

Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date - February 15, 2022

Remote Meeting via Zoom

In Attendance: J. Strehle, G. Danis, N. MacDonald, D. Anderson, B. Black, D. Cooper, R. Curley, K. Dziergowski, M. Goulet, C. Kirk, A. Macdonald, A. McElaney, S. Melia, E. Sheehan, T. Sherwood, Town Accountant S. Nickerson.

Absent: None

1. Call Meeting to Order

At 7:01pm Chair Strehle called the meeting to order and read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020, Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the Chairman at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the Chair may inform all other participants of said recording.”

2. Comments from the Public Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

None

3. Review and Approval of Minutes from February 3, 8, 10, 2022

Meeting minutes from February 03, 2022, were approved by roll call vote, 12-0

Meeting minutes from February 08, 2022, were approved by roll call vote, 12-0

Meeting minutes from February 10, 2022, were approved by roll call vote, 12-0

4. Capital Repurpose Request for Fire Department

Chief Murphy requests to repurpose \$15,000 from FY21 appropriation and provided an overview of the request, which has been unanimously approved by the Select Board. The original appropriation was for \$20,000; the intent was to use the funds for HVAC pipe wrap at Station 1 (Central). There is a Warrant Article requesting funds for repairs to Station 1 that include the HVAC system which will fix the root cause of the problem. This Article requests to repurpose those funds towards other needs at the Fire Station. The Fire Department would like to repurpose an existing conference room into an office by adding a window. The Chief noted that it has been used as an office since 2015. The Department would also like to repurpose a radio room that was built as a back up to the dispatch center which was still housed at Station 1 when the station was renovated. Since that time, dispatch became SRRECC and is now in Town Hall and there is no longer any need for dispatch services to be at Station 1, including backup. The Department would like to repurpose to radio room into an office by adding a window and making minor interior changes. Ms. Kirk asked if this office would still be used when the new PSF is built. The Chief noted that the Fire Prevention Officer has also moved from Town Hall to Station 1 and that the position is a public facing officer which is more appropriate at Station 1 as it is designed to accommodate public access with an entry vestibule and meeting rooms. There will be additional office space in the new PFS, but not for customer facing officers. Ms. Cooper noted that Capital Outlay has also approved this request. The request was approved by roll call vote 14-0.

5. Warrant Article Hearings and Potential Votes

Article T: Fire Department Large Capital Needs

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Ms. Cooper and Ms. Kirk gave an overview of this Article. Ms. Cooper noted that these were originally requests of Capital Outlay, but they would take the entire capital budget, so they became a Warrant Article. There are four requests from the Fire Department included in the Warrant Article:

1. \$790,000 to replace the current reserve engine purchased in 2002 and various accessories. Ms. Kirk noted that the estimated trade in value for existing engine is \$10,000. The Department currently has four engine pumper trucks; two primary and two reserve. Reserve engines are used when others need maintenance. She noted that a fire truck has an expected life of 16 years. Currently, supply chain issues are causing longer than normal lead times, so the engine to be replaced could be 23 years old when the new engine arrives. Ms. Kirk explained that one of the current primary engines will become a reserve and this replacement engine will replace the primary engine in the rotation.
2. \$500,00 for roof replacement at Station 1 and \$150,000 for roof replacement at Station 3 (aka Constitution). Ms. Cooper noted that the roof at Station 1 was not replaced when the station was renovated, and that Station 3 still has the original slate roof from when the building was built in 1941. In both stations there are problems with leaking and mold.
3. \$70,000 for other repairs at Station 1. Repairs include fixing faulty gutters that are causing rot, failing trim, and others.
4. \$720,000 to replace the HVAC system at Station 1. Ms. Cooper noted that the HVAC was replaced as part of the renovation, but the system was not designed properly or installed properly. She noted that the current system can only be heat or AC and that it is a two-pump system but only one pump works; the Department has been unable to find a repair person for this system. Ms. Cooper noted that the faulty HVAC has condensation issues which is causing mold.

Chair Strehle noted that the current plan is to fund this Article out of unassigned fund balance. Ms. Dziergowski asked about the size of the roofs. Deputy Chief Lachance noted that the roof on Station 1 is about three times the size of Station 3. Chief Murphy noted that Station 1 is a slate roof and that they have spoken to the Historic Commission about replacing it with a non-slate option that will be less expensive. Deputy Chief Levenson noted that Station 1 is also more complicated because there are flat sections. Chief Murphy explained that there are 3 roof sections on Central Station. Only one section was replaced when the station was renovated. Mr. Danis wonders what will be done to ensure this work will be done properly as roof replacements and HVAC replacements should last more than 15 years. Ms. Cooper noted that they will work with Town Engineer Frey who will be involved from the beginning; additionally, they are looking into having an OPM for the project. She noted that the project will benefit from additional oversight by Deputy Chief Levenson who has construction experience. Mr. Danis wonders if the comment should reflect the need for an OPM given the experience of the past project. Ms. Melia asked if there is any recourse for the poor installations. Chief Murphy noted that the company that made the materials that failed has since gone bankrupt. Ms. Melia asked if there will be less use of Station 3 once the PSF is built. Chief Murphy explained that the stations are based on geography and the new PSF will replace the geography of Station 2 but has no bearing on Station 3. The recommended motion was approved by roll call vote 14-0.

Article N: Community Preservation Committee

Ms. MacDonald gave an overview of this Article. The CPC had a budget this year of \$1,764,70. There are 4 projects in the Article: 1) \$20,000 for the CPC General Fund for administrative purposes; 2) \$166,840 to be used by South Shore Habitat for Humanity to support creation of two new affordable single-family homes on Whiting Street; 3) \$289,815

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to be used by Hingham Rec to replace the Cronin Field Hockey Court; and 4) \$550,00 towards the pool project at the South Shore Country Club. Mr. McElaney asked whether the sentence in the comment: "In previous years, \$2,083,313 has been retained for this purpose" referred to the debt that has been paid or is still outstanding. Ms. MacDonald explained that this is a cumulative number representing debt payments since the Town acquired the property. Mr. McElaney inquired about the ownership of the property. Ms. Dziergowski explained that previously the Select Board owned the land and turned it over to the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust, who in turn conveyed the property to Habitat for Humanity. Ms. Cooper confirmed that Habitat closed on the property, and it is now owned by them; she explained that there are deed restrictions on the property so that they will remain in the affordable housing trust inventory. The recommended motion was approved by roll call vote, 14-0.

Article K: Transfer Funds to the Reserve Fund

Mr. Curley gave an overview of this Article. He explained that this Article is similar to one of the Warrant's perennial Articles in that AdCom votes on this almost every year to balance the previous year's budget. It is used to cover expenses that exceeded their budgets such as excess snow removal. He noted that AdCom will not know the actual amount until closer to Town Meeting thus, there is no recommendation to vote on. A statement will be put in the Warrant indicating that the Advisory Committee will make its recommendation at Town Meeting. Chair Strehle noted that in previous years we have met immediately before Town Meeting to take our vote and she anticipates this will be the case this year.

Article O: Modify Size of Long Range Waste Disposal & Recycling Committee

Ms. Sherwood gave an overview of the discussions she had with Town Counsel regarding the AdCom's discussion from February 8, 2022. Town Counsel Coughlin advised that as the change does not materially change the Article the correction of the Committee name in the Article is permissible. He allowed that the name change to Cleaner Greener Hingham can be referenced in the comment but cannot be changed in the Article. Mr. Curley and Ms. Black noted that the names of committees should be consistent across documents. Ms. Melia asked if Article C needs to change to include the word DISPOSAL. Chair Strehle will check with Town Hall to see what they want to do. The recommended motion was approved by roll call vote, 14-0.

6. Liaison Reports

a. ACES

Mr. Anderson asked about the date of the next forecast. Chair Strehle said it could be as soon as this Friday and that the AdCom will discuss this at our next meeting scheduled for March 1st. Mr. Anderson would like to make a recommendation for the School Budget after the next forecast is available. Town Accountant Sue Nickerson said there will be two more forecast updates as additional information comes in.

7. Warrant Process Update

Chair Strehle reviewed the Warrant process and progress.

8. Discussion of Advisory Committee Housekeeping Items

Chair Strehle noted that the AdCom will meet again on Thursday and will hear and potentially vote on Articles EE and Q as well as a reserve fund transfer requested by Conservation. The Town Administrator will present his budget priorities.

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9. Matters not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting

None

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 by roll call vote 14-0.

Documents Distributed for this Meeting

- Agenda
- Draft meeting minutes for February 03, 08, 10, 2022
- Draft Warrant Articles K, T, O, N
- Community Correspondence
- Request to Repurpose FY21 Capital

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy MacDonald
Advisory Committee Secretary

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