

Approved August 25, 2021

**Advisory Committee Meeting
Zoom Video Conference
Wednesday, August 18, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Neal Goins, Tom Cunningham, Jake Erhard, 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

There was no one present for Citizen Speak

6:30 p.m. Facilities Maintenance Department (FMD) Contract

Meghan Jop, Executive Director, and Joe McDonough, FMD Director, provided an update of the FMD union contract. A brief overview of FMD was provided to help put the contract into context. In addition to maintenance of Town buildings, FMD is responsible for project management on vertical construction of buildings. This was contrasted with DPW, which is focused on horizontal construction projects such as roadways and parks. The reporting organization and core business areas were presented. This contract impacts custodians and maintenance staff.

The negotiation of this contract began in early 2020 before COVID restrictions. Negotiations were restarted in March, 2021 with a tentative agreement reached in May, 2021. The negotiation team included FMD maintenance and custodial managers; Finance Director, Sheryl Strother; FMD Director, Joe McDonough; and HR Director, Scott Szczebak. Custodial staff in this unit have been working for a little over a year without a contract. A PowerPoint presentation of the tentative agreement with AFSCME Council 93, Local 49 Custodians was presented and reviewed. There are 58 positions in this unit.

Questions:

- A request was made for a description of the sick bank.
 - Employees are allowed to donate sick time to other employees typically for long term family illness or personal illness. It's been used a few times but it is hard to manage from a financial manager perspective. The changes are to make it easier to manage and to be fairer to all town employees.
- What is the percentage increase of the settlement over 2021-2023?
 - About 1% of the total budget.
- Are the retroactive amounts in FY21 and FY22 within guidelines?
 - At the Special Town Meeting (STM), FMD will be requesting FY21 and FY22 be added to the budgets to be paid retroactively in the current year.
- How are the relations with the union?
 - It is an excellent relationship and is respectful on both sides. Wellesley has a long-term custodial staff.
- How does this agreement compare to other municipalities around us?
 - Joe surveyed other communities with information on wage rates by discipline; uniform costs; longevity. 28 organizations were reduced to 11 comparable communities. Maintenance staff salaries were looked at and compared to where Wellesley is. Wellesley is competitive. This contract wasn't a catch up – staff are not underpaid

compared to comparable communities. Contract came down to cost of living and is consistent and in line with other departments in town at the 1.5-2.5% range.

- Has there been an analysis over the years for how much money FMD has saved the town?
 - From an operational standpoint, a very detailed analysis from FY12 to current year of the normalized heating and cooling days and electric and natural gas costs showed over this 8-year period that FMD saved the town a couple hundred thousand dollars. On the design and construction side there is tremendous impact on capital projects. Last year the town saved \$2.7 million dollars with Owner's Project Manager (OPM) and clerk projects which is a return on investment of 2.5.
- A comment was made that the custodians worked very hard to keep the buildings safe, clean, and sanitized during COVID. Are things back to normal?
 - The custodians worked through the various phases of COVID. At each phase there were changes. Hopefully going forward things will be a little easier. Custodians will continue to be attentive the entire year based on the requirements
- Is the retroactive difference between FY21 and FY22 the difference in the .5 COLA?
 - Yes
- There is nothing in the budget for the retroactive amounts in FY21 and FY22, will the \$150,000 requested at STM throw the budgets over guideline?
 - No, budgets will still be within the 2.5% guideline. A portion will come from Free Cash and the FY21 budget had a line item for contract settlements.
- Why is the timing now?
 - Negotiations were impacted by COVID. A tentative agreement was reached in May. But it made sense to wait to present to the new Advisory Committee since new members will be voting on this.
- What is the baseline custodial contract cost and what percentage does the \$80,000 and \$70,000 represent?
 - This is a stepped contract and in addition to straight COLA there are step increases. Throughout year there are changes in steps and ranges. A guess would be in the 2% range but we'd have to look at each of the 58 union employees to apply the rates.
- Who is the proponent of this article?
 - The Select Board (SB) and only one motion is anticipated under this article
- A comment was made that in additional to the cost savings quantified using OPM in house, there is also an internal relations impact with other departments involved in projects.
- Are steps and lanes based on performance or years?
 - Time based - each year someone can be promoted and can be moved 2 steps above.
- Were any COVID relief funds used to offset extra expenses involved with COVID protocols?
 - Yes, CARES Act funds and FEMA funds were used to reimbursement costs associated with disinfecting and supplies and filters. These funds are not offsetting the costs of the settlement contract.

Liaison Reports

Library/Corinne Monahan – there was no meeting in August.

- A question was asked about the construction progress.
 - The library is pleased with its new location downtown and they might not be opening on projected date in September. Opening might be a few weeks later.

Minutes Approval

Patti Quigley made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to approve the August 11, 2021 minutes.

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Roll call vote

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

August 11, 2021 minutes were approved 12 to 0 with 1 abstention.

Jenn Fallon made and Patti Quigley seconded a motion to approve the July 7, 2021 minutes.

A request was made to amend the draft minutes to remove Jake Erhard from the attendance list as he was not in attendance.

Roll call vote

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

Amended July 7, 2021 minutes were approved 6 to 0 with 7 abstentions.

There was a discussion about roll call voting on Zoom and if a feature of Zoom could be used to cast votes. Julie Bryan asked Tom Harrington about roll call votes and Advisory was advised to continue with roll call votes. Shawn Baker will follow up with Tom Harrington.

Administrative items

Bylaw Article 11.11 pertains to boards reporting their final numbers to Advisory 90 days before the start of ATM and if they can't do that, then Advisory can waive this requirement. Advisory wants to look at this early because deadlines are tight. Typically, Boards come with best estimates and sometimes numbers might change due to a variety of factors and final numbers come later. A vote to waive this

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across the board now so that if it happens and every time it happens Advisory doesn't have to take a special vote.

Patti Quigley made and Doug Smith seconded a motion to waive requirements as allowed under Town Bylaws Article 11.11, to authorize late filing of information for annual appropriation requests when appropriate related to scheduled meetings of the requestor to Advisory

Comment was made that Advisory will probably get information prior to 90 days but this way the process is followed and there is flexibility.

Clarification was provided that this only authorizing late filings for ATM and that there are no special requirements for STM.

Roll call vote

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

Upcoming highlights

- School Committee projects will be presented next week
- The Warrant closes at noon on Friday and there is a tight timeline for STM.

Adjourn

Jenn Fallon made and Jake Erhard seconded a motion to adjourn.

Roll call vote

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

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Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m. 13 to 0.