

Approved Sept. 9, 2020

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Zoom Videoconferencing Platform
Wednesday, September 2, 2020, 7:00 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Shawn Baker, Julie Bryan, Tom Cunningham, Lauren Duprey, Jake Erhard, Jennifer Fallon, Neal Goins, John Lanza, Jeff Levitan, Bill Maynard, Deed McCollum, Corrine Monahan, Patti Quigley, and Doug Smith,

Julie Bryan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

7:00 p.m. Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

7:00 p.m. Discussion of Special Town Meeting (STM) and the Warrants, Meghan Jop, Executive Director and Sheryl Strother, Finance Director

The Warrant articles were discussed. There will be two (2) STMs and there are two (2) Warrants both of which are now closed.

There are three (3) Capital projects – library interior renovations, library roof, and Middle School building systems -- that need Town Meeting consideration and vote. The Middle School building systems would require a debt exclusion on December 1 if approved by Town Meeting (TM). The separate STM and Warrant includes the Middle School building systems because there is a need to meet the deadline for a debt exclusion vote. The remainder of the first October 26 STM will cover the Interior library renovations and library roof replacements, along with other new matters and all business carried over from the 2020 ATM.

There was a discussion of the FY21 Budget Supplemental Appropriations that are anticipated and all other appropriations that will be considered during STM.

Question: Is there any update on whether there are any new Citizens Petition? The Town Clerk confirmed that there were no additional citizens petitions received.

Question: Will there be presentations to Advisory for all new Articles? Yes, there is a Moderator's meeting on October 2. All presentations will be recorded prior to Town Meeting. There will also be a question and answer period prior to STM. STM will follow a similar format of the recent ATM.

Question: When will this be presented to Advisory? September 23. Articles 22 and 23 are the same – but need two articles to change language in both zoning and bylaws.

A comment was made that there is a chance that some of the supplemental appropriations may be delayed to the spring. There is concern about the schools being able to determine all their needs and there may be some cost savings as well. It is out there as a placeholder but it might be a written report. The schools' needs are evolving with new information.

Question: Which year do CARES funds go into – FY20 or FY21? FY20 is closed however some costs were removed from FY20 and put into the grant fund. Costs are also being evaluated as to what can be applied to FEMA.

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Question: When will Advisory get a complete package from the Board of Selectmen? Warrant is signed next Tuesday, so likely on Wednesday.

Question: Since many of the Articles were already written up for the 2020 ATM, is Advisory just reviewing them? Advisory will be reviewing those with no changes and identifying any that need to be re-voted and discussed. As a result, Advisory will be on a tight schedule.

Question: Schools may not know what costs are so far and going forward, and they may not have a supplemental budget so how are costs between October and ATM being handled? Schools have an existing budget and can continue to spend on that budget and there are CARES funds left.

+ Concern was expressed that Schools have spent all their CARES money and that the Schools could be using all the CARES money in town when that money was not just for the schools? If the Schools need it, then they will take from CARES money or the town will appropriate it to them.

+ An additional comment was made that an appropriation needs town buy-in but the CARES money doesn't seem to have the town oversight; something in the process has to change? If the town must go through the same process, we would miss a window of opportunity by waiting. CARES funds are administered by the Board of Selectmen (BOS). CARES money is limited in use to unanticipated costs and very specific to PPE and technology, backfilling, and cleaning protocols that provide health sanitation and safety. There was a discussion of costs associated with people taking leave.

Preliminary fiscal 2020 highlights were presented and departmental operating results reviewed. Grant status was reviewed. Next steps were reviewed.

Question: What is the town hearing from the state regarding state support? 2021 held harmless, 2022 don't know. Schools are down 200 students who have gone off to private schools, so in 2022 we will lose money for those students.

+ Will costs go down with those kids being gone? It depends on how the vacancies are spread across grades and whether staff is re-deployed.

A consistent set of assumptions about 2022 need to be made and applied across all Town departments.

Question: More information was requested on the insurance turnback and whether assumptions will be changed because of the turnback? There is a new insurance plan for 2022 which will hopefully be a low-cost, high-benefit program. This will help tighten up projections. The Town is moving to a new plan because the insurance is re-negotiated every three years. From an administrative perspective, the last plan was very hard to manage due to the level of specificity required.

Question: Will the financial condition of the state affect MSBA funding? Those projects that have been approved, and funds are earmarked. New projects could be affected.

Budget guidelines are expected at the end of September and there may be modifications in the typical process given the unknowns and uncertainties. As soon as the budget calendar is set, it will be given to Advisory.

7:43 p.m. Administrative Matters/Liaison Reports/Minutes

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There was a discussion about the potential delay of 2021 ATM to accommodate the change/delay in the budget calendar. This would also give Advisory more time to review Articles, vote, and produce the Advisory Report.

The STM calendar was reviewed, and Advisory discussed which boards need to come to Advisory before voting on STM articles. Articles that will be unchanged from ATM will be flagged, and new members can review the 2020 ATM Advisory Report so everyone is ready to vote on September 30. There is a short time frame to get presentations before Advisory.

Corinne Monahan/Library: The Library requested clarification of what the Library should present next week since nothing has changed and Advisory has heard the presentation before. Library should give background of the project and the amount of money that is needed and how the money will be spent. Since Advisory has many new members it is important for the Library to present an overview.

John Lanza/Planning: Planning has a number of articles held over from ATM. Planning is reviewing these now; should they be prepared to present to Advisory?

Discussion: Presentations are only for those Articles from last year's ATM that have significant changes. According to Town Counsel, for the deferred 2020 ATM Articles, Advisory can vote to adopt the findings and recommendations from last year's Advisory report. If there is an Article that Advisory feels should be pulled out and re-voted, then Advisory can re-vote that one Article. This will be done on September 30th which is why homework is important prior to the 30th for those Articles that won't have presentations.

There will also be a Consent Agenda which includes Articles that the Moderator believes will not have extensive TM discussions/questions and that have unanimous Advisory votes.

Jenn Fallon/Schools: There was a joint statement from the union and district and the plan is that the contract will be voted on this coming Friday. Tonight, a medical seminar is being held to answer questions about testing. Operational components are being worked on. Metrics that the school system will use regarding illness are being discussed.

Deed McCollum: The SEC was awarded a Green Community grant to support the purchase of two hybrid police cruisers and LED parking lights for gym/auditorium parking.

Shawn Baker/FMD: Plans for the renovation of Town Hall will be presented to Advisory on November 18. FMD is moving to renovate the interior -- and utilizing rental space -- rather than building a Town Hall annex.

Doug Smith/CPC: CPC is presenting on the 9th for the Hunnewell field bathroom.

There was discussion over the printing of the Advisory Report versus putting it online. Advisory is printing for the foreseeable future. Town Counsel interprets "delivery" as mailing. That said, the goal at some point is to be all electronic.

8:00 p.m. Minutes Approval

Patti made and Tom seconded a motion to approve the August 26, 2020 minutes.

Discussion: Jeff Levitan's asked to correct his mis-statement regarding the scheduling of PBC's presentation to Advisory; this was incorporated into the motion.

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Roll call vote:

Bill Maynard – yes
Patti Quigley – yes
John Lanza – yes
Deed McCollum - yes
Jennifer Fallon – yes
Jeff Levitan – yes
Corinne Monahan - yes
Shawn Baker – yes
Doug Smith – yes
Jake Erhard – yes
Tom Cunningham – yes
Lauren Duprey – yes
Neal Goins - yes

8:11 p.m. Adjourn

Corrine Monahan made and Doug Smith seconded a motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote

Bill Maynard - yes
Patti Quigley – yes
John Lanza - yes
Deed McCollum - yes
Jennifer Fallon – yes
Jeff Levitan - yes
Corinne Monahan - yes
Shawn Baker – yes
Doug Smith – yes
Jake Erhard – yes
Tom Cunningham – yes
Lauren Duprey – yes
Neal Goins – yes