

Approved June 9, 2021

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, May 12, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Julie Bryan, Tom Cunningham, Jake Erhard, Jennifer Fallon, Neal Goins, Jeff Levitan, 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.

Year in Review

There was a discussion regarding the past year and suggestions for next year. Comments included:

- For new members it would be helpful to understand the life cycle of a motion and an article and the timing of all the pieces particularly with respect to the preparation of the Advisory Report.
- The Advisory Report is still very long and there are places it could be cut back. With the Budget Book, Five Year financial plan and Article 8 there are many redundancies. Seems that a lot of people are working hard to produce all this information.
- It was thought that the Budget Book would resolve having to write a long Article 8. The Budget Book goes too deep and includes details, background and set up that we do not need. It was felt the real opportunity is with the Town Wide Financial Plan (TWFP). A suggestion was made to sync the TWFP and Article 8 and make the Article 8 write-up shorter.
- A comment was made that with Schools write-up it felt like we were re-doing what had already been done.
- A comment was it would be helpful to have the Motions before the Public Hearing.
- A comment was made that placeholder articles do not have any real substance when placed in the Warrant. Advisory has general language at the Public Hearing but does not have the motion language. Advisory can request that the proponents provide the best numbers or the best narrative, and request draft motion language prior to the public hearing. Boards and committees might benefit from the Public Hearing comments so that changes and revisions can be made before it is too late in the process.
- A comment was made that it would be helpful to have a Zoom option even if meetings are in person as this would give people flexibility for attending meetings.
- A comment was made that it might be helpful to ask Town Meeting members about the Advisory Report and what is found most helpful in the Report.
- A suggestion was made to brainstorm in advance with Advisory about the real holes and concerns people are going to have so that Advisory can provide the expectations about what is needed when people present to Advisory.
- A comment was made that it is helpful to have lengthy write-ups of Advisory considerations so that people can understand the thought process and the debate.
- A comment was made that it felt that boards were telling Advisory what want to hear. It might be helpful to give the boards a template so that everyone giving Advisory the same information, e.g., actual numbers rather than budget numbers. It was suggested to push on content rather than how that content is being presented.

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- A comment was made that Advisory needs to get information and answers to questions so that Advisory can respond. Follow-up meetings might be needed.
- There was a conversation about IT and how it is structured and that costs are in everyone's budget. A suggestion was made to placemark this and review for next year as there are significant dollars and many questions. There is an opportunity to look at cost savings and efficiencies.
- A suggestion was made that the Audit Committee should talk with Advisory a little more about the results. IT is supposed to have an audit. MLP should be audited.
- A comment was made that the overviews of departments were very long and seemed to be an inefficient use of time at the beginning of the year. Departments and boards were not getting to the core of issues. A suggestion was made to provide a thumbnail of the organization and to talk about issues they might have with less focus less on the canned intros.
- A comment was made that the roll call votes seemed to take a lot of time particularly on routine matters. Roll call votes are needed according to Town Counsel. However Advisory will check with Town Counsel again this summer to see if it is still required for routine matters like minutes and motions to adjourn.
- A suggestion was made that at the initial meeting Advisory can ask each department about its budget assuming a 2.5% increase and if there will be problems getting to that.
- Advisory can communicate to committees what the expectations are and how Advisory can be helpful. The value of Advisory is to ask questions.
- Come up with plan of action to get before boards and committees before the fall. "Be the voice, eyes and ears of Town Meeting."

Advisory may need to meet over the summer for a contract or business that needs to be completed before the end of the fiscal year. There are no more regularly scheduled Advisory meetings for the fiscal year.

Administrative Matters/Liaison Reports/Minutes

Minutes Approval

Jen Fallon made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to approve the May 4, 2021 minutes.

Roll call vote:

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

May 4, 2021 minutes were approved 10 to 0 with one abstention.

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Adjourn

Jeff Levitan made and Deed McCollum seconded a motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote

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

Approved 11-0.