

**Advisory Committee Meeting  
Zoom Video Conference  
January 11, 2023, 6:30 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Shawn Baker, Doug Smith, Madison Riley, Rani Elwy, Gail Sullivan, David Prock, Bill Schauffler, Pete Pedersen, Al Ferrer, Jenn Fallon, Christina Dougherty, Wendy Paul, Susan Clapham, Neal Goins, and Andrea Ward.

Shawn Baker called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and Doug Smith took roll call of Advisory members in attendance.

**Citizen Speak**

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

**Board of Health overview and FY24 Budgets**

Marcia Testa Simonson, Vice Chair, Board of Health (BOH); Lenny Izzo, Director, Health Department; Deadra Doku-Gardner, Health Department; and Linda Grape, BOH were present.

A brief overview of the Health Department and its responsibilities were presented. The FY24 Health Department budget request was presented and reviewed.

**Questions**

- Do you feel you have enough staff to perform Health Department duties?
  - Not in this fiscal year but we will be closer to having enough staff with the addition of new staff in FY24. On the environmental side we have been behind and have been behind for a while. There has been an increase in the food and new business workload. There are also biosafety labs and an increase in housing in town. With respect to mental health, the new position is a full-time social worker and will cover work with the housing authority and the community. We could put in two (2) full-time social workers to address the mental health needs in town. The benefit of having the social worker in the health department is that it allows the social worker to cover all the areas in town and not be specifically tied to one group of people. The social worker position has been vacant for a year and a half. The housing authority asked the health department to partner on the social worker; they will be contributing their federal funds to support a portion of this position. Otherwise, they will lose the funds if they don't use them. The health department is taking the housing authority funding and adding town funding to create and support a full-time position. This will be beneficial for all. There is a need for another full-time social worker. The health department has been incrementing part-time positions over time and is now hiring a full-time position.
- What role is the BOH playing in the town's assessment and treatment of PFAS and what is the impact to the budget?
  - PFAS is part of environmental health. We have expertise on the board and in the department on environmental issues. All environmental initiatives draw upon our environmental health resources. The BOH has been involved with all the groups and meets with and supports DPW. The educational aspect also taps into department resources. We are working on this as a team approach to cover all the areas.
- How do initiatives and new projects get factored into the budget?
  - We can support new initiatives with grant money. We recently received money from the FDA for specialized training in food code. We have a shared services grant that helps in funding an epidemiologist. The town has been awarded over \$200,000 to go towards

opioid prevention; the state identified this need for the town. The Select Board (SB) will need to work with the Board of Health on this. Opioid prevention was mentioned as a possible new initiative. We will continue to receive additional funds through awards from lawsuits initiated by the state Attorney General.

- What is the real driver of this budget? And do you not have enough skilled people?
  - There are two (2) issues: an internal policy that we cannot hire independent contractors that are doing the same work as an employee, which means we must hire part-time individuals. There is a shortage of public health professionals. State is trying to provide training to increase public health professionals. Public health personnel are in short supply and many candidates are not that strong. It takes six (6) to eight (8) months to hire someone. It has not worked for the department to bring on part-time positions.
- A comment was made that the two (2) \$20,000 benefit charges for this year are a one-time accounting benefits charge and are removed from the budget in subsequent years and moved over to central administrative group.
- A question was asked about the \$3,000 expense for the school physician: should there be a standard way this is handled?
  - The BOH is expecting the schools will always need this service. We must pay someone to be the physician for the health department to write the orders for vaccines. A volunteer could do it. But until the BOH has the guarantee that it is covered elsewhere, then the \$3,000 is needed in the health budget.
- Is the Shingrix for uninsured people the first step on covering people for things for which they aren't covered by insurance?
  - Shingrix is a two-dose vaccine. When surveyed, people requested a Shingrix clinic, but today there are fewer people who can't afford it and don't have Medicare Part B. The state does provide some vaccines for people. We can look for additional outside funding in the future. It is an identified need that is out there.
- A comment was made that as population groups age, the need will recur periodically.
- Is there any inventory of other vaccines? A comment was made that it might be useful to state inventories for various boards of health across the state.
  - If you need a vaccine, you can call the health department. All vaccines are reported to the state and recorded.
- A comment was made that the school budget includes a nurse and physician. Is this the same thing?
  - No, but we can check it out.
- Is the \$12,018 covering the adjustment for the full-time hire last year?
  - Yes. This will be in the salaries, and it won't be a separate line item. The current budget was constructed based on the salary received by the previous employee. The new person was hired at a higher salary. The proposed budget reflects this higher amount.
- Is the SB not releasing funds from the opioid Johnson and Johnson grant, or is this an administrative procedure?
  - The award was released by the State Attorney General's office on November 2 and a small part received in July. It is probably too soon to have a plan for how to use these funds. The BOH plans to partner with the SB to develop initiatives for the use of these funds.
- How do you feel about the FY23 budget, both YTD and as the end of year approaches?
  - Since the housing authority is on a different fiscal year schedule, the health department would like to capture those funds and combine them with town dollars to fund the new position. Since the health department has some left-over part-time salary funds, we'd like to combine this in FY23. We can hire now because the housing authority federal money is available now.

- Since the housing authority budget comes from outside the town, could you structure this as a job share and still take advantage of federal funds going forward?
  - The town will get the contract from the housing authority and will shift the funds over to the BOH. The worker's salary transfer is in summary pages.
- Looking forward, would the federal government continue funding the part-time position or would the town be funding the full cost?
  - We had a conversation with the housing authority and the executive director about this. Our understanding from the housing authority is the money is guaranteed for the next ten (10) years. The \$45,000 will keep coming but it is a fixed amount and there will be no cost-of-living increase.
- A comment was made that the \$20,000 for each person to go from part-time to full-time is for benefits; this cost then gets allocated away from the budget in subsequent years and that money rolls forward in a different budget. It is a number based on an assumption and fact. Some of that is pension benefits. Staff must be employed by the town for 10 years to be able to vest in the pension plan. Although the benefits cost won't be in the BOH budget in future years, there is a true increase to the town on the benefit side.

### **Town Clerk FY24 Budget**

KC Kato, Town Clerk reviewed highlights of the Town Clerk's FY24 budget and provided an overview of the ATM warrant article amending Chapter 202 of the Special Act of 1932 to be consistent with recent changes to the Town Bylaws.

### **Questions**

- Are you planning on digitizing records?
  - We are required to keep hard copies of vital records. It is a challenge to digitize due to the significant cost. We will need to figure out how to fund this and we might look to do this in a future budget.
- Will there be a "red line" of this change to Chapter 202 of the Special Acts of 1932?
  - Yes
- Has the technology landscape changed since the electronic voting devices were last used for ATM in the fall of 2019?
  - We did some additional research. The devices are smaller and very specific. At some point, we may shift to voting by using phones. However, given the age range of town meeting members, there is concern that the use of phones for voting might be challenging. The technology is available to vote by using phones and we are watching it. We are leasing the devices this year and next year.

### **Human Resources**

Scott Szczebak, Director, Human Resources Department; Mark Furlow, Human Resources Board; Julie Moore, Chair, HR Board, were present and provided information on the FY24 budget and the ATM warrant article on HR policy changes.

### **Questions**

- A comment was made that Advisory has heard from various departments about how difficult it is to hire people. Does HR have data to show how long it takes to fill positions? Does HR track how long it takes to hire and is there information you can get from that?
  - The recruitment report tracks the process from when HR receives the requisition from a department. The hiring process and timeline of recruitment was explained. HR uses a company for background checks. HR can do CORIs.

- Does HR have data on people leaving employment with the town? How many quit per month in the town? Do you do exit interviews to find out the reasons? Can we have that available? How many positions are outstanding.
  - HR provides this at the ATM presentation. HR tracks retirements and completes exit interviews. We currently have 18 positions open.
- Do the open positions include the police and fire positions?
  - Yes; dispatch is listed as well. We believe the fire positions have been filled; the new individuals need to complete academy training before they can go on duty. HR will check with the police regarding recruitment for any openings they may have. With public safety positions, those who are hired need to wait for available spots in the training academy; this adds to the time it takes for onboarding. Police and fire conduct their own recruiting and background checks and HR assists them. Positions can only be filled as fast as the test for candidates can be completed; the availability of places at the training academy also affects the time it takes to bring newly hired officers onto the duty roster.
- A comment was made that it seems as if more people are leaving than are being hired. A request was made for the number of open positions by department.
- Are the 18 open positions compared against the 1,300 total positions or does this not include unions?
  - This is compared to 500 town positions as we don't recruit for the schools.
- How does HR interact with different departments regarding salary guidelines and how to fill a position?
  - It depends on the position and department.
- HR is addressing the issue of pay for people who are operating at a higher level than their official employment grade, but is there consideration to making this symmetrical when someone covers a position at a lower level?
  - This does happen but it is rare.
- Is there any effort to look at the merit pay plan across the town to try to create more of a bell curve and less of a grouping? Is this possible and something we could do?
  - We are taking steps to create more of a bell curve. We changed the performance review to try to accomplish this. We also changed the matrix several times and the times we publish the matrix. This has all helped a little. However, we have many departments doing performance reviews, and they all have different standards. HR tried to put in goals, but ultimately the boards and departments are responsible for evaluating the performance of their staff.
- What is the major roadblock to hire people and how much of this is in HR's control?
  - Public safety is different in how they hire their staff. For most of the general positions in town, HR can move quickly. If there is a change in the job description and classification, additional time is needed. It also takes time for departments to review resumes. Some things are in HR's control and some things are not. HR moves as fast as other department on the tasks it controls.
- Is there anything HR can do to speed the process of recruitment, or do you feel it's a timing and planning issue?
  - The process works relatively quickly, outside of the response time needed for replies and interviews. We are one of the fastest hiring municipalities. In general, municipal hiring takes a long time to fill positions. The timing also depends partly on the priority given to it by the department that is filling the position.
- Is there information and resources that would be helpful for departments to increase their speed in recruiting and hiring?
  - HR runs workshops and training for all departments. Departments that interview for positions need to understand the types of questions to ask. For smaller departments, HR

takes more of a role. We look at ways to be more efficient. But there are some required steps in the process that might take time and slow things down.

- Is there any way to aggregate data for the top reasons and issues as to why people are leaving so we can understand from a macro standpoint the reasons people leave? How do we relate to other towns? Are we at the higher end of pay scale or lower end of pay scale?
  - Wellesley compensates its employees well and benefits are good. Bigger cities pay more, but higher levels of skills are required. For towns or cities under 75,000, Wellesley is in the top in terms of salary.
- Is there data on this?
  - Yes, we benchmark positions.
- Is it possible to aggregate the information from the exit interviews?
  - Yes, but this information does not always paint the true picture of why people leave. The municipal world is a small world, and people may be hesitant to discuss why they are leaving. We have also lost people due to the need to commute from other communities. There is a natural attrition rate: people retire, make career changes, etc. Municipal employment is horizontal, so there is not a lot of opportunity for promotion; moving to a position in another town can provide employees with an advancement in their careers.
- Is there an upper limit on salary ranges, and outside of a bonus merit structure, can you move that upper limit without a bylaw change?
  - We can't move the upper limit. The ranges are based on 20% on midpoint. HR is unable to change to 25% as that would impact the current system.
- Is that a legal or administrative roadblock?
  - It is a legal restriction as it is in our town bylaws. The only way to change is to change the entire scale – both the minimum and maximum. We look at the midpoint or market and make recommendation to Town Meeting on the midpoint based on the market.
- How quickly can people move between steps, for example, if they come in at midpoint?
  - If a person is just out of college and they don't have work experience, they will be at the minimum of the range. As they gain experience, they will earn more. The farther away an employee is from the midpoint, the more quickly they will move to the midpoint if they are performing well.
- How quickly can someone move between steps?
  - There are six (6) steps in the 40 series. Each step takes one (1) year, based on anniversary. Department managers have flexibility when hiring to place someone higher in the range.
- Are you working with all departments on DE&I and the focus on hiring and are there any other DE&I facets where you can work with departments?
  - HR handles recruitment advertising: we are learning a lot about how to expand our search process, such as tapping into a jobs network for individuals with disabilities. We will be working with some Boston agencies to reach other groups. We are expanding to other services for advertising, and many of these are free.
- Are there any other DE&I arenas that can help other departments?
  - We are working on setting up some training for understanding LGBTQ identities. This is new to a lot of departments. We are finding that the best way to do this is to build slowly and introduce concepts and to not just offer a weeklong seminar. We need to build understanding and awareness of DE&I issues.
- What options are available for departments to retain high-performing individuals?
  - Performance awards are available. With approval from the HR board, a department can apply to move the individual higher in the salary range for that position or request to move the individual to a higher grade.

- A suggestion was made that although the town doesn't use headhunters and consultants, perhaps we should consider using outside resources for key positions such as the COA Director and the Director of Planning.
- How do you evaluate a position and determine that someone should be in a 50 series? Is there a hard definition of 40/50/60 series classifications?
  - 40 series positions are hourly; there is a test dictated at the federal level to determine whether a position is hourly or salaried. Positions are scored using the Hay system which is a point factor system and considers responsibility and depth of knowledge. Most municipalities and government agencies use a point system to score their positions. With respect to headhunters, they often don't bring much more to the table than we do in our recruiting. The talent pool for some of these positions, such as for the Planning Director, is small. We might be competitive with salary, but the pool might not be large. And for positions like the Planning Director, we don't generally like to look outside of Massachusetts because a planning director needs a strong background knowledge of zoning laws specific to Massachusetts.
- A request was made for recommendations HR could provide to Town Meeting for steps or actions that are being taken to increase the retention of existing personnel.
  - For retention, a good working environment is important as is making sure managers are managing in a way to create a good work environment. We are competitive on benefits. We've taken steps to increase the work/life balance. When someone takes a new position, it does not necessarily reflect badly on Wellesley. It is good that these people are receiving the training to enable them to take higher level positions elsewhere.
- Given that we don't use search firms, what are your primary tools for recruitment?
  - The recruitment search tools depend on the position which is being filled. HR will target specialty positions such as an assessor or library position and will post on the relevant boards for these types of positions. LinkedIn is not necessarily useful for municipal jobs. We often post job listings on MMA (Mass Municipal Association).

### **Climate Action Committee**

Mary Beth Martello, Climate Action Director; Sue Morris, Chair, Climate Action Committee (CAC), were present. The CAC FY24 budget was presented.

### **Questions**

- Assuming families want help to make a home as healthy as possible, is there a way to build coaching and working with contractors to create revenue?
  - We have not specifically talked about this idea. We have talked about the need to educate and to work with the contractor community and help people navigate these questions on how to create a home and property that is as sustainable as possible. Currently we are not able to train people to advise fully on a house on every aspect of a house as an architect would. Our first steps will help create coaches with the knowledge of weatherization and heat technology.
- A comment was made that it is important to focus on the health benefits of greener building in addition to sustainability issues.
- How much of budget would apply to services and education of colleges in town?
  - We have an expense budget of \$9,700. Most of CAC's engagement does not have a price tag to it. There are many ways we have engaged the colleges: they are part of our building energy and tracking program; they are invited to the building energy roundtable discussion program that meets quarterly. CAC has also worked with Babson and Wellesley College on food waste diversion and food rescue. We have had some conversations on transportation. The challenge with the colleges is that they no longer

have sustainability offices that are staffed. CAC has been working with facilities departments at the colleges. It is hard to educate these communities if colleges do not have sustainability coordinators on staff; CAC is reaching out to the contacts that we have. We want the colleges to be leaders and be innovators. It is a critical issue.

- Is the state goal a mandate and what are the thoughts about budget trends meeting these goals in the future?
  - The state goals are not a mandate; there is no requirement. The CAC plan pertains to the town but if we look at the municipality in terms of investment in buildings, we don't have a dollar figure. We are helped by the greening of the electricity grid. The electricity we are using has fewer emissions over time. We also need to consider what it takes is to weatherize buildings and to switch to electric. Gradually we will be doing upgrades. As municipal building systems need upgrading, FMD is putting in electric; so, town maintenance plans are aligning with these goals. Installing solar will also help.
- A suggestion was made to have a scale of how much we are investing each year with the net savings.
  - Departments are asked to identify greenhouse emissions savings in their budget narrative.
- A comment was made that to produce this information with a small staff could have an impact to the budget.
- A comment was made that we are starting to close in on the 2030 target deadline, so getting communication out is important. Community engagement is important and there is no capital money for consultants in this year's budget. We need to include the resources to spread the word.
  - CAC has had conversations with MLP/Don Newell, and CAC provided a wish list of items related to the community engagement piece. We have not spent the \$50,000 so that is still there. MLP is helping with this. The plan is to pilot use of money and then go back with evidence and show accomplishments and say a capital budget is needed.
- A comment was made that the investment in climate activity to help move the town closer to the goal will be a vital investment to move towards goals.

### **Administrative**

- Public Hearing has been changed to February 9, 2023, at 7 p.m. Hearing will be recorded.
- Advisory was reminded of article writeup deadlines.
- Next week – DE&I taskforce; CPC; BPW/DPW.

### **Minutes Approval**

Bill Schauffler made, and Neal Goins seconded a motion to approve the January 4, 2023, minutes.

### **Roll Call Vote**

Jennifer Fallon – yes  
Doug Smith – yes  
Susan Clapham – yes  
Al Ferrer - yes  
Wendy Paul – yes  
Pete Pedersen - yes  
Madison Riley – yes  
Rani Elwy - yes  
Christina Dougherty - yes  
Gail Sullivan – yes  
David Prock -yes  
William Schauffler – yes  
Neal Goins – yes

Approved January 18, 2023

Andrea Ward – yes

**January 4, 2023, minutes were approved, 14 to 0.**

### **Liaison Updates**

*Library/Christina Dougherty* – an update of the recent Library meeting was provided - new electric van; partnered with BOH on Covid testing kits and will be on table in the entry to the library; using a new program Gimlet that tracks questions called into the library to give a more accurate representation of what people are asking about; enhancements to high school room were discussed; the foundation fund raiser, Books in Bloom, will be held on May 12; there will be no winter book sale; supporting Kiwanis cost of membership; there will be a survey put out to the community; Jan. 23 and Jan. 24 there will be an interactive town hall zoom option for the community to provide feedback which will be used in the five (5) year strategic plan; The consultant will compile feedback from the focus groups.

*School/Rani Elwy* – provided an update of the recent School Committee meeting. There was a large overview of the budget; budget workshops are scheduled; ZBA approved Hardy plans; School Committee is going to PBC and hoping to break ground in the next few weeks; AP Language and Composition course to be introduced Sept. 2024; AP Chinese and AP Capstone will be introduced this fall; other program offerings were also discussed; Hunnewell field concession review process is underway; update with contract negotiations - WEA filed an objection to the mediation request. It was emphasized that there was no walking away from the contract negotiations and School Committee felt it best to request a mediator. Testing for COVID was encouraged.

*BPW/Pete Pedersen* – BPW/DPW is presenting to Advisory next week; update of recent BPW meeting was provided – Weston Road reconstruction project was discussed; PFAS – there is no movement on the Morse Pond well and DPW is continuing to operate the interim solution and defer permanent solution as they wait for the EPA to set up federal regulations regarding PFAS; will focus on the proposed stormwater enterprise fund next week.

*MLP/Neal Goins* – meeting with Paul Criswell next week to review questions from previous presentation to Advisory. Send additional questions to Neal.

*CAC/Gail Sullivan* – update of CAC meeting was provided – the PACE program was discussed which is a financing program for commercial projects that have a green element and payback from that sustainability.

*PBC/Wendy Paul* – PBC is meeting with SC and with SB with respect to the Hardy project. PBC/SC to come forward with pricing and proposals for Hardy. There is good competitive bidding.

*COA/Bill Schaffler* – anew director, Deb Greenwood, has been hired.

*Select Board/Doug Smith* – three (3) new firefighters were welcomed to the force; one is from Wellesley, and one is a female EMT. Fire department is at full strength and new hires need to be trained.

### **Adjourn**

Jenn Fallon made, and Gail Sullivan seconded a motion to adjourn.

### **Roll Call Vote**

Jennifer Fallon – yes

Doug Smith – yes

Susan Clapham - yes

Al Ferrer - absent

Wendy Paul – yes

Pete Pedersen - yes

Madison Riley – yes

Rani Elwy - yes

Christina Dougherty - yes

Gail Sullivan – yes

David Prock -yes

Approved January 18, 2023

William Schauffler – yes  
Neal Goins - yes  
Andrea Ward – yes

The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 p.m.

### **Meeting Documents**

<https://www.wellesleyma.gov/DocumentCenter/Index/1956>

- BOH FY24 Operating Budget request
- BOH FY24 Budget Narrative
- BOH PowerPoint presentation
- Human Resources PowerPoint presentation
- CAC FY24 Budget PowerPoint presentation
- HR policies:
  - Military Leave
  - Sick Leave
  - Vacations
  - WooC
- Town Clerk PowerPoint presentation