

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: January 7, 2020

Place: Town Hall

In attendance: Committee Members Victor Baltera, Bob Curley, Julie Strehle, Tom Belyea, Eryn Kelley, George Danis, Andy McElaney, Davalene Cooper, Dave Anderson, Evan Sheehan, Nancy MacDonald, and Town Accountant Sue Nickerson.

Absent: Eric Haskell, Libby Claypoole, Ed Gaydos, Kathleen Almand.

Chairman Baltera called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

Comments from the public regarding items not on the Agenda None

Approval of Minutes from December 10, 2019 and December 17, 2019 meetings

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12/10/19 were approved with revisions by a vote of 7-0. Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Anderson arrived after this vote.

Minutes of the Meeting held on 12/17/19 were approved with revisions by a vote of 7-0. Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Sheehan, and Mr. Anderson arrived after this vote.

Budget Corrections and Updates

- Information Technology - Eryn Kelley provided a correction to the Information Technology Expenses that was previously presented to AdCom on 12/17/19. The Computer Service Agreement (for ongoing cyber security) has been updated and increased by \$4,950. Ms. Kelley recommended the base amounts requested with the correct numbers. The IT Department requests \$214,628 for Salaries, \$261,789 for Expenses, for a total of \$476,417.
- Elections - Davalene Cooper reported that there are potential changes to the Elections budget. The original budget requests were based on the expectation of early voting for primary election 9/1/2020, but the Commonwealth has recently decided not to offer early voting for the September Primary. Therefore changes are expected to the request for Salaries. The Town Clerk's office may also increase its Elections Expenses with a technology purchase to streamline Town Meeting check-in and early voting. Further discussion was deferred to a future meeting after any proposed changes are finalized.

Budget Hearings

- South Shore Country Club - George Danis presented this budget, which is an enterprise fund paid for by SSCC operations. In the years when the club runs a deficit, the Town covers the shortfall. Kevin Whalen, Director of Operations/Golf Superintendent, requests an overall budget of \$1,766,742. Mr. Whalen, along with Country Club Management Committee Chair Christine Smith, provided an overview of this budget, which supports the operation of the golf course, pro shop, bowling alley, restaurant, and simulator. Measures are being taken in all areas to reduce costs and bring the SSCC to a profit, including the purchase of items previously rented (which will eliminate costs after purchase is paid back), slight increases to various golf fees, and increasing program offerings. The pool has been permanently closed, and the SSCC is making plans to repair the storage facility beneath it. While the SSCC is able to pay for the costs of storage and golf infrastructure, it is unable to afford the installation of a new pool. Ms. Smith noted that the Town would need to finance that capital project, and to that end, the SSCC is applying for

\$500,000 CPC funding to pay for construction documents. Mr. Danis recommended the base amount requested, with Expenses for \$1,766,742, and projected revenues of \$1,901,500.

- Department of Public Works - Tom Belyea presented an overview of the Public Facilities departments, with responsibilities including road maintenance, transfer station operation, Sewer Department operation, tree maintenance, snow removal, and traffic and signal light maintenance.
- Sewer Department - Nancy MacDonald presented this budget, which involves a special revenue fund, with expenses paid by ratepayers. Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent, requests Salaries for \$371,660, Expenses for \$318,992, Engineering for \$10,000, MWRA Assessment for \$2,130,980, Debt Service for \$74,656, Intermunicipal Agreement (Hull) for \$445,869, for a total of \$3,352,157. Ms. MacDonald recommended the base amounts requested.

Under Expenses, electric utilities increased due to a change in the method that Hingham Municipal Light Plant (HMLP) uses to measure electrical usage. This new demand charge measures the energy surge needed to simply start sewer pumps. When a heavy rain event increases infiltration and inflow into the sewer system, additional pumps engage, causing another energy surge and a higher spike in electricity usage.. The Town's Accountant, Town Administrator, and Mr. Sylvester plan to work with HMLP on a better way to measure and report the utility costs for sewer while using this new demand charge tool.

- Landfill/Recycling - Nancy MacDonald presented this budget. Mr. Sylvester requests Salaries for \$611,875, Landfill/Recycling Expenses for \$886,229, for a total of \$1,498,104. Ms. MacDonald recommended the base amounts requested.

As explained under the Sewer Budget, electric utility expenses increased due to the usage of a new demand charge. Trash removal services are expected to increase because the contract with SEMASS is scheduled for renewal in December 2020, and other towns have recently experienced rate increases in their contracts.

For recycling, the Town continues to earn relatively good rates because its recyclables are in good condition. If the DPW can further separate and bale different types of plastic, then a higher payment rate can be earned. Mr. Sylvester has been banking credits awarded by the DEP's Recycling Dividend Program (which awards funds annually for recycling), and is halfway through earning the funds to purchase a better feeder system in order to further separate plastic recyclables.

- Department of Public Works - Tom Belyea presented this budget. Randy Sylvester, DPW Superintendent, requests Salaries for \$2,391,898, Expenses for \$826,469, Snow Removal for \$563,365, Road Maintenance for \$382,500, for a total of \$4,164,232. Tom Belyea recommended the base amounts requested.

The DPW performs ongoing work to remain in compliance with the Environmental Protection Agency's "MS4" (Municipal Separate Storm System) drain compliance program, including public education and outreach, illicit discharge elimination program, ongoing testing of water within the system for contamination (such as bacteria, nitrates, sulfates), elimination of any detected illicit discharge, management of construction and post-construction site runoff, ongoing street sweeping, and catch basin cleaning. GIS mapping currently tracks locations for catch basins and

outfalls. Having a dedicated GIS Coordinator would help the DPW better track and report data to the EPA for the MS4 program.

Town Administrator Tom Mayo and Assistant Town Administrator Michelle Monsegur joined Mr. Sylvester to discuss the dissolution of the Engineering Department (due to the resignation of personnel), and its impact on the DPW and other departments. The Town evaluated the services and responsibilities that were formerly performed by the Engineering Department, and decided to assign some currently open positions to the DPW (Town Engineer, Assistant DPW Superintendent, and additional administrative assistant positions) and others to the Selectmen's Office (two new positions: a Procurement and Contracts Manager, and a GIS Coordinator). The total FY21 budget for the positions related to the reorganization is \$429,000. Aside from the efficiencies and benefits that Mr. Mayo expects from the reorganization, the total difference between the former engineering salaries and the proposed new structure is \$36,640 (a net gain of one position). Although there are other worthy budget requests such as a senior center program coordinator, Mr. Mayo states that the requests related to the Engineering function are more necessary at this time, and that the senior center position merits additional analysis. Mr. Belyea suggested that the cost of a senior center position could get offset by user fees.

Additional Request for GIS Coordinator

Mr. Mayo and Ms. Monsegur discussed the additional request for a GIS Coordinator under the IT budget. The customers for this position will be all Town departments. The position is proposed to be placed under IT in order for the Coordinator to be better able to provide IT help during any possible technical emergencies. Once data has been uploaded into the GIS system, benefits include the ability to track the condition of Town assets, view a picture, locate assets even under snow, and provide an increasing pyramid of information. DPW could use GIS to better manage the tree maintenance program. Police and Fire could serve the public better by being able to determine the locations of pools, dogs, weapons, and elderly residents.

Liaison Reports

Water Transition Committee - Dave Anderson

The most recent meeting was held on 12/9/19, with a lengthy discussion on rules and regulations. The Committee is facilitating a crowd-sourced naming process, with the ultimate decision by the Board of Selectmen. Three entities have responded to the RFP for an operator, with interviews expected to be conducted this week. The Town is required to evaluate proposals by looking at all aspects of the proposal except for the price (until later in the process).

Master Plan Committee - Andy McElaney

The formal visioning sessions (11) have been completed, plus special smaller meetings with various groups. A community-wide survey will be circulated soon, then consultants will create vision and value statements, and craft policy goals for committee discussion. Results of information collection should result in a draft plan by the 5/20/2020, deadline, and then a final plan would be adopted in September or October. The next committee meeting is scheduled for 1/15/2020, and preliminary results will be presented at a public forum on 2/26/2020.

Discussion of Advisory Committee Housekeeping Items

The next meeting is scheduled for 1/14/2020, with budget hearings for Culture & Recreation (the Recreation Department, Historical Department, Library, and Trustees of Bathing Beach) and Debt Service, Employee Benefits, and Unclassified. Evan Sheehan will be absent from next week's hearing, so

Dave Anderson will present the Debt, Employee Benefits, and Unclassified budgets. Warrant articles are due on 1/21/2020, so AdCom will soon discuss the approach to studying warrant articles, including guidelines for drafting comments.

Matters Not Anticipated within 48 Hours of the Meeting - None

Adjourn - 10:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Strehle, Secretary

List of Documents Distributed at this Meeting:

Agenda

Budgets as set forth in the Budget Books

Draft Minutes of Meeting 12/10/2019

Draft Minutes of Meeting on 12/17/2019

Budget Scorecard for FY21 AdCom budget process

AdCom approved 1/14/2020