

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall
Wednesday, January 22, 2020 7:00 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included John Lanza, Mary Scanlon, Mary Gard, Ralph Tortorella, Julie Bryan, Bill Maynard, Todd Cook, Betsy Roberti, Lina Musayev, Deed McCollum, Paul Merry, Patti Quigley, Rusty Kellogg, and Jennifer Fallon.

Todd Cook called meeting to order at 7pm

7:00: Citizen Speak - Katie Smith Millway - speak in favor of petition for green energy with an opt-out.

7:05: Council on Aging Budget Presentation for FY21:

Judith Webster (Interim Director)
Heather Budrowicz

Powerpoint presentation on budget (slides available on Town website):

FY19 shows increased participation in COA activities
In preparing the budget, they looked at the job descriptions and organization of the various jobs, plus the goals of the COA and the use of Tuller Parsons
Certain jobs needed to be reclassified and included in the Hay system
There is a demand for non-fee-based programming

FY21 Budget Proposal

- Total: \$461,545
- 3.39% increase over FY20
- Primary increase comes from Operating budget

Advisory Question: What makes up the biggest changes to the operating budget?

- Printing and Mailing, in part because they lost an offset
- Laptop replacement of \$3000, but on the regular replacement cycle
- Transportation budget increased \$2500 because COA stopped asking for donations for the bus transport
- Non-fee based programs increased by \$2000 because of increased demand
- Other line items were adjusted to conform to the existing service contracts and actual use.

Advisory Question: Why is printing and mailing so high (relatively speaking)?

- The newsletter; other mailings; no EOEA grant money as there was last year.

Follow up question regarding explanation of grant money?

- EOEA grant money (\$12 per senior), typically \$43,000 applied to COA to the Town's budget items.

Advisory Question: Were there other changes to EOEIA offset?

- COA decided to use \$35,000 of the EOEIA grant funds to offset personnel costs; using some of the money to buy a new defibrillator; Using it for other things that don't necessarily apply to the regular budget.

Advisory Question: What is included in the cost of programming activities other than staff?

- Materials, supplies, speaker fees, transportation costs, and things of that nature.

Continued PowerPoint presentation:

Discussion of FY21 personal services; eliminating 2 transportation coordinator positions (38 hours); reclassification of current 40 series general wage positions; modification of daily work schedules.

Advisory Question: Are FTEs are down?

- Yes. FTE equivalents dropped from prior year. There were various reasons for the loss of certain employees. There is a temporary transportation coordinator. The actual numbers for salaries may change depending on how the HR Board will need to classify certain positions, but the current numbers are based on discussions with HR and Town Finance.

Advisory Question: Why is EOEIA number different on different slides?

- COA offsets the operating budget and then uses other portions of the grant funding to fund the different programs. So, the numbers depend on where the grant money is apportioned.

Advisory Question: Are you looking for other grant sources and/or seeking a grant writer to have on staff?

- It is something that has been discussed and will continue to be considered. It is a priority for the COA in the near future.

Advisory Question: Can the donation from Campana Trust be put in an endowment?

- Because the funds were earmarked specifically for COA programming and building enhancements, it might not be able to be put into such an endowment. Because of the way the funds were gifted through the estate, it was not left as an endowment. It is in an interest-bearing account now. COA will discuss with Town Counsel about the best way to invest and preserve these funds.

Revolving Funds Explanation.

- COA has a single revolving fund with various codes for each program in order to track how well a program is doing. All the programming and fee structures are evaluated for cost (the goal is to break even) with an overall goal of keeping costs down and to be competitive with neighboring towns in terms of the number and variety of offerings and the price point for the various programs.

Advisory Question: How often you meet with Finance to discuss your numbers?

- COA meets with finance fairly often, and they work closely with the Town to discuss the operations of the COA, Tolles Parsons and the revolving funds

Advisory Question: Is there a demand from the community to increase the service hours?

- It continues to be a strong concern for the Board, especially for working seniors who want to use the facilities after work hours but can't. They will continue to look at it, and are committed to expanding the hours, but need to work out logistics with regard to staffing and funds.

Transportation services: 3 part time drivers comprising 33 hours a week of service. There are also 17 volunteer drivers.

Advisory Question: Are the volunteers CORI'd?

- Yes, all drivers (volunteer or not) must provide a CORI check and have a background check.

SEC Budget Presentation

Discussion regarding current goals and shifting goals based on current emissions.

Wellesley's 2020 goal is not being met, and the current goal is not in line with the state's goals.

SEC would like to reach out into commercial sectors and the community at large to make a climate action plan.

The budget reflects a promotion that HR approved after they collected the salary and budget numbers, so the numbers published by Finance did not reflect new classifications and new job descriptions.

There are new titles, new classifications, and increased hours for the various positions at SEC. There were funds added to the budget to allow for someone from SEC to attend a conference on urban sustainability.

SEC does bring in money through grants. There is a Green Communities grant that is over \$137,000. That grant has funded several projects throughout the Town, as well as the sustainability analysis for the Town Hall Annex feasibility study.

SEC will apply for additional grants in 2020; numerous projects will save money every year in energy, so the short-term costs will be offset by the long-term savings.

Advisory Question: Is the salary for the director half from the SEC and half from MLP? Yes

Advisory Question: There are an additional five hours allotted; does that open up time for seeking funding from additional grants?

- Not really, because much of it is already needed for other grants and climate change. There is an intent to apply for an MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) Grant to fund the climate action plan.

Advisory Comment: someone needs to look into why the lights in the Town are out of sequence — that causes more idling and more traffic.

Advisory Question: Is there any opinion from the SEC on the citizen's petition on the MLP opt out program?

- SEC has not deliberated on that petition so they cannot provide an official position, but they are looking into it and looking at the numbers. SEC has had conceptual discussions about it. There is no current consensus on whether to support or oppose the citizens petition.

Advisory Question: If you used the metric of vehicles garaged in the Town, would that bring us closer to our goal?

- We don't have that data, so we can't say.

Advisory Question: How well are we doing if you exclude the vehicles altogether?

- We are just about meeting our goal on everything other than vehicles.

Advisory Question: How has the support from the Town been since it is a standalone committee that has no Town department or Board oversight?

- SEC feels good about the support from various Town departments and committees. SEC meets regularly with FMD and MLP and other Town departments to keep SEC a consistent presence in the Town.

Advisory Question: Carbon emissions are different for the Town and for the state?

- The newly-announced 2050 goal for the State is 100% (net zero emissions). Wellesley's baseline is from 2007; state's baseline is from 1990.

Advisory Question: RE: the capital budget request for monitoring the police station to determine how to be more energy efficient in Town. Can you explain more?

- SEC has its first ever capital budget. It has an energy assessment for the police station, which is open 24/7 and runs computers 24/7. Chief of police saw how high the EUI was for the station. There was a free audit done (results not available yet) but they are doing a level 2 audit to get a more comprehensive analysis of the energy usage study and use that as a model to help other buildings improve their energy use and to potentially do studies at other buildings.
- Other part of the capital budget is \$50,000 for a climate action plan.

Advisory Question/comment: Maybe an additional excise tax for all-gas vehicles to encourage residents to look at EVs and hybrids. Another metric is to track how many EVs are in town.

Citizens' Petition to no longer recognize Columbus Day and recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.

Two Advisory members are on the World Of Wellesley, but there is no conflict per consultation to Town Counsel.

Warrant read by member of World of Wellesley, who is assisting the citizens who are seeking to present the petition. Others invited to speak about the petition:

Senior at WHS speaking on behalf of various groups at WHS in favor of the petition: states that Columbus was a violent and vicious person who cause devastation to native people upon his arrival in America. We should no longer celebrate Columbus. To those who believe we should not judge him by today's standards, he was violent and cruel even in his own time, as proved by the stripping of his titles upon his return to his country. Columbus caused racist genocide and should therefore not be celebrated. Changing Columbus Day to Indigenous peoples day is a small but important step in reconciliation.

Advisory Question: what do the rest of the students in the general population think?

- She represents several committees that all unanimously support the petition; no sense of whether the general school population supports or doesn't support it.

Senior at Babson College speaking in favor of the petition. Student is a Haitian immigrant that spoke about the history of Columbus as a colonizer and instigator of violence. Important step to change Columbus Day to Indigenous Peoples Day.

Wellesley Citizen: Spoke in favor of supporting the petition, but recognizes the importance of the day to many Italian Americans. Read quote from MLK and another from Columbus himself. Very impassioned comments of concern over celebrating Columbus despite his cruel words and actions.

Indigenous Wellesley resident: Spoke in her native language to begin. Spoke in favor of the petition, stating: we are in traditional territory of Massachusetts people who have lived here for thousands of years; many nations of indigenous people who live here now. As an indigenous person, the question of Columbus Day vs Indigenous Peoples day is about values — what do we value? Indigenous people have values such as honesty, truth, generosity, caring about the land, about community, about never taking more than what you need, and many other values. When Columbus came here, he was a merchant looking for an expedient route to India for trade. He “discovered” this land, but there were already people living here, so how can he be said to have discovered it? Then, Spain got the right to ownership of those lands by Papal decree. Spain declared that the people were savages because they were not Christians and because they lived off the land. Pattern continued around the world. We have been taught an incomplete false narrative. There are about 567 indigenous nations in the US alone. We are still here. In this time of ecological crisis, I'm here standing up because I want you all to make a decision from your hearts. What do you want to choose for our community? It's not about Italian-American heritage. It's not an attempt to take something from them or from anyone; it's for people to hear the truth.

Student speaker: proud son; Very passionate speech about how he has no room for arrogance or people who don't want to change for the better; no room for people who are toxic; the school population doesn't care; if they did, they'd make a change; we need help to make a change; that's why I'm here. There's no point to keep Columbus Day. Let's teach children about what really happened. It's not that much to change one day to recognize people who have been oppressed for 500 years. All they are asking for is one day. It doesn't seem like that much. Just remember where you're from and why you're still here.

Todd Cook invited the World of Wellesley representative who presented the warrant back to the table to answer questions from the Committee members. Others up at the table were from Italian Americans for Indigenous Peoples Day.

Advisory Question: Have you discussed the language with Town Counsel? Not yet.

- Todd Cook encouraged the petitioners to consult with Town Counsel and the BOS about whether there are any issues that may need to be addressed through a motion or other means.

Advisory Question: How does this petition work with the other petition that seeks to celebrate both indigenous peoples day and Columbus Day simultaneously?

- An advocate from another Town invited to the table to speak states that they cannot be celebrated simultaneously. Because of the reasons for both holidays, it would be nonsensical and impossible to allow them to be celebrated on the same day.

Advisory Question: Have you considered celebrating on another day instead of Columbus Day?

- It needs to replace Columbus Day, because celebrating Columbus has done so much harm to indigenous people for so long.

Advisory Question: Columbus is a federal Holiday, so how do address that?

- Local communities can choose to celebrate it or not. It will still be a day off, etc., but communities can choose to celebrate a different holiday.

Italian Americans for Indigenous peoples day: spoke on the wide support from Italian Americans for recognizing Indigenous peoples day instead of Columbus Day, and support for a corrected version of history. There was some discussion regarding the fact that Massachusetts celebrates Italian-American Heritage month in October, so they are getting the recognition and celebration of that heritage even without Columbus Day.

Citizens Petition: Greenhouse Emissions

Powerpoint presentation on the citizens petition.

Petitioners states that the Townwide goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2020; they want the Town to reaffirm the 2020 GHG reduction goal and enroll support of Town to achieve immediate reduction by raising renewable electricity to 60%.

80% as written in the warrant article are non-emitting. Achieving use of 60% renewable gets us to the 80% of non-emitting. To meet the goal, we need 60% renewable energy immediately.

Advisory Comment: If the top four users of electricity opt out (which use 23% of the Town's electricity), then it would significantly decrease the ability to reach the goal. Presenters acknowledged this.

Advisory Question: What is the effect on residents' MLP bill?

- 7% increase, but that's based on recs today.

Advisory Question: If we go forward with this plan, what is the overall impact on residents? What's the potential volatility impact because we know some of the costs?

- There's a risk on overreliance on any one type of energy, and so the portfolio should be diverse.

Advisory Comment: This would cause more volatility than the way the MLP has been managing the costs of energy over the past several years.

Discussion regarding what motion language is permitted by the warrant article and suggestion to discuss with the BOS and Town Counsel to determine what motion language is appropriate for the warrant article and what is authorized.

Continued presentation about the importance of the issues presented in the warrant.

Advisory Question: Have you talked to the MLP about the petition?

- Lots of involvement with MLP and SEC, but the MLP believes it has met its goal of 25%.

Advisory Question: Costs for MLP to buy the RECs?

- more than \$2 million a year.

Advisory Question: Is the increased cost a disincentive to participate in the Voluntary program?

- The petitioners do not believe so given the long term savings for the Town, although it might be a disincentive for some.

Advisory Question: Who is responsible for paying for the delta between the cost if there are more opt out residents than expected?

- Need to have that answer before Town Meeting.

There is discussion about not moving on number 3 (from the warrant, which offers three different goals/action items on the petition).

Todd Cook, Chairman, has requested that they return on February 27, after they have presented to MLP, and after MLP has come before Advisory.

Advisory Question: The Town has made a decision to retire RECs now, so why doesn't that increase demand for renewable energy?

- We can table this question for later (after MLP comes to Advisory).

Advisory Question: What is the cost of the REC versus launching a new renewable source?

- It's complicated; more to come at next presentation.

Julie Bryan made a motion and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion to approve the minutes from the January 8, 2020 meeting.

No discussion; motion passed, 12-0-1.

Bill Maynard reports on the budget book. Draft to come shortly.

School Committee liaison report from Lina Musayev - there is a \$300,000 gap in the budget; BOS plan to discuss on Monday.

Lina Musayev made a motion and Paul Merry seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting
Passed 13-0-0.

11pm adjourn