in open public meetings, the purposes of which include, but are not limited to: (i) eliciting input and information from proponents and opponents of an article; (ii) eliciting input and information from members of the general public; and (iii) providing a forum for the exchange of views by Committee members, with the goal of arriving at a recommendation to Town Meeting by majority vote. The Committee generally meets on Tuesday evenings. From early September through November, meetings are relatively infrequent, and from December to the start of Town Meeting, meetings are generally weekly. In the event of Special Town meetings, the Committee also meets on a regular basis as required. In addition, individual Advisory Committee members, acting as liaisons, closely follow the proceedings of other Town boards and committees.

2. To whom is your department or committee accountable? ***The AdCom serves at the pleasure of the Town Moderator and is appointed by same in consultation with the BOS.***

3. What three things contribute most to the successful functioning of your department or committee? **1.) An amazingly dedicated group of Townspeople who have volunteered their time and resources to work on Town issues. 2) A clearly defined mission. 3.) A deliberative process and a set of rules that the Committee can easily understand and work under.**

4. What three things would you change to bring about more effective functioning? **Since the Committee works under the assumption that if there isn't a problem, don't fix it, I would suggest that we don't see three things that would make the Committee more effective. During the past two years, the Committee has worked diligently to increase awareness of the AdCom by expanding its footprint on the Town Web site, drafted a strict set of Rules of Conduct, reviewed its/the Town's Financial Policies, and prepared a set of guidelines for the many tasks that Members are assigned during their time on the Committee. All of those steps have enabled the Committee to function more effectively.**

5. What challenges do you anticipate that might impact the work of your department or committee in the future and what changes would you suggest for addressing those challenges? **One challenge that we are working on is to shorten the timeframe for identification and review of proposed Warrant articles. If all Town departments and boards/committees work with that same objective for budgets and articles, it might be possible to move the date of Warrant finalization earlier than mid-March, providing more time for increased voter awareness and deliberation. At this moment, a Warrant Article is being prepared for next Town meeting with that objective in mind. Other than that, no other challenges comes to mind that we can speak to.**

6. Do you have anything to add? **No.**

Respectively submitted.....Jack Manning, Chair Hingham Advisory Committee