

Advisory Committee
October 1, 2014
Felix Juliani Meeting Room, Town Hall

Andy Patten called the meeting of the Wellesley Advisory Committee to order at 9:00 p.m. Those present included Mary Crown, Thomas Engels, Tom Frisardi, Chad Harris, John Hartnett, John Hussey, Lucy Kapples, Michael Mastrianni, Frank Pinto, Lon Povich, Ann Rappaport, Mason Smith, Scott Tarbox and Kathleen Woodward.

Citizen Speak

No one wished to speak at this time.

Special Town Meeting Public Hearing

The regular meeting was postponed at 9:04 p.m. to allow for the continued Special Town Meeting Public Hearing with no objections.

Andy Patten explained the public hearing from September 23, 2014 had been postponed until this evening to allow extra time for anyone who was not able to make the first meeting.

The Public Hearing was left in session to allow for any late-comers with no objections.

Advisory resumed the regular session at 9:10 p.m. with no objections.

Advisory Discussion of STM Articles

Article 3 – Rescinding Unused Borrowing Authority

Article 3 deals with rescinding the unused portion of an appropriation which was authorized under Motion 1 of Article 5 of the October 2008 Special Town Meeting for construction of the new Wellesley High School. This action requires Town Meeting authorization to rescind unused borrowing authority since the project is completed and funding is no longer needed.

Mason Smith made a motion that the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action on Article 3. Mary Crown seconded the motion.

Disposition:

Favorable action was recommended on Article 3 by a show of hands, 14 to 0.

Article 4 – Transfer of Funds for Reimbursement to School Committee

** Article 4 and 5 authorize appropriation of funds related to the replacement of the Middle School windows.*

Article 4 will authorize the transfer of funds to reimburse the School Committee for expenses incurred during the planning phase of the Middle School window replacement project in the amount of \$125,000. In order to meet the deadline by MSBA, funding for the feasibility study was provided through the School Committee operating budget outside of the usual Town Meeting appropriation cycle. Since the Town may receive the additional funding through the MSBA, the Committee is recommending moving forward to meet all deadlines.

Advisory is in agreement for reimbursing the School Department's operating budget for the cost of the feasibility study. Some members of Advisory were concerned this might set a precedent for any future expenditures not approved by Town Meeting. However, due to the unique situation of this project and time frame constraints, a majority of Advisory feels the action is reasonable.

Article 5 – Authorization of Funding to Permanent Building Committee

Article 5 will authorize the appropriated funds to the PBC for total costs of design and construction costs for replacement of the Middle School windows. This appropriation will be funded by borrowing outside the levy. The School Committee has recommended replacement of the windows at the Middle School due to safety, negative impacts on learning, energy inefficiency and the potential availability of MBSA funding of up to 31% through the Accelerated Repair Program. If approved at the Special Town Meeting and the MSBA approve, PBC will finalize the design and prepare for construction bidding process to begin.

Advisory consensus is for window replacement due to ongoing safety, learning and energy consumption concerns. Some Advisory members question whether the savings of \$18,000 a year in energy costs is an acceptable return on investment for this expensive project.

Advisory will make its final recommendations on Article 4 and Article 5 before or during the Special Town Meeting when the actual figure costs are known.

Article 6 – Funding for Fiske and Schofield Renovations

Article 6 would authorize funding under the Permanent Building Committee for architectural, engineering and/or other costs for plans and specifications for renovations, reconstruction, remodeling or additions at Fiske and Schofield Elementary Schools recommended by SMMA. This funding will be financed through a debt exclusion which will need approval of Wellesley voting residents. If the debt exclusion is approved in December 2014, work on the project will start during the summer of 2015. Interior work will be done during the summer of 2015 and exterior work during the summer of 2016 to avoid disrupting regular classes.

Article 7 – Purchase of North 40

This article seeks authorization to purchase for municipal purposes the property located at 156 West Road or Parcel No. 5 on Assessor's Map No. 149 referred to as "North 40" from Wellesley College. Funding is needed to purchase the property as well as provide money for planning and any other managerial needs as the BOS deem necessary to handle due diligence, planning and site work, traffic studies and any other costs needed to take action.

Town meeting will be asked to decide whether Wellesley should purchase the property. Any uses for the property will not be handled in Special Town Meeting.

No vote was taken at this time, as purchase offer on property is still being vetted. Advisory will make a final recommendation before or at Special Town Meeting.

Article 8 – Funding for North 40 Landfill Studies

Article 8 seeks authorization of funding to be spent on planning funds to further study the landfill located on a portion of the North 40 property. If the Town does not acquire the land, they may still be liable to address any remediation needed on the old landfill located on the property with the new owner.

No vote was taken at this time, as purchase offer on property is still being vetted. Advisory will make a final recommendation before or at Special Town Meeting.

Article 9 – Amending Vote

Article 9 is requesting the Town vote to amend its prior vote under Motion 1, Article 2 of the Special Town Meeting on June 13, 2013 and under Motion 1, Article 18 of the 2014 Annual Town Meeting which concerns the acquisition of the property located at 900-910 Worcester Street. The Town would need to rescind all appropriations from the Community Preservation Fund and transfer funding from available funding to reimburse for any expenditure against the appropriations and to rescind the requirement that a portion of the property be placed under any conservation restrictions. Also, it asks for a sum of moneys to be expended by the BOS for the purchase of the property and preparing for development including payment of real estate taxes and authorize further amendment to the Purchase & Sale Agreement.

This article would modify the original funding plan already approved by replacing the CPA funding at 62.5% of the property with taxable General Fund borrowing. This will release potential conservation restrictions and allow for potential future private development and use of the property. The total purchase price has increased to \$5,109,374 from the original purchase price to allow for demolition costs of \$902,374 for the church and rectory which were found to be contaminated by asbestos.

The Town would fund the entire purchase price with under-the-levy taxable General Fund borrowing. Also, the Town is seeking initial funding for development and review of RFPs from private firms interested in developing and operating recreational services on the property. The current motions proposed are:

Motion 1 – Purchase of the Property with a new funding structure

Motion 2 – Funding for the RFP Process

No vote was taken at this time, as purchase offer on property is still being vetted. Advisory will make a final recommendation before or at Special Town Meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Mason Smith made a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2014. The motion was seconded by Ann Rappaport and the minutes were approved unanimously by a show of hands.

New Business/Old Business

Advisory had a discussion regarding the Town-Wide Financial Plan which was presented earlier in the evening by Hans Larsen. Advisory is pleased that there is no override is being contemplated for FY16. They noted an interesting comment was made by a citizen at the meeting regarding the management cost and volunteer hours associated with a number of the Town projects.

A motion was made by Lucy Kapples to adjourn the Special Town Meeting Public Hearing. The motion was seconded by John Hussey and approved unanimously by a show of hands. The Special Town Meeting Public Hearing was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

The Advisory Committee will meet at 7:00 p.m. on October 8, 2014 in the Juliani Room of Town Hall.

Mr. Patten adjourned the meeting at 10:35 p.m. with no objections.