

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: January 15, 2019

Place: Town Hall

In attendance: Committee Members Donna Smallwood, Victor Baltera, Bob Curley, Tom Belyea, Libby Claypoole, Eric Haskell, Julie Strehle, George Danis, Andy McElaney, Davalene Cooper, Nancy MacDonald and Town Accountant Sue Nickerson

Absent: Dave Anderson, Eryn Kelley, Evan Sheehan, Ed Gaydos

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

Questions from the Public on Items not on the Agenda- None

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting held on 1/8/19 were approved as amended by a vote of 10 – 0.

Minutes of the meeting held on 1/10/19, when 8 AdCom members attended a joint meeting of the Selectmen and Water Company Acquisition Study Committee, were approved as amended by a vote of 4 – 0. *Budget Hearings*

- Library – Victor Baltera introduced this budget. Director Linda Harper, who was accompanied by David Mehegan, Chair of the Board of Trustees, provided an overview of this budget which supports the annual lending of over 300,000 books, movies, magazines, technology and art; the provision of digital databases for research; over 800 programs and events; research and reference services; individual study rooms and community meeting rooms. Approximately 250,000 people of all ages visit the library annually. Key initiatives are focused on the evaluation, redesign and expansion of physical space; continuing improvement of technology; development of staff and the development of new public and private funding

sources. The Trustees provide (separate from the Town budget) for 80% of the funding for books which qualifies the Library for State certification and grants. Ms. Harper requested \$1,495,489 for salaries and \$325,426 for expenses for a total budget of \$1,820,915. Mr. Baltera recommended these amounts.

- Recreation Commission – Andrew McElaney introduced this budget. Chair Vicki Donlan and Mark Thorell, Director, provided an overview of the activities supported by this budget including the management of over 200 self-funded programs which generate approximately \$1.5 million in revenue; the operation of the Rec Barn, Rec Center and Fitness Room; and the provision of safe and accessible fields and playgrounds. The only item funded out of the budget is the director’s salary; everything else is funded by program revenues. Key initiatives involve a Town-wide athletic field study, increasing programs for seniors, improvement of athletic field and playground conditions and the construction of a playground on the Hull Street field. The Commission operates the pool at the South Shore Country Club and participates in monitoring concerns about its condition. Mr. Thorell requested \$104,317 for salaries and Mr. McElaney recommended this amount.
- Trustees of Bathing Beach – Julie Strehle provided an overview of this budget which supports the operation and maintenance of the Bathing Beach. Expenses are down 62% due to transfer of the geese management program to the DPW budget. Key initiatives involve the construction of a new bathhouse and related grant applications to the Community Preservation Committee. The budget request was for \$20,664 for salaries and

\$8,058 for expenses for a total budget of \$28,722. Ms. Strehle recommended these amounts.

- Historical Department – Nancy MacDonald introduced this budget. Andrea Young, the Historical Administrator, provided an overview of this budget which supports the maintenance of the Town’s Comprehensive Inventory of Historical Resources, the review of state or federally funded projects to ensure protection of historic resources, the conduct of design reviews within the Historic Districts, and the administration of the Greenbush Trust Fund and Preservation Projects Fund. This budget is new this year; in prior years it was part of the Community Development Department budget. The Historical Department has only one employee, the administrator, and has no support staff. Key initiatives involved the publication of *Tranquility Grove*, the return of the Lincoln Chair to the Heritage Museum from the Museum of Fine Arts, the award of Greenbush Preservation Trust grants and the deployment of signs marking former Town bridges. Ms. Young requested \$73,012 for salaries and \$5,291 for expenses for a total budget of \$78,303. Ms. MacDonald recommended these amounts.
- Debt service, Benefits and Unclassified – George Danis introduced these budgets for which Town Accountant Sue Nickerson provided overviews. With the exception of the additional request in Workers Compensation which will be set aside for later action, Mr. Danis recommended each of the following budget requests.
 - Debt Service Budget - \$8,214,774
 - Group Insurance - \$6,856,029. This amount is pending final rates.

- Other Post-Employment Benefits (“OPEB”)- \$1,153,245. The Group Insurance and OPEB budgets relate to insurance and other benefits provided to over 1,100 active and retired employees.
- Medicare - \$973,500.
- Contributory Retirement - \$4,801,468.
- Workers’ Compensation - \$330,000. There is an additional request for \$50,000 which is supported by the Town Administrator intended to better align the budget with recent expenditures.
- Unemployment Compensation - \$30,000.
- General Insurance - \$687,023.
- Unclassified - \$6,700

Review of Warrant Process and Guidelines

Chair Smallwood provided an overview of the warrant process and guidelines for members serving as Warrant Article liaisons and distributed written procedures and related timelines to be followed.

Liaison Updates

- Schools – George Danis indicated that the selection process for the new Superintendent was ongoing and would involve site visits to the school districts of the remaining two out-of-state candidates. The boiler at the High School is in need of repair and/or replacement.
- Community Preservation Committee – Chair Smallwood reported that there would be a joint meeting of the CPC, the Selectmen and the Advisory Committee on 1/22/19 to review this year’s proposed grants.
- Planning – Victor Baltera reported that Planning had opened hearings on the five Planning Board Warrant Articles and the three Zoning Board Warrant Articles. The hearings will continue into February.
- Water Company Acquisition – Victor Baltera reported that in addition to the Water Company Acquisition Study Committee meeting occurring

simultaneously with the 1/15/19 Advisory Committee meeting that there would be a meeting on 1/16/19 by the Water Company Acquisition Study Committee to address governance issues.

Advisory Committee Housekeeping Items

The identification of a date for the year-end celebration is a priority.

Matters not anticipated within 48 hours: None

11. Adjourn – 9:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Curley, Secretary

List of Documents Distributed at this Meeting:

Agenda

Draft Minutes from meetings held on 1/8/19 and 1/10/19

Warrant Article Guidelines and initial assignments

Budget Scorecard updated through 1/8/19

Warrant Article Style Guidelines

AdCom approved on 1/29/2019