

## Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date: February 7, 2019**

**Place: Town Hall**

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

Absent: Eric Haskell

Chairman Smallwood called the meeting to order at 7:31 pm.

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

### *Warrant Article Hearing*

- Z – Foster School Article to Amend Feasibility Study Vote – George Danis introduced this Article and an overview was provided by John Ferris, Director of Business and Support Services, and Michelle Ayers, Chair of the School Committee School Committee Vice-Chair Liza O'Reilly and Ray Estes of the Foster School Building Committee provided supplemental information. This Article would rescind the restriction in a vote on Article 20 at the 2017 Town Meeting on the use of \$750,000 for a feasibility study of any Foster School project. The restriction provided that the funds could only be used in the event that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) awarded a grant for school construction to the Town. No grant was awarded. The School Committee will again file (for a third time) for a grant from the MSBA to address the needs of the Foster School in 2019 but will not know whether a grant will be awarded until December 2019. The School Committee seeks removal of the restriction so that it might proceed to obtain a feasibility study to address the needs of the Foster School as expeditiously as possible even if the MSBA does not award a grant in 2019. If a grant is not awarded in 2019, the School Committee may seek the award of a grant in 2020 (for a fourth time). In the event of an award in 2020 by the MSBA, the expense of a feasibility study not conducted at the

direction of the MSBA may result in diminished use and value of a Town directed feasibility study. AdCom members questions included:

- The impact of a Town Meeting decision permitting a feasibility study with/without an MSBA grant on the MSBA's evaluation of the Town's 2019 application.
- The impact of a Town Meeting decision to proceed with a feasibility study outside of the MSBA process on the availability of preferred consultants (i.e. architects, engineers, etc.) due to limitations on the ability of such consultants to participate in an MSBA funded program if they have previously performed a non-MSBA funded feasibility study.

Members of the Foster School community including parents, teachers and PTO officers spoke forcefully about the long overdue need for addressing the many challenges of the Foster School building and the inequities for students assigned to Foster School as opposed to other elementary schools in Hingham.

### *Warrant Article Hearings and Votes*

- AA – Foster School Extraordinary Maintenance Capital – Evan Sheehan introduced this Article and John Ferris provided an overview. This Article would provide funds in the amount of \$350,000 to address any extraordinary maintenance needs of the Foster School including boiler maintenance or replacement, electrical upgrades/repairs and roof maintenance to ensure the safe operation of the building. A vote on this Article was deferred pending review of amended language in the recommendation.
- BB – Funding for High School Clerestory Window Project – Evan Sheehan introduced this Article and John Ferris provided an overview. This Article would provide for funds up to \$550,160 to replace the clerestory windows at the High School gymnasium pursuant to a study and assessment authorized at the 2018 Town Meeting. Mr. Sheehan provided a comment

and a favorable recommendation. The vote to approve the recommendation was 13-0.

- CC – Authorize Five-Year Lease for School Transportation Vehicles. – George Danis introduced this Article and John Ferris provided an overview. Town Meeting approval is required for a Town to enter into a lease for more than 3 years. The Town will save money by allowing a five year lease for school buses and vans for the transportation of both regular and special education students. Mr. Danis provided a comment and favorable recommendation. The vote to approve the recommendation was 13-0.

### *Liaison Updates*

- South Shore Country Club – Bob Curley reported that the Warrant Article concerning a cell tower at the South Shore Country Club would be withdrawn to allow for permitting to occur before any lease.
- Water Company Acquisition – Victor Baltera reported on the Advisory Committee Water Company Acquisition Subcommittee meeting held on February 6, 2019. The meeting was also attended by members of the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator and members of the Water Company Acquisition Study Committee to address issues relating to the governance and operation of the water company, if acquired, and financial aspects of the proposed acquisition.. The Subcommittee’s next meeting which will address engineering and transition issues is scheduled for next week.

### *Advisory Committee Housekeeping Items*

There was discussion concerning procedures for the review and finalization of Warrant Articles. The year-end party is scheduled for June 8 at 4 PM.

*Matters not anticipated within 48 hours: None*

Adjourn – 10:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Curley, Secretary

List of Documents Distributed at this Meeting:

Agenda

Warrant Articles Z, AA, BB, CC with proposed Comments and Recommendations

AdCom approved on 2/20 /2019