

# Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**Date: March 11, 2021**

**Place: Remote Meeting via Zoom**

***In attendance:*** Committee Members Bob Curley, Julie Strehle, Andy McElaney, Evan Sheehan, Dave Anderson, Davalene Cooper, Kristin Dziergowski, Victor Baltera, Tina Sherwood, Libby Claypoole, Alan Macdonald, Brenda Black, Eryn Kelley, Nancy MacDonald, and George Danis.

***Absent:*** No one

1. ***Call meeting to order:*** Chair Curley called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm 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 on items not on the agenda:*** None

3. ***Warrant Article hearings and potential votes:***

- a. ***Article N- Design and Construction bids for Public Safety Facility:*** Nancy MacDonald and Public Safety Facility Building Committee member Donna Smallwood presented this Article. The AdCom had initially heard this Article on March 4, 2021 and requested clarification on the cost estimate and some edits to the Comment and Recommended Motion.

Ms. MacDonald stated that the proponents were seeking \$1,650 thousand dollars in funding for this phase. The funding source would be \$1,250 thousand from the proceeds of the Hersey House sale and the remaining \$350 thousand from Fund Balance. Approximately \$400 thousand of these funds are to cover the costs of the contract with the Owner's Project Manager (OPM). Approximately 20% of the \$400 thousand would be spent in this phase of the project but, by contracting for and funding the entire OPM project contract at this time, the Town will avoid the need to re-bid the contract for later phases and the possibility of having a new OPM for the later stages of the project. The OPM position oversees the project

and represents the Town in all aspects of the project. An OPM is required for projects of this size by Massachusetts law.

Ms. Smallwood gave a brief overview of the project and outlined the objectives of this current design development phase:

- I. Right size the project to fit the size and scope of the facility;
- II. Develop a realistic cost estimate to build the facility;
- III. Prepare for a 2022 Town Meeting(s) when funds will be requested to prepare construction documents and to build the facility.

The AdCom voted 13-0-0 in favor of the Article (Tina Sherwood was not present for the vote);

- b. Article O- Climate Action Planning Study: Brenda Black and Climate Action Task Force Chair Brad Moyer presented this Article which seeks funding to prepare a Climate Action Plan (CAP) for Hingham designed to achieve a net of zero carbon emissions produced and taken out of the air by 2040.

Ms. Black noted that the Net Zero by 2040 goal is compatible with the Town Master Plan's goal of protecting the environment and preparing for and responding to climate change. She added that a Hingham CAP will address the needed policies identified in the Master Plan regarding achieving reduced carbon emissions and reduced energy consumption by all sectors of the Town. Ms. Black also noted that the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant (HMLP) has committed to provide \$80,000 in funding for the project.

Chair Moyer presented a history of the work of the Committee and stressed that the Plan needed to address all areas of the community: municipal, business, and residential in order to be successful.

AdCom members questioned the wording of the Article, which seeks funding, with the fact that the HMLP has now offered a grant of \$80,000 to cover the cost of producing the CAP. The AdCom voted to defer voting until the issue of funding could be resolved;

- c. Article P- Climate Action Planning Committee: Alan Macdonald and Climate Action Task Force Chair Brad Moyer presented this Article which seeks to establish a Committee to develop a CAP.

Chair Moyer described the make-up of the Committee and the decision to reduce the Committee from 12 members as described in the Article to 11 members as

described in the Comment and Recommended Motion. The reason for the change is the belief that 12 members is potentially too large and too unwieldy.

Following a discussion over whether the HMLP Plant Manager or the Light Board should be given the authority to appoint the HMLP representative to the proposed Committee, the AdCom elected to defer voting this Article until it received the input of the Plant Manager and the Light Board;

- d. Article U- Authorization to Borrow for Repair or Replacement of Windows at the Plymouth River School (PRS): Dave Anderson and School Business Manager John Ferris presented this Article.

Mr. Anderson noted that the Town has been accepted into the Massachusetts School Building Authority's (MSBA) Accelerated Repair Program. This program will reimburse the Town for approximately 31.5% of eligible expenses. Additionally, the developer of the Cove Apartments, Broadstone Bare Cove Alliance, had previously provided the Town with \$1.0 million in mitigation payments to help pay for this project. The remaining balance will be the responsibility of the Town and is the subject of this Article.

Mr. Ferris noted that the Town is currently looking to hire an Owner's Project Manager, as required by the MSBA, and that a final cost estimate, which is subject to approval by the MSBA at its August, 2021, meeting is not currently available. This Article seeks funding to replace the windows at PRS regardless of MSBA reimbursement. The AdCom elected to defer voting on this Article pending receipt of a more refined cost estimate;

- e. Article AA- 32 Rockwood Road Transfer: Chair Curley noted that the Board of Selectmen has voted "no action" on this Article and that it might be pulled from the Warrant by HAHT Chair Tim White;
- f. Article BB- Citizens Petition to Amend General By-Laws Articles 2 and 3: Tom Patch, the proponent of the Article, presented the Article to the AdCom. The Article seeks to recognize the passing of volunteers who were appointed to and served on various official Town Committees at the Annual Town Meeting following their passing. To avoid confusion, only those deceased volunteers whose names had been brought to the attention of the Town Clerk would be recognized.

Chair Curley noted that this Article would result in extra work for Town employees, would take up valuable time at Town Meeting, and would raise the possibility of people feeling their relatives or friends had been slighted because there is no tracking system or database of people who have been appointed to

serve on Town Committees. Chair Curley also noted that the Town regularly thanks volunteers for their service to the Town;

- g. Article Y- HMLP Transmission and Substation Distribution Facilities: Chair Curley noted that the BOS was voting this Article at its March 16, 2021 meeting and that the AdCom would defer hearing this Article until after the BOS vote;
- h. Article Z-Repair/Reconstruction of Town Pier: Libby Claypoole presented a brief update on this Article which the AdCom had originally heard at its March 9, 2021 meeting. The update reflected that a projected start date for the project, if approved at the 2021 Town Meeting, would be in the winter of 2021-2022 and that the project would take an estimated 6 months to complete. Based on this schedule bonding of the project would occur in FY 23. The AdCom voted 14-0-0 in favor of this Article.

**5. Town Administrator Budget Recommendations (agenda item taken out of order):** Town Administrator Tom Mayo presented a list of recommendations for additional spending for numerous Municipal Departments. The list of additions, and the related expense, is as follows:

Assistant Town Administrator	\$137,000
Mental Health Clinician- Police Dept.	54,096
Senior Planner	63,403
Heavy Equipment Operator --DPW	51,980
Recreation Department Field Maintenance Program	241,180
Communication Consultant (one-year contract)	35,000
Legal Services Budget Structural Deficit	138,372
Snow and Ice Removal Budget Structural Deficit	63,172
Total Town Administrator Recommendations	\$784,203

If approved, the additions detailed here would increase municipal spending by 3.1% over FY 21 budgeted spending.

Mr. Mayo further stated that he was recommending a \$500 thousand increase in Capital spending for FY 22. This additional spending recognizes the backlog in Capital spending requests and the need to increase available funding to accommodate some of the backlog. Mr. Mayo noted that Capital spending is designated at between 2-5% of Town expenditures. The town has typically funded the Capital budget on the low end of this range and, in recent years, has increased the Capital budget by \$100 thousand yearly in an attempt to reduce the backlog. This additional spending recommended for FY 22 recognizes that the increased annual spending has not been sufficient to address the backlog.

4. **Discussion of Forecast, Financial Policy, Fund Balance and Override, Finance and Tax planning tools, Town Meeting Procedures:** Chair Curley noted that a recent update to the Tax planning tool allowed a resident to determine the exact change in their taxes from any borrowing or override action.

6. **Review and Approval of Minutes from March 4 meeting:** Approved, with revisions, by roll call vote of 14-0-0.

7. **Warrant Article update:** Julie Strehle noted that the Bare Cove Park Committee met on March 10 to consider asking the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to remove their grant request from the Warrant. CPC will meet on March 17 to consider any such request.

8. **Liaison reports:** None

9. **Discussion of Advisory Committee housekeeping items:**

- a. Meeting times: Chair Curley noted that the AdCom would next meet on March 16 and on March 18;
- b. Policies and Procedures Review: the next review of this document is scheduled for March 16;
- c. Town Meeting and related deadlines: No update.

10. **Matters not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting:** None

11. **Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn at 10:50 pm approved by roll call vote of 14-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

George Danis, Secretary

List of Documents Distributed for this Meeting:

- Agenda
- Warrant Articles
- March 4 meeting minutes
- Draft AdCom letter to EOEEA
- Government Finance Officers email regarding the American Rescue Plan
- Policies and Procedures update draft, version 2
- Citizen email's regarding Warrant Articles

Approved with revisions on 03/18/2021 by roll call vote 13-0-0 (Libby Claypoole was unable to attend the meeting).