

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Juliani Room, Wellesley Town Hall
Wednesday, January 23, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

Those present from the Advisory Committee included Jane Andrews, Todd Cook, Rose Mary Donahue, Bob Furlong, Mary Gard, Jeff Levitan, Bill Maynard, Paul Merry, Dave Murphy, Lina Musayev, Betsy Roberti, Mary Scanlon, Tom Skelly and Andrea Ward.

Tom Skelly called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

7:00 p.m. Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

7:00 p.m. Board of Health FY20 Budget

Shepard Cohen, Chair, Board of Health (BOH); Marcia Testa Simonson, Vice Chair, BOH; Dr. Rob Evans, Executive Director, Human Relations Service (HRS); Leonard Izzo, Director, Health Department; and Deadra Doku-Gardner, Administrator, Health Department, were present.

- Five BOH service areas/public health domains: mental and social health; inspectional and environmental; public health nursing; community health and education; and emergency preparedness and public safety
- FY20 budget includes an increase of \$55,080 (6.73%) from FY19, due to:
 - Personal Services increases
 - Mandatory salary/merit raises of 2% and the extra days in the FY20 calendar, along with small raise for the nursing pool
 - Request to increase per diem social worker hours by 9 hours per week (\$13,205) and environmental health services (EHS) hours by 12 hours per week (\$20,750)
 - Total personal services increase is \$46,881 (9.38%) over FY19
 - Contractual salary adjustments for mental health contracts of \$5,967 (2.5%), which is the first increase since FY16
 - General expenses are budgeted to increase by \$2,232 (2.77%) over FY19
 - Increase in expenses will bring the budget back to FY18 levels, as some expenses were postponed in FY19

There was a comment/question that the BOH budget has not been compliant with guidelines for many years; that every year there seems to be an increase in social worker and EHS hours; and that it is unclear how the BOH budget is built and how it escalates each year: It is important to include mental health services in any budget analysis; not sure what numbers Finance has provided Advisory, but they may not reflect the mental health contracts; in addition, it is important to look back to FY11, the year in which the current Director went from EHS position to Director.

A comment was made that all funds go through the Town budget and Advisory would like a better understanding of why the numbers received from the Finance Department don't match what the BOH is presenting; in addition, the FY20 budget should be compared to FY19, not FY11.

There was a comment that looking at the numbers in the BOH presentation that go back to FY16, there has been something like a 6% increase: No question that in later years the percentages have been higher; trying to restore.

- Regarding the EHS budget: Have restored over two years the loss of EHS position that occurred when current Director moved out of that position and left only one full-time inspector; now have in place the 2 full-time EHS positions that Department had previously; however, the 14 additional per diem EHS hours in FY19 budget are insufficient to cover the increase in growth in EHS demands; Department needs an additional 12 EHS hours for FY20

A comment was made that the requested 9 hour increase in the social worker per diem hours for FY20 may be necessary based on Social Services study that Executive Director/inter-departmental group in Town have been working on.

- More specifically, the additional 12 EHS hours are needed because of new state-mandated food code; massive undertaking for a town to implement; BOH can't implement the new food code with current resources
 - Perhaps BOH could use fees it collects to set up a revolving fund to pay for EHS services

A suggestion was made that the BOH sit down with Finance: BOH has worked with Finance numerous times leading up to preparation of this budget; the additional hours have been in the budget for a long time; the budget is the same as it was on November 29; BOH will continue to work with Finance.

- Regarding environmental health needs: Changing issues in this area over time, such as vectors, foods, plastic bags, gas leaks, demolition inspections, newly emerging infectious diseases
- Not only have EHS demands increased, but the load on the Director has increased; more than half the work the Department does is in collaboration with other departments; it takes time to keep up with new regulations and to work with other departments
- BOH has tried to meet these needs/demands while being fiscally responsible (e.g., for nursing, uses a nursing pool instead of full-time employees)

A comment was made that last year there was a similar conversation with BOH and that the problem is there is a lot of movement within the budget, which makes it difficult to understand; we need to be able to compare apples to apples. There was a further comment that with regard to the request for additional inspectional services hours, the need (new state food code) appears to be a one-time expense, which leads to concern about permanently funding a one-time need. An additional comment was made that Wellesley isn't the only community facing this issue and perhaps there are outside organizations to turn to for help and outsourcing: That is why the expense is listed as a per diem. There was a follow-up comment that those per diem hours will be in the budget next year, however.

- The new state food code isn't the only source of increased EHS demands; the workload for recreational camp inspections has increased, as well
- With respect to the food code, however, the state did a poor job with the roll out; tremendous task to educate all business owners in Town
 - BOH is talking to Weston about partnering with their Health Department for training
- In addition, food recovery and food redistribution are new areas that require inspections; BOH feels it is still behind/playing catch up on its regular inspectional work; the new food code is pushing the BOH even more behind

A comment was made that perhaps we should be looking at the issue of funding as one of risk, across Town departments; what is the risk of not getting to everything; what is the Town's role in lowering the risk and by how much; there will always be risk; we can't be risk-free, but we do the best that we can. There was a follow-up comment that this ultimately becomes a budgetary issue, looking at all the Town's

needs and how to prioritize those needs with the available financial resources; last year BOH budget went up a lot; would like to see it stable for a year and see how things go.

A question was asked about how the BOH Director's time is allocated: 40% of his time is spent on EHS. There was a follow-up question whether restaurants are currently facing delays in opening based on inability to complete inspections: BOH does priority-based inspections; new restaurants all have had a delay; tremendous load on the BOH.

7:37 p.m. Natural Resources Commission: Overview and FY20 Budget

Regina LaRocque, Chair, Natural Resources Commission (NRC); Raina McManus, Vice Chair, NRC; Laura Robert, Member, NRC; Katie Griffith, Member, NRC; and Brandon Schmitt, Director, Natural Resources Commission, were present.

- NRC regulatory authority and mission were reviewed
- NRC organizational structure includes 5 elected commissioners (responsible for appointing Wetlands Protection Committee and Trails Committee), 3 full-time staff (Director, Wetlands Administrator and Secretary) and a part-time Environmental Education and Outreach coordinator
- NRC FY19 projects include:
 - Programs such as "Saving Our Ponds," Police Station Pollinator Garden and Rachel Carson Day movie series
 - Actions such as Town Forest Management Plan, Tree Preservation Bylaw Review (in conjunction with Planning Board) and Gas Leaks Reduction

The NRC was asked to elaborate more on the Tree Preservation Bylaw: Developers are held accountable for the trees on a site; there is a tree accounting process ("preservation" might be a bit of a misnomer); all trees greater than 10 inches in diameter are subject to the bylaw, but developers can take trees down and put money into mitigation fund; some waivers for situations where a tree is considered hazardous.

A follow-up question was asked as to what priority is given to the tree bylaw: Sixty-six percent of the trees identified have been protected; not sure how they are faring; very real concern about the Town's tree canopy; we plant a lot of trees, but think we are losing double or triple the number due to construction; this is one of the NRC's highest priorities; Town needs to do more work mapping/assessing the tree canopy.

An Advisory member expressed agreement with those concerns and asked whether there is anything the NRC believes it could do to advance the current bylaw. Another Advisory member asked what the fee schedule is for tree removal and who follows up on this: There is a sliding scale; for trees up to 20 inches, it's \$120 per inch; then the price per inch goes up once a certain diameter is reached; the bylaw was an effort to institute some protections and is effective, but more is needed.

A comment was made that the tree bylaw is dealing with private property and that maybe part of the solution is to work with Planning to be more commercial about the process (i.e., if you're trying to preserve a large diameter tree, then maybe give the developer a little setback relief on the other side of the property); might provide motivation for developer to change the design of the house. An additional comment was made that perhaps all the restrictions are a little siloed and there might be unintended consequences.

A comment was made that, at a recent NRC meeting where development at 80 Walnut Street was discussed, there was a thorough assessment by the NRC of all the trees on the lot.

- NRC will continue to educate community about value of tree canopy and work on this issue
- With respect to gas leaks, the NRC is also trying to address the over 200 gas leaks in Town, as these affect trees and the public health
 - Complicated project and problem
 - NRC has tried to identify the leaks around schools and public trees

A question was asked whether there is a particular plan that National Grid follows with respect to identifying/addressing gas leaks: Legislation requires that utilities identify all gas leaks; leaks are rated in terms of explosion probability; however, some of the non-explosive leaks emit more methane (“super-emitters”) and are probably the worst from a public health perspective but the safest from a public safety perspective; new data will be coming out in March.

A follow-up question was asked whether the gas companies report when they have fixed a leak: The NRC gets data on an annual basis. An additional question was asked about the ranking/evaluation system for leaks: There is a “1, 2, 3” ranking system. A follow-up question was asked whether there is an existing plan to fix the leaks: The leaks with the most risk have to be repaired immediately, but the lock-out and the situation in the northern part of the state have slowed things down. An additional question was asked as to why we have gas leaks: Massachusetts has the second oldest gas pipe infrastructure in the country; in addition, the gas today has a different composition than the gas that flowed through these pipes when they were laid; consortium of community groups and academic experts working with National Grid on a better plan.

- Other FY19 projects include working on waste reduction in Town
 - Second year of plastic bag ban
 - Recycling and Disposal Facility (RDF) composting pilot is now Town-wide
- Continuing efforts with active and passive recreation
- FY19 capital projects, including those funded through Community Preservation Committee (CPC) assistance, were reviewed (e.g., WWI Memorial Grove restoration, small weed harvester, mobile phosphorous inactivation system, vernal pool boardwalk, Duck Pond bridge and Fuller Brook fish ramp)
- Ongoing projects and initiatives to be continued in FY20 include backyard pollinator corridors, hands-on workshops, environmental film series, Rachel Carson Day events
- NRC also involved in education
 - Second year working with Bates teachers and students on Morses Pond erosion
 - Continuing to work with WHS Evolutions class on waste reduction efforts
- Morses Pond restoration project
 - Management involves monitoring, weed harvesting, phosphorous control
 - Very good water quality; will need to continue to harvest invasive species until at some point conditions shift and native species regain control
 - Request for new harvester is in the 5-year capital plan for FY22; harvester will be 15 years old at that point

A question was asked about the feasibility of chemical options for reducing the weeds in the pond: There are wells adjacent to the pond and people have contact with the water; it is not certain the herbicides are safe; the Town is wise in practicing a cautionary approach.

- Fuller Brook Park restoration project is now complete and under Town management; huge success; more people enjoying the Park than ever

There was a comment that the consultant submitted the project to a design organization and the project won a bronze award.

A question was asked whether there are any natural counters to invasive weed growth in the ponds that could be used instead of the mechanical harvester: There are some natural herbicides that might be effective on things like poison ivy; Town has used biological controls for insects; however, there are no biological controls for the plant species in the pond.

- Wellesley has been a Tree City USA for 25 years and planted 119 private trees last year
- FY20 projects include:
 - Total capital projects of \$271,000, to be funded via CPC grants pending approval at Annual Town Meeting (ATM)
 - Morses Pond Shore Erosion remediation (\$150,000): There are 11 sites on the pond on public property that will be addressed over the next several years; NRC hopes to utilize a combination of volunteer work and bid work
 - Duck Pond Bridge restoration construction (\$91,000)
 - Church Park restoration expands off pollinator corridor idea; work to be done by Department of Public Works (DPW) (\$30,000)
 - Town Forest Stewardship and Bird Habitat Plan is in place; opens Town up to matching grants from state Department of Conservation and Recreation
 - Continued involvement in environmental planning: Unified Plan, 40B projects, Railroad Lot redevelopment, and Municipal Light Plant (MLP) LED conversion

A question was asked whether the NRC coordinates with the BOH about rodents: The NRC deals with different rodents than the BOH, primarily beavers; our pest management is about turf management and the landscape.

- Tax impact FY20 capital budget for NRC is \$80,000
- Tax impact FY20 operating budget is \$255,763
 - Budget is over guidelines; up 9.56% (\$22,316) from FY19
 - In the previous three fiscal years, the NRC has never been above guidelines
 - Two reasons for increase this year
 - Accounting change: NRC was asked by Executive Director/BOS to move \$2,500 from capital budget into operating budget expenses
 - Personal Services: Human Resources (HR) Board approved revision of Director's job description and reclassification from 57 series to 59 series, resulting in salary increase

A question was asked confirming that there were no FTE or personnel changes: Correct.

- Morses Pond FY20 operating budget is \$145,250, an increase of 1.61% over FY19; expenses are related to managing the pond

A question was asked about the cost of the weed harvester and where it is in the five-year capital plan: It has been in the plan for a few years; is listed in FY22 for \$350,000; this includes the trailer and the device. A follow up question was asked about the longevity for the harvester: The current harvester is 15 years old; 15-20 years is about when a harvester starts failing. An additional question was asked as to how many days per year the harvester is in action: It is used from May through September, five days per week, so roughly 150 days per year.

A question was asked whether the 2.78% for extra days in FY20 and the Director's salary increase approved by HR are both included in the total 9.56% FY20 operating budget increase: Yes.

8:20 p.m. Recreation Commission: Overview and FY20 Budget

Paul Cramer, Chair, Recreation Commission; Mark Wolfson, Commissioner; and Matt Chin, Director, Recreation Department, were present.

- “Something for everyone” is the Recreation Department’s mission
 - Eclectic range of offerings for residents of all ages, abilities and means
 - Programs are not designed to maximize revenues/profitability
 - Recreation traditionally has a turnback to the Town
- Departmental overview
 - Department housed at Warren Building and majority of programs offered there
 - All program fees are put into revolving account and used for program expenses
 - Program pricing is instructor cost + 20% (at least break even)
 - 5.4 FTEs (six actual employees) paid for out of tax-impact budget; staffing for programs/classes/camps paid for out of program budget
- FY20 tax impact budget is \$377,661
 - 2.76%, or \$10,137, over FY19
 - Additional 0.26% over guidelines is \$961
- FY20 program budget (non-tax impact) is \$124,050; shared costs paid out of revolving fund

A question was asked whether Recreation processes credit card payments for other departments: Only for Wellesley’s Wonderful Weekend.

A question was asked as to how Recreation predicts utilization when setting fees: Utilization is difficult to predict; hinges on Morses Pond (e.g., weather and the number of people who use the pond); fees are on par with last year (in which Recreation turned back \$80,000).

- Recent accomplishments include
 - After-school programs now offered at all elementary schools
 - Increased middle and high school programming (including Teen Center)
 - Trying to get this age group more involved in programming, but challenging
 - “Drop-in” programming most successful
 - Summer camp scholarships in conjunction with Friendly Aid (Friendly Aid vets applicants; Recreation gave \$43,012 last year)
 - Collaborations with Council on Aging (COA), NRC, Library, DPW
 - Improved experiences at Morses Pond
- Recreation offers many community events (e.g., Summertime Concerts, Family Camp Out, Halloween Parade)
 - Some have a small fee and some are free because they are paid for by others
- Morses Pond
 - Programmatic changes include reconfiguring swim area, regrading underwater contour, installing benthic barrier, and expanding hours and picnic table/grill rentals
 - Financials: revenues stable despite decline in attendance; increase in fees for non-resident beach tags; decrease in daily use fee for residents and non-residents
 - Experience may be better for those attending because Pond is less crowded

There was a comment that 7-10 years ago there had been incentive/promotion that brought in more non-residents, and a question as to the effect of raising non-resident beach tag fees: Will be interesting to see what happens this summer, as Needham pool will be back online.

A follow-up question was asked whether, given how little revenue the tags bring in, the lifeguards can be paid from this: Yes, Recreation is offering this as a service to the Town; Recreation does take a hit but the program overall is still making money.

A question was asked as to how the contouring of Morses Pond was accomplished: Sand was added from outside; Recreation worked with pond consultant.

There was a comment that a few years ago the Morses Pond non-resident fee went up significantly and whether any consideration has been given to decreasing that fee, as it is nice to have a mixture of people from around the region using Morses Pond: Recreation is interested in getting more committed people who buy for the whole season; trying to use pricing to drive people to buy for the season and have less daily purchasing.

A question was asked about the pickle ball courts and how they can be managed so that there is enough availability for Town residents: Recreation has been working with user groups; on Mondays, three hours (11 a.m. to 2 p.m.) are reserved for residents only; Thursday is drop-in pickle ball; Recreation looking for feedback.

A question was asked whether there has been a drop in program attendance since the Tolles Parsons Center (TPC) opened: There has actually been an increase in attendance; Recreation works with the COA on programming at the TPC.

- Recreation has been working with all the elementary school principals and PTOs and now has afterschool programs in all the elementary schools
 - Increased enrollment in 2018 and more profitable than 2015-17 combined

A question was asked whether fees are charged for the afterschool programs: Yes, but instead of the typical 20% markup, Recreation adds 1%-5% to the teacher cost to cover the credit card fees.

- FY18 program budget
 - 725 programs were run and there were 7,241 participants
 - If there are insufficient participants to cover program costs, program is not offered
 - Program revenue was about \$1.5 million
 - Program expenses were about \$1.3 million
 - \$43,012 of summer camp scholarships absorbed by Recreation
 - \$79,227 of turnback to the Town

A question was asked if the numbers on the program budget slide are supposed to tie out and equal the revenue: The \$43,000 in scholarships is foregone revenue; does not show in the revenue calculations.

- Program pricing policy: Recreation adds 20% to what instructors charge for a class
 - Reasonably affordable way to generate offerings for residents
 - Even if Recreation could charge more for a very popular program, it won't do that; pricing is not market-based
 - Part of program revenues are used to support scholarships
- Long-term capital planning
 - Commission thinking about ways to build a fund to support future capital expenditures (e.g., Morses Pond boathouse)
 - Would like ability to use some of program surplus for future capital projects

- Considering establishment of a new revolving fund in FY21
 - 53E1/2 fund vs. current 53D fund
 - 53E1/2 fund allows carryforwards from one year to the next; 53D requires annual turnback

There was a question as to what phase of discussions Recreation is in with Finance in terms of creating a new revolving fund: Just beginning discussions for FY21; this would be on the warrant for next year. Recreation was advised to work on educating the public about this proposal for the future.

A question was asked whether spending from the fund would be entirely within Recreation's discretion: There would have to be a disbursing agent for the fund who ultimately votes on spending.

A comment was made that buildings (like boathouses) have ongoing maintenance costs, and Recreation should have conversation about who will pay for those. There were several comments that building support for underlying capital projects will be important.

- There will be sequencing with long term capital projects; Morses' Pond feasibility study and design study with CPC will help determine projects
 - Request for Qualifications for feasibility study will feature public meetings to get input from residents
 - Would like to focus on whole pond area (bikers, walkers, etc.) and not just the beach

There was a question as to who currently maintains the boat house, which is on NRC land: Facilities Management Department does (toilets, etc.).

9:06 p.m. Minutes Approval

Andrea Ward made and Mary Gard seconded a motion to approve the January 2, 2019 minutes, as revised. The motion passed unanimously.

9:06 p.m. Liaison Reports/Administrative Matters

Planning/Dave Murphy

- Board of Selectmen (BOS) held a public hearing last night on the proposed 40B project at 3 Burke Lane
 - BOS response to application due to Mass Housing next week
 - Strong turnout from the neighbors opposing the 40B project; concern with traffic given narrow street
- Continued discussions between the Town and John Hancock on the 40R project at the Wellesley Office Park (WOP)
 - Working through a lot of issues to come to preliminary agreement on another water main servicing that area, a larger sewer pump and lines going under Route 128
 - One issue still concerning BOS is traffic
 - Town's traffic consultant (Beta) is looking at what the developer's traffic consultant has put together
 - Town is not only looking at Phase 1 of WOP but is considering Phase 2 and what would be needed in terms of water and sewer
 - MLP has determined there is adequate electrical service to area
 - Public hearing on WOP is next Monday evening (January 28, 2019)
 - Some financial projections have been completed which seem favorable in terms of additional revenue to the Town and the costs the Town will incur related to the project

- For Delanson Circle and 148 Weston Road projects, the developer seems to have come to an agreement to buy another piece of property contiguous to 148 Weston Road; appear to be talking about moving some of the units from Delanson Circle over to Weston Road

A question was asked whether the 40R would be addressed in a Special Town Meeting (STM): In order to allow the maximum amount of time for the host community agreement to be developed, it would be handled in an STM within ATM.

Audit/Jeff Levitan

- Audit Committee sent a letter to the BOS recommending a cyber audit, even though this is a little outside the financial responsibilities of the Audit Committee
- Given all the cyber issues going on, important to make certain good practices are in place
- There is no cost estimate for this yet; won't affect this year's ATM

FMD/Jeff Levitan

- There is discussion/visioning about Town Hall and what to do about office space for people working there
- Momentum is towards creating an off-site facility/annex
- Makes good sense for the Town to move some of the functions out of Town Hall
- Annex can provide swing space during Town Hall interior renovations; FMD could later move out of its current off-site rental location into an annex

There was a request to ask the Audit Committee if it has the ability to do internal audits of Town departments; perhaps analysis could be done in conjunction with BOS; likely are departments that could use help with operations and financial controls, as they are experts in other areas.

Schools/Jane Andrews

- School Committee (SC) was able to get the budget down to 3.6%
- Varied opinions regarding different proposed positions, such as a Director of Diversity; SC continuing to look at the budget
- With respect to the 3% guideline and how to explain the SC budget to Town Meeting, SC is preparing budget differently this year
 - SC is budgeting only for known out-of-district placements of 58 rather than the 72 last year; this results in a \$950,000 difference
 - Level service budget for Schools comes in a little below 3%, so difference between that and 3.6% actual is strategic plan initiatives

There was a comment/request for clarification that the difference this year is about who bears the risk for Special Education (SPED), i.e., last year it was SC (they budgeted for projections and turned back funds when not needed) but for FY20 it will be the Town (SC only budgeting known costs): Yes; one factor to consider is a possible addition to the SPED Stabilization Fund, which is controlled by both the SC and the BOS.

The hope was expressed that when SC comes to Advisory on February 6 for its budget presentation, it can also give an update on the SPED Stabilization Fund.

A comment was made that the Town budget is not balanced and it must be balanced, or else there would need to be an override. It is encouraging, however, that there is downward movement on the School budget.

School Building Committee (SBC)/Jane Andrews

- Four tentative options for the Hunnewell proposal; these are on the Town website
 - One includes the old façade with the tree, one includes the old façade without the tree, one is a new building with the tree, and one is a new building without the tree
 - Experts feel it is very unlikely that the tree will survive the construction
 - Forum at Hunnewell on Tuesday night (January 29, 2019)
 - Background issue is whether there will be swing space for Hunnewell project; looking right now like best option is some kind of distributed enrollment
- Hardy/Upham
 - Four Owners' Project Managers (OPMs) were interviewed; chose same one as Hunnewell; great deal of consensus within SBC
 - Next step is working with the MSBA this spring to choose a designer
 - All OPMs interviewed felt the Town would be able to reach a choice on a school by next February
 - Advisory members are encouraged to look at SBC's updated website
 - SBC will come to Advisory after ATM to discuss the projects
 - New Advisory representative to SBC will be needed next year

9:32 p.m. Adjourn

Paul Merry made and Jeff Levitan seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously.

Items Reviewed During the Meeting

- Memorandum to Advisory Committee from Wellesley Board of Health Re: Revised Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Submission (November 29, 2018)
- Wellesley Board of Health, *FY20 Budget Request: Advisory Committee Presentation* (January 23, 2019)
- Wellesley Board of Selectmen, *Social Services and Mental Health Services: A Report of Service Delivery Challenges and Opportunities* (January 17, 2019)
- Wellesley Natural Resources Commission, *FY20 Capital and Operating Budgets: Presentation to Advisory Committee* (January 23, 2019)
- Memorandum from Brandon Schmitt, NRC Director, to Advisory Committee re: NRC FY20 Budget Request (January 16, 2019)
- Natural Resources Commission, *Director Job Description* (November 2, 2018)
- Natural Resources Commission Letter to Human Resources Board re: Director Job Reclassification (December 6, 2018)
- Wellesley Recreation Commission/Department, *Something for Everyone: Presentation to Advisory Committee* (January 23, 2019)