

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, February 13, 2018

7:00 PM

Town Hall – Selectmen’s Meeting Room

Members present: Connie Benjamin (by phone), Brad Cote, Ann Hurd, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle

Members absent: Ted Kirchner

Call to order: Brad Cote called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to:

http://new.townhallstreams.com/stream.php?location_id=75&id=15611

Agenda Item #1: Discuss initial budget proposal recommended by the Town Roads Strategic Planning Committee (TRSPC)

- Doug Neuschafer, Chris Lineberry, and DPW Director Joe Lynch came to discuss the TRSPC’s \$150,000 budget recommendation. Doug explained that the TRSPC was formed by the Board of Selectmen in October 2017.
- The committee’s charge from the Board of Selectmen was to provide recommendations regarding the redesign of Main Street/Route 117:
 - To better manage and calm traffic in the Town and improve traffic flow
 - To ensure the Town’s roads and streets are designed to be as hospitable as possible to human activity and interaction
 - To thwart the Town’s separation because of traffic
 - To include consideration of:
 - traffic calming, traffic speeds, paving, marking, sidewalks, ADA access
 - the effect that any proposed redesign will have on roads that feed Main Street
 - sidewalks on Main Street and elsewhere, to provide for ADA compliance and also to allow for as much pedestrian, bike, and non-automobile use as possible
 - To deliver, by January 15, 2018, a budget recommendation to the Board of Selectmen for the appropriation of initial monies necessary for the initial design and engineering phases of any project(s).
- To fulfill its charge, the TRSPC designed a Request for Information (RFI) that was distributed to various design/consulting firms in November 2017. The TRSPC then held an open house in January 2018 with interested design firms, and RFI responses were received on January 18, 2018.
- After analyzing six responses to the RFI, the TRSPC recommended a budget amount of \$150,000 to pay for the creation of a “master plan” for Route 117 that would identify and prioritize various traffic projects along the Route 117 corridor.
- The master plan for Route 117 would likely incorporate “Complete Streets” principles. DPW Director Joe Lynch educated us about what a Complete Streets

policy is. A Complete Streets policy looks at the entire town and addresses all modes of transportation. The current draft of our Complete Streets policy is available here:

https://www.townofbolton.com/sites/boltonma/files/news/town_of_bolton_draft_complete_streets_policy_0.pdf

- Assuming that the Complete Streets policy is approved by the Selectmen and accepted by MassDOT, the TRSPC would then apply the Complete Streets concepts to the Route 117 corridor. This would allow us to access Complete Streets grants in carrying out Route 117-related projects. Joe Lynch said that grant money to formulate a Route 117 master plan is guaranteed, up to \$50,000.
- Town Administrator Don Lowe said that he believed that the TRSPC's \$150,000 estimate for the engineering/master plan work was reasonable.
- Town Accountant Ninotchka Rogers asked what the implications are for the town's long-term capital plan. In other words, if the town votes in favor of the \$150,000 "117 Master Plan," what future costs are we likely to face when carrying out the projects recommended by that plan? TRSPC member Chris Lineberry said that the committee's charge did not include getting an "all in" estimate for the cost of carrying out all the potential improvements to Route 117.
- Town Administrator Don Lowe mentioned another grant for which the town might be eligible. He confirmed that this particular grant could pay for this type of engineering study/master plan. It is a competitive grant and he believes that the town should apply for it. Mr. Lowe said that the difficult question is whether we should appropriate the \$150,000 in FY19 in case our grant application is not successful, or whether we should just wait until FY20. Several Advisory Committee members also wondered whether this should be postponed until FY20.

Agenda Item #2: Discuss the Fire Department's FY19 budget and capital requests

- Chief John Mentzer, Deputy Chief Gery Wilson, and Firefighter Matt Bosselait came to discuss the department's operational budget and capital requests.
- Proposal to increase daytime coverage and hire a full-time Chief:
 - Chief Mentzer is asking for two additional full-time positions (80 hours per week) which would be filled by a pool of 6-10 *per diem* firefighters. The total cost for this would be around \$90,000.
 - Chief Mentzer also intends to retire at the end of FY18, which means that the town needs to discuss how to fill the vacant Chief position. Currently, the Chief is a "strong" chief (*i.e.*, reports directly to the Board of Selectmen) who works part-time and is paid through a stipend. In terms of potential cost, our Human Resources director, Donna Madden, is working on that and will be presenting a salary range recommendation later in February.
 - Town Administrator Don Lowe said that he believes that, upon Chief Mentzer's retirement, the town should hire a full-time working Chief who is also a trained EMT and can go out on fire and ambulance calls. He noted that we are one of the only towns in the area that does not have a full-time working Chief.

- Chief Mentzer also mentioned that our Human Resources department was looking into possible re-classification of the current full-time firefighter/EMT.
- Chairman Cote noted that his initial inclination is to support the move toward a full-time Chief position, but he wanted to learn more from Human Resources and think about how hiring a full-time Chief might affect the department's other staffing and capital requests.
- Proposal to purchase a modular hooklift apparatus to replace Engine 4 (\$275,000)
 - The department's initial proposal was to purchase a prime mover chassis with a hooklift apparatus plus (1) a brush fire body, (2) an ice rescue/command body, (3) a utility/stake body, and (4) a hazardous materials body.
 - After the last meeting with Advisory, Selectmen, and Capital Planning, the department reassessed the proposal and determined that they could probably postpone the purchase of the hazmat body and the utility/stake body. If we did that, they estimated a cost savings of approximately \$25,000.
 - Deputy Wilson said that the current Engine 4 is very unreliable and the internal workings of the pump are questionable. Until they get a replacement, they might have to use a much larger and more expensive piece of equipment to serve in its place. He also mentioned that because Engine 4 is a manual transmission, there are fewer people who are capable of operating it.
 - Selectman Wysocki noted that he would like to know the individual costs of the chassis and each of the four proposed bodies.
 - Chairman Cote asked how the adoption of a hooklift/modular apparatus to replace Engine 4 would affect the rest of the fire department's fleet. Deputy Chief Wilson said that if we were to obtain this apparatus with all four of the proposed bodies, then we would have a complete fleet.
- Proposal to replace the SCBA (Self Contained Breathing Apparatus) fill system (\$44,000)
 - The current system that we have is 12 years old. If we were to replace the system, we would expect it to have a 20-year useful lifetime.
 - The quote that the fire department received breaks down as follows:
 - \$9,270 for a Scott Revolve Air charge station
 - \$25,271 for a Scott Simple Air compressor system
 - \$6,400 for four 6,000 psi DOT cylinders
 - \$1,000 for an air line set (nuts, crimps, nipples & fittings)
 - Chairman Cote asked whether we could get a compressor that matches our current 4,500 psi regime, instead of moving up to 6,000 psi. Chief Mentzer said he would try to get a price for a 4,500 psi compressor.
 - Connie Benjamin asked whether leasing is a possibility. Chief Mentzer said that some of the suppliers do offer a lease-to-own program.
- Discussion of unspent articles from prior fiscal years

- “Fire Engine 1 Repairs” approved in May 2016: Chief Mentzer said that Engine 1 is scheduled for those repairs on February 26, so this money will be spent.
- \$6,400 remaining in the “fire apparatus” article: Chief Mentzer said that they are still planning to purchase some laptops or tablets to go into that apparatus.

Agenda Item #3: Advisory Committee business

- Review the Dispatch (299) budget
 - Ninotchka informed us of the FY19 number from Devens Dispatch: \$170,000. Chairman Cote noted that that sounds like a very round number, so he asked Ninotchka to confirm with Don Lowe. We therefore did not vote on that budget.
- Review the draft of the Advisory Committee’s FY18 Annual Report
 - We discussed the initial draft of our report (which covers the period of July 2016 through June 2017) and agreed to add a few more details about the specific issues that came before the committee over the past year (*e.g.*, the purchase of the Town Common).
- Prepare for the FY19 Advisory Statement and PowerPoint presentation
 - Brad reminded us that we will have to prepare a written statement and PowerPoint presentation regarding the FY19 budget. He asked people to start thinking about elements that ought to be included in the statement and presentation.
 - The objective of the PowerPoint presentation is to educate the public about how we arrived at the FY19 budget.
 - Ann Hurd mentioned that she would like for both our statement and presentation to discuss the concept of “value.” Joe Myerson noted that we should try to demonstrate the efficiency and value of the municipal services that are provided by the town.

Adjourn: **MOTION:** Joe Myerson moved to adjourn at 9:35 PM; seconded by Ann Hurd. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Ann Hurd, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (4-0).**

Documents Referenced

Departments’ FY19 budget submissions

Draft of the Advisory Committee’s Annual Report for FY18

Approved by the Advisory Committee