

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 6:30 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, Mary Scanlon and Doug Smith.

Julie Bryan called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

6:30 p.m. Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

6:30 p.m. Police FY22 Budget

Chief Jack Pilecki and Lieutenant Marie Cleary were present. The FY22 budget request for the Police Department was presented. Police services during COVID-19 were reviewed. In addition, FY20 budget highlights were discussed including the turn back due to personal services was explained. Similarly, he FY21 budget highlights were discussed although the estimate for the FY21 turnback is unknown.

Questions and Discussion

- How much will costs increase next year particularly with additional personnel costs due to events being held again?
 - It all depends on how COVID plays out. The online training saved money but it is not as good as in-person training. When COVID goes away, people will take vacation.
- How much is .09% slightly over guideline in terms of actual dollars?
 - About \$7,000 (under \$10,000)
- What would be cut from the budget to get to 2.5%?
 - We'd find a way to get there and it would come from personal services. There are contractual obligations but we might reduce overtime for investigations.
- Gratitude was expressed for the service and dedication provided by the Police to make us feel safe in town.
 - We have great officers in town and we hire excellent quality people who take pride in what they do.
- Is there a morale problem?
 - There is no morale problem and there has not been a grievance filed in over 20 years.
- Is there an FTE allocated for the number of grants the police applies for?
 - There is no FTE. Deputy Chief Whittemore and Lieutenant Marie Cleary do a great job looking for and applying for grants.
- With the social worker, Winnie, and trained officers we are in a learning phase of how to utilize each resource. There has been an increase in mental health cases over the years, and the approach to mental health cases has changed as well. We hired social worker because we were not happy with the way we were following up on some of these cases. The social worker can take it a step further and identify resources to help people. There are training courses for officers in mental health strategies.
- Numbers from FY21 and FY22 appear to be the same. Is this correct?

- There was an error in the presentation, the numbers are not the same. FY22 personal services are \$6,320,620 and expenses are \$752,802. The year-over-year increase is 2.59%
- In Chart 9 there are three capital items eliminated; how much were the radios?
 - \$65,000.
- So, then it looks like the Police deferred almost \$100,000 in capital costs?
 - Yes.
- When do we need to start worrying about the cost impact of police reforms?
 - The state commission is to be set up by July 1 and mandates are supposed to take effect on the same date. We need to see how it plays out and it depends on who the commission members are. There will only be 2-3 from a law enforcement background on the commission.
- Hasn't the \$100,000 been deferred for a couple of years?
 - There are two different things – the radio antenna versus the radios that are being carried. Instead of replacing all radios in one-year replacement it is being done gradually. This year we will keep what we have and parts are still available for these radios.
- Are you replacing all the antennas on the pole and is this in conjunction with the new radios?
 - The radio antenna is 50 years old and over the years different antennas have been added to that pole. We can no longer use the pole because it can't support the weight. The new radio system works with the new antenna.
- What is the total cost of ownership of the hybrid vehicles versus gas vehicles?
 - Hybrids are \$6,000 more than a gas cruiser. But hybrids require less maintenance than gas cruisers. The Police Department is trying to support the town mission of lower greenhouse gas emissions.

7:25 p.m. FY22 Fire Department Budget

Chief Rick DeLorie and Deputy Chief Jeffrey Peterson were present.

COVID 19 departmental modifications were covered. FY20 budget highlights, turnback in personal services and expenses, and expenditures not incurred were shown, along with FY21 budget drivers and the COVID -19 impact on the FY21 budget. The FY22 budget highlights and FY22 capital requests were reviewed.

Questions and Discussion

- When recruits come back from training, are they at full capacity and can they work a full shift?
 - Recruits are usually assigned to Engine 2 to get acclimated. However, given that there are so many of them they are going to be rotated and will have supervision at all times.
 - They will have skill sets but will lack fire ground experience so we will have supervision on the new recruits.
- If the overtime is not used, is it carried forward?
 - Earned time is personal time and can be put in a sick bank. Vacation time is traditionally not allowed to be carried over.
- Has the COVID money been worked into the budget and has anything been deducted from the budget that reflects COVID money?
 - The Fire Department is working with Finance to make the transfers.
- Was anything deferred from the capital budget?
 - No.
- Have there been any preliminary conversations about what the need will be in the future for the fire station by Wellesley College?

- The Fire Department understands the issues with the schools, and Town Hall and is looking at the total needs of the town. But, at some point, we will need to address the needs of Station 1.
- With the increased diversity of the department and the need for another bathroom, how much is the problem of increased diversity or is it a space problem at Station 1?
 - It is a combination of both.

8:25 p.m. Advisory Warrant Article

A presentation of Advisory Committee's Warrant Article 23 regarding the distribution of the Advisory Report was provided by Patti Quigley. The general bylaw of the town was reviewed and the survey results were presented

Questions and Discussion

The goal of this discussion is to talk about some of the logistics and parameters and then draft the motion. A more detailed motion will spell out requirements for how this is administered and managed. The objective is to phase out the paper report over time.

- What do other towns do?
 - Most towns still do paper. Some towns tried electronic, but the transition was not successful and they went back to paper.
 - Advisory wants to make this option available to future Advisory Committees. Resolving the lack of clarity in the bylaw will allow future committees to send the Advisory Report electronically if necessary.
- Who will be the Advisory Committee administrator?
 - It is up to the Committee to decide who is responsible for this. The budget funds an administrative person and this work might add a little time.
 - Goal is not to add time because if it is too cumbersome administratively then it is not worth it.
- A comment was made that it feels overly complicated for what is wanted to be accomplished?
 - We can't say electronic only as that ties the hands of future Advisory Committees. What we are trying to do is change the bylaw to have the option of electronic, paper or both. Logistically it is difficult to have people email to request a copy.
- A comment was made that it is good to give options and this is a more sustainable option. As time goes on more people will be in favor of this.
- A comment was made that with the town clerk contacts used in canvassing benchmark towns for the electronic voting Advisory could reach out to see what their experience has been.
 - It was agreed that it would be helpful to have this information.
 - Advisory is not going to push electronic only, but wants to take out restrictive language in the bylaw. The goal would be for bylaw language to not box anyone into any theme.
 - The motion language will be the thoughts of 2020-21 Advisory Committee but next year's committee might decide differently. This article is to allow people to have the option to do it if it makes sense for the town at the time.
- Is this opt in or opt out?
 - Default would be paper. Opt out would be on-line (no paper) only.
- If the goal is to move to electronic, then would it be better to do the opposite with the first year opt out and then opt in in later years?
- A suggestion was made to provide training opportunities on how to view and use the online report with the benefits of the online report highlighted. For example, there are navigation opportunities and hyperlinks.

Approved 2/24/2021

- Advisory will never prevent anyone from having a paper copy.

9:00 p.m. Administrative Matters/Liaison Reports/Minutes

Liaison Reports

Library/Corinne Monahan – The library is moving forward with the renovations and planning. The library is planning on moving. The WFL Friends and Foundation are helping the library. The library exceeded the request to cut cash capital from budget.

DPW/Bill Maynard – DPW met last week as finance had asked them to reduce cash capital by another \$570,000, and last night the cuts were approved. However, the board is uncomfortable with the program reductions they had to make and are concerned about impact to the infrastructure over the long term. Also, FY23 cash capital would now be \$6 million because the reductions in capital budgets for FY21 and FY22 simply roll over to FY23. There may also be operational budget impacts (e.g., for repairs) from deferring cash capital projects.

- A comment was made that DPW is less comfortable now than when they originally presented to Advisory.
 - They had hoped that Advisory would come to the rescue so that cash capital doesn't get reduced by as much.
- What things were taken out to get to the \$570,000?
 - They started with creative accounting (e.g., applying money from unused funds/contracts) and turn backs. The rest is equipment – they will purchase a less expensive piece -- and making additional cuts in areas that have already been reduced.

Schools/Jenn Fallon- the Schools reduced cash capital by \$800,000 and they have been asked to cut another \$17,000 so they are cutting printers. School Committee voted on budget increase of 2.69%. There was a joint meeting with NRC regarding the lights, bathroom and team room. School Committee voted on some scheduling changes at the high school and middle school.

- A question was asked about whether the boards being given any reason or basis for the cuts?
 - They are given the number they need to cut. It is believed the BPW was a percentage-based request, but not sure how \$570,000 number came up. A comment was made that Advisory needs additional conversations with Finance.

FMD/Shawn Baker– FMD's cash capital budget was sent to Advisory. FMD was asked to defer \$800,000 for LED lights at high school.

Minutes Approval

Patti Quigley made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to approve the February 3, 2021 minutes.

Roll call vote:

Bill Maynard – yes
Patti Quigley – yes
John Lanza – yes
Mary Scanlon - yes
Deed McCollum - yes
Jennifer Fallon – yes
Jeff Levitan – yes
Corinne Monahan - yes

Approved 2/24/2021

Shawn Baker – yes
Doug Smith – yes
Jake Erhard – yes
Tom Cunningham – yes
Lauren Duprey – yes
Neal Goins - yes

Minutes were approved 14 to 0.

9:15 p.m. Adjourn

Mary Scanlon made and Patti Quigley seconded a motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote

Bill Maynard - yes
Patti Quigley – yes
John Lanza – yes
Mary Scanlon - 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

Approved 14-0.