

Approved Aug. 18, 2021

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Neal Goins, Tom Cunningham, Patti Quigley, Shawn Baker, Jennifer Fallon, John Lanza, Corinne Monahan, Doug Smith, Susan Clapham, Al Ferrer, Wendy Paul, Pete Pedersen, Madison Riley.

Neal Goins called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

6:30 p.m. Citizen Speak

Trish Glass, 30 Garden Road – a member of Sustainable Wellesley asked that Advisory consider Planning’s articles this year for cutting carbon emissions as climate change is at a crisis point and it is a critical time to make changes. The Planning Board’s articles are one piece of the process.

Neal Goins introduced the new officers as Patti Quigley and Tom Cunningham, Vice Chairs and Shawn Baker, Secretary and welcomed new Advisory members.

6:35 p.m. Moderator Overview

Mark Kaplan, Moderator presented a general overview of Advisory and its role in town government. He thanked the 2nd and 3rd year Advisory members for their work during this challenging past year and thanked the 1st year members for stepping up to serve on Advisory. Advisory members are selected to represent a wide range of views and constituencies. The Moderator makes appointments to a variety of committees and appointments to Advisory have the widest visibility and influence. There were many applicants and referrals this year and members were selected to represent a wide range of views and constituencies. Impartiality, objectivity, and independence are critical elements for Advisory Committee.

The legal authority for Advisory Committee was reviewed under the Massachusetts General Laws and Article 11 of the Town Bylaws. Advisory considers and recommends on all issues before the town, both financial and non-financial. Advisory’s basic role is to consider justification and background on any issue that might come before Town Meeting. Advisory is the eyes and ears of Annual Town Meeting on issues.

Advisory Committee is subject to the Open Meeting Law and the Conflict-of-Interest law. It was suggested that Advisory members be familiar with the Town Bylaws and Zoning Bylaws. Other resources for Advisory members include the recent Town Report and the detailed Budget Book. Wellesley has a highly decentralized government with independent elected and appointed boards with own their own jurisdiction and responsibility. Wellesley does not have a Town Manager. This topic of a Town Manager is reviewed periodically. Wellesley has an Executive Director, Meghan Jop, who is the chief administrative officer of the town and works with the various boards. The legislative function is Town Meeting. Advisory doesn’t have any power but has influence. Advisory takes a Town wide perspective and looks at what is in the best interest of the Town. Proponents on items/issues want to go to Town Meeting with favorable action from Advisory.

The “Do Nots” for serving on Advisory were reviewed including those Advisory members that cannot run for town wide office except for Town Meeting Member (TMM) and should not flaunt membership on Advisory. Advisory speaks through the Chair and the Chair should be the only one to speak publicly on behalf of Advisory. TMMs who also serve on Advisory are not bound to vote as Advisory recommends. Recusals and abstentions were reviewed.

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7:20 p.m. Financial Director Overview

Sheryl Strother, Finance Director, presented an overview of municipal finance via PowerPoint. The Budget Book is available on the website. Finance Director serves as resource to Advisory.

7:50 p.m. Town Clerk – Conflict of Interest and Open Meeting law and Public Records

KC Kato, Town Clerk, reviewed the Open Meeting law and Conflict of Interest requirements for appointed Boards.

The Open Meeting law provides transparency and allows the community to see the process with opportunities for feedback. If there is a quorum of any committee or subcommittee the meeting needs to be posted and made public. All deliberations need to be done in public. In-person, remote meetings, and emails need to be done publicly. For Public Records requests the information needs to be provided within 10 days. Use of town email is encouraged. If anyone has a question about Conflict of Interest it is best to ask KC or Neal and if necessary they will consult with Town Counsel.

8:00 p.m. Advisory Committee Overview and Training

Highlights and summary of the PowerPoint sent to Advisory members was presented. The list of materials sent to Advisory was reviewed.

The Advisory liaison role was discussed. Liaisons are not on the Board but are there to help with interaction of that Board with Advisory. When attending a board meeting, the liaison should convey factually what Advisory has been talking about as opposed to giving opinion. It is important to obtain pertinent information from Boards as soon as possible to give to Advisory. Materials need to be sent to Advisory before the Advisory meeting rather than after the meeting as Advisory needs to create public record with this information and Advisory needs to be able to probe deeply into what is being presented.

- A question was asked if the deadline for presentations is Monday prior to the meeting. Yes, presentations should be available on Mondays.
- A suggestion was made that the Massachusetts Moderators Association has some good videos in For the Public section of the website.
- Advisory members are encouraged to reach out to chairs of boards that they liaison to.
- A question was asked if there is a list of liaisons. Yes, there is a list on the contact sheet.
- A question was asked if there is a meeting with two of the school liaisons would that need to be a public meeting. As long as the conversation is on scheduling and planning process and not on substantive issues, it is okay to discuss.

Advisory will be meeting next week, August 18 on potential articles for Special Town Meeting. Schools will present on August 25th. Special Town Meeting will consider other articles besides the schools but the warrant has not been opened yet. Advisory was reminded to read the background information that was sent on the schools.

Adjourn

Patti Quigley made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote

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Patti Quigley - yes
John Lanza – yes
Jennifer Fallon – yes
Jeff Levitan - absent
Corinne Monahan - yes
Shawn Baker – yes
Doug Smith – yes
Jake Erhard – absent
Tom Cunningham – yes
Susan Clapham - yes
Al Ferrer - yes
Wendy Paul - yes
Pete Pedersen - yes
Madison Riley – yes

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.