

Advisory Committee
October 5, 2013
Kingsbury Meeting Room, Police Station

Marjorie Freiman called the meeting of the Wellesley Advisory Committee to order at 6:30 p.m. Those present included Bob Capozzi, Mary Crown, Thomas Engels, Becky Epstein, Tom Frisardi, Ann-Marie Gross, John Hartnett, John Hussey, Andy Patten, Ann Rappaport, Deb Robi, Mason Smith and Scott Tarbox.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak.

School Special Education Presentation

Dr. David Lussier, Superintendent, gave brief opening remarks and introduced Sal Petralia, Assistant Superintendent; Dean Blase, Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Judy Belliveau, Director of Finance and Business Operations and Linda Waters, Director of K-12 Student Services. Linda Waters proceeded with the presentation. She gave a historical overview of the special education program including federal and state laws and regulations, the role of the programs and student population. A review of the Wellesley program followed which showed a slight increase in the number of students from last year which is currently larger than the State average. The high rate of outside evaluations, unilateral placements, parents with legal counsel, amount of post-high school transitional planning and disproportionate percentage of students of color are areas of concern for administrators.

Ms. Waters explained the team approach and how decisions are made regarding each student's educational course. The District has hired a Team Chair to assist with the increased caseloads in the High School and Middle School. They continue to place students in-district whenever possible.

She briefly reviewed the FY13 budget criteria and explained the new model being used for FY14 budget preparations. The new format will result in an accurate representation of all special education costs and will allow comparisons of data from previous years, depict accurate exceptional costs, be consistent with federal and state terminology and allow full transparency of all special education costs. Salaries of employees in non-specialized and specialized programs were outlined, as well as general expenses, student specific costs, transportation costs, out-of-district components and tuition costs.

Presentation of Special Town Meeting Warrant Article 3 – Permanent Building Committee

Matt King, Chair of the Permanent Building Committee and Kathy Mullaney, Projects Administrator, gave the review. This item will be Article 3, Motion 2 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant and deals with personal services appropriations. This article authorizes funding increases to convert a part-time position to full-time (project coordinator). Due to increases in the number of projects being handled by PBC, it has become necessary to have a full-time employee to assist with the additional work load. A candidate has been hired and will be starting in the position in about two weeks. Discussion followed.

Discussion of Public Hearing and Advisory Report Write-ups

Ms. Freiman discussed the anticipated dates for Advisory drafts to be completed and submitted for the final book to go to print. Liaisons are to notify all Boards and Committees that reports and appendices for the report are due by November 1st. Edits will follow and the final drafts are due by November 15th. The book goes to print on November 19th and will be mailed on November 26th.

A public hearing on the Special Town Meeting warrant will be held on October 30th at 7:00 p.m. in the Juliani Room at Town Hall prior to the regular Advisory Committee meeting.

Preliminary Discussion of Warrant Articles

Ms. Freiman announced that the Board of Selectmen had signed the warrant and any motions to the warrant articles need to be submitted by November 8th. The twelve articles are available for review on the Town website. Several items have been deferred including alcohol in Town buildings, Town Hall renovations, SEC expansion of mandate and by-law amendment, and branch libraries. It is unlikely that 900 Worcester will be presented, but is currently on the warrant.

Approval of Minutes

None were presented for approval at this time.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Freiman reviewed the status of Fuller Brook Park and discussed a pending wetlands issue which has resulted in cost overruns for the project.

New Business/Old Business

Ms. Freiman distributed a guideline for processing Reserve Fund transfer requests as established by legal statute. Any department wishing to request funds from Reserves will be invited to make a presentation to Advisory who will then make a formal vote and submit the forms to the Town Accountant for processing. The law allows towns to appropriate money into a reserve fund to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenses.

Announcements

There were no new announcements.

Ms. Freiman adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m. with no objections.