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**Advisory Committee Meeting
Kingsbury Room, Wellesley Police Station
485 Washington Street**

Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Those present from Advisory Committee were Madison Riley, Chair; Susan Clapham, Secretary; Wendy Paul, Vice Chair; Gail Sullivan, Vice Chair; Al Ferrer; Pete Pedersen; Christina Dougherty; Rani Elwy; David Prock; Tamara Sielecki; Hanna Bonin; Phil Jameson; Jay Prosnitz; Lucienne Ronco; and Donna Stoddard.

Madison Riley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Kingsbury Room of the Police Station at 485 Washington Street.

Also present were Meghan Jop, Executive Director; Colette Aufranc, Select Board (SB), Tom Ulfelder, Chair, SB; Marybeth Martello, Director, Climate Action Committee, (CAC); Sue Morris, Chair, CAC

Citizen Speak

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

Special Town Meeting Warrant Article 2, Motion 7 – Contract Settlements

Last week the terms for the Superior Officer Association contract were settled. The settlement fundamentals were presented and reviewed. The SB voted to approve the three (3) year contract this week. See PowerPoint presentation listed at the end of the minutes.

Questions

- Are the number of police being increased to accommodate the increase in the new apartment complexes?
 - The number of police is not increasing at this time, but the activity and call volumes are being watched to determine if extra staff are needed. Staffing depends on call volume.
- Does the financial cost factor in things like funeral leave and overtime?
 - Overtime is factored into the cost. There are veterans on the force, but no one is currently in the reserves. However, in the future younger police and fire will be hired and the reserve costs will be a factor.
- Was there an element holding that held up the settlement of this contract?
 - Specifics of the negotiations cannot be shared. But looking across the board and the amount of work these officers do, they felt they should be compensated.
- What can the town do to help employees feel valued.
 - These contracts reflect some of this such as decreasing the number of years for vacation. The new hires are more interested in time off. The new HR director has been hired and will be looking at retention and recruitment as this is important to many department heads. The town will continue to look at other positions. Some examples are the potential of remote work and looking at DPW's pilot for some employees to work four (4) 10-hour days.

Discuss and Vote 2023 STM Warrant Articles

Article 2, Motion 7

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Susan Clapham made, and Al Ferrer favorable action on Article 2, Motion 7, as proposed by the Select Board, that the Town amend the vote taken under Motion 2 of Article 8 of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting by increasing the sum appropriated to the Select Board for Public Safety by \$89,048 as set forth in the article and the motion.

Discussion

- A comment was made that on behalf of Advisory it is good to recognize supervisory personnel in the police department and it is great that this is settled.

Advisory recommends favorable action on Article 2, Motion 7, 14 to 0.

Climate Action Committee Overview

Marybeth Martello, Director, Climate Action Committee presented an overview of the Climate Action Committee (see Meeting Documents below for the CAC presentation). Community highlights were also reviewed. A campaign is being launched next year and will be centered around 6 things – weatherizing, electrifying, adding solar, greening mobility, reducing waste, and landscape sustainability. Website will provide a “how to” do these things. There will be an energy coaching program of energy volunteers to help people with these transitions. Advisory resources will be available. MLP has a Wellesley drives electric program to help residents and departments with the purchase of an EV. Abode services is also offered and is a highly technical service for heat pumps. Outreach for this program will be extensive. There will be a Climate Action Dashboard as a measurement tool. Every action in the Climate Action plan will be on the dashboard to measure how much is accomplished for each goal.

Questions

- What is included in the waste number and why is it increasing?
 - The numbers from the RDF reflect business at the RDF. The numbers fluctuate widely from year to year based on the economy. Commercial customers vary year to year, and it also varies with the number of houses being built.
- How can CAC work with the Health Department to engage people? There are trauma effects of climate. It was felt that resources for parents of young kids who are traumatized by the climate would be helpful. Concern about the mental health impact of the climate was expressed.
 - There are both mental and physical health concerns. Behavioral change in the community is important in addressing this.
- How does CAC work with water resources and water resiliencies
 - The CAC is focused on water as energy piece. The CAC does not have authority over water quality. Minimizing storm water runoff is part of the Climate Action Plan.
- What can be done about the landscapers and their use of combustion engines which add noise and green gas emissions? A comment was made that electric equipment is much better and improved.
 - There is an issue with the banning of gas-powered blowers. It's been discussed and is complex at many levels. Part of plan for electrifying the landscape is the shift to electric powered lawn equipment.
- Is there a metric CAC would like to proactively report?
 - Departments are asked to report on sustainability in their budget submissions. Dashboard is full of metrics. It's understanding areas that departments are responsible for.
- A comment was made that it would be great if more people used the RDF instead of private haulers. Are private haulers recycling?
 - It is single stream recycling with the haulers. At the RDF the recycling is sorted by category. That material is more likely to be recycled at the RDF than with a single stream recycling. Some recycling items are high value recyclables like cardboard. Food waste is also available at the RDF.

- Does the CAC play a role in the retrofitting of existing buildings and working with the new owners/lessor to put in systems that are more sustainable?
 - The CAC would like to be able to discuss this when buildings are renovated but CAC doesn't have a direct line to do this. The CAC would like this to be part of the process, but more conversations are needed.
- Concern was expressed about the idling of cars around the schools at pick-up time and about the private trash haulers and the pollution from their diesel trucks.
 - Idling concerns were shared and there is a penalty for idling. CAC has worked with the schools on idling awareness. Idling is a large problem in town.
- Who oversees the land?
 - NRC oversees the land.
- Concern was expressed over the push for EVs as there was concern for the recyclability of the batteries. Concern was also expressed over the humanitarian cost of raw mineral mining for the batteries.
 - The CAC is becoming educated about some of the issues with mining and the recycling of batteries and solar panels. It was commented that there is a humanitarian crisis with the climate itself. No solution is perfect, but the concerns were understood.
- A request was made for restaurants to do more composting and to segregate the composting.
 - Restaurant work is coordinated with the Health department. The new food waste regulations went into effect a year ago, but enforcement is an issue. Programs are in place at some of the larger schools for composting.
- Concern was expressed that people might not be aware of the idling law.
- A recent article was cited about banks funding “carbon bomb” fossil fuel projects which will impact the attempts at lowering GHG emissions. Is it possible to tap into local banks to finance green projects?
 - The CAC is working with the Chamber of Commerce to engage local banks in the financing of green projects.
- A comment was made this it seems to be a layered approach to reducing GHG and is based on connecting with individuals and helping them understand how their actions have an impact. An additional comment was made that the website will be a great tool and is key in getting more people involved to make small changes in their lifestyles. What is the outreach to point people to the website?
 - There will be multiple channels and contact such as social media, newsletters, press releases, news and announcements, Swellesley Report, videos, and face to face meetings. CAC plans to attend meetings of other organizations in town, such as churches, and attend town-wide events. House tours and lawn signs are also ideas to work at the neighborhood level. Behavior change is also part of this.
- A comment was made about conflicting initiatives in town.
- A comment was made about future capital projects in town and the buildings without air conditioning/improved HVAC. It was felt that the issue of parity across the schools with respect to HVAC will be a topic and that it is important that CAC be involved in the conversation.
 - The CAC would prefer all electric and air source heat pumps in municipal buildings.
- A question was asked as to how the trends and measurements are calculated.
 - CAC has been tracking inventory since 2007. The electric numbers are from the MLP. National Grid gives data in clumps. Assumptions are made at fuel oil use. On road vehicles are based on counts from Mass DOT. The DPW provides the amount of gas and oil the fleet vehicles use. The fuel use data is then converted into emissions by a software package.
- When boards come to present to Advisory, would it be helpful to ask questions about energy use?

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- Although Advisory has been instrumental in helping CAC over the past few years, the boards and departments are not yet at the point to be able to answer this for the FY25 budget. However, they are being asked, as part of the budget process, about capital projects and programs and the GHG implications and the resilience of the infrastructure and the natural environment.

Administrative

There was an administrative review of materials available to Advisory members on the Google sheet and on the Town's website. A review of Town Meeting was provided for Advisory members.

Minutes Approval

Lucienne Ronco made, and Hannah Bonin seconded a motion to approve the October 25, 2023, minutes. Minutes were approved unanimously by a vote of 14 to 0.

Liaison Updates

Planning/Jay Prosnitz – provided an update on the recent Planning Board meeting. There was concern expressed during Citizen Speak about the Cliff Road project (489 Worcester); concerns about traffic – Route 9, Cliff and surrounding roads were mentioned, and the neighbors are concerned about the size. This project would require a change in zoning from single use to multi use; a new project on Worcester Road and Cedar Street ramp was also discussed which, although early in the process, will be 34 units on 1.5 acres. Developers have been speaking with abutters and held a public hearing. A website for MBTA Communities information is being developed. There will be a November 30 presentation of the information by the League of Women Voters

MLP/Tamara Sielecki – a new assistant director has been hired; the director, Don Newell is retiring; the board discussed the transition; the battery project on schedule and will be ready June 1, 2024; accounting changes were discussed; it was discussed putting excess cash into a rate stabilization fund; there are transformer issues with long lead time on purchasing replacements.

BOH/Christina Doherty– meeting preparing the budget; reducing plastic use; possibility article to establish a revolving fund; possible article for Opioid settlement – money coming in for next 10 years – education and prevention awareness.

Schools/Rani Elwy– School budgeting process begins now. February 7 SC is presenting their FY25 budget to Advisory. Schools are in the process of finalizing their strategic plan which drives the budget. Schools would like Advisory's questions to School Committee in advance to assist with the budget process and to provide answers early and incorporate the answers into what they present to Advisory. The website Cleargov.com was recommended to look up questions about Wellesley. The district's budget timeline was explained. It was recommended to look at last year's budget. The district follows a state formula for their budget.

Donna Stoddard made, and Pete Pedersen seconded a motion to adjourn. Members voted unanimously to adjourn, 14 to 0. Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.,

Meeting Materials [November 1, 2023, meeting materials](#)

- Draft AC Minutes 10/25/23
- CAC Memo – Climate Action in Town Government
- CAC Presentation to Advisory 11/1/23 – PowerPoint
- Article 2 Motion 7 – Superior Officers – PowerPoint