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Approved  
1/28/2020

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

7:00 PM

Town Hall – Selectmen's Meeting Room

Members present: Connie Benjamin, Brian Boyle, Jessica Colangelo, Ann Hurd, Craig Lauer, and Joe Myerson

Call to order: Brian Boyle called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKX1EAxDWTA>

- Agenda: High level review of FY20 operating budget, FY21 budget requests, and capital requests to date.
- High level points:
  - Budget includes assumptions about revenues and operating expenses.
  - Numbers are subject to change, but as of today there is a projected deficit of \$457,292.
    - Goals
      - To resolve this deficit.
      - Certified free cash to be 3-5% of overall operating budget as of the start of the fiscal year to help manage unexpected expenses such as snow and ice removal, etc.
      - Ongoing target at end of FY is about \$350,000 carryover.
- Review of FY21 requested budget against FY20 approved budget to call out changes for review and discussion
  - No changes to selectmen
  - Decrease to town administrator due to staff turnover/rehire
  - No change to advisory committee
  - Town accountant increase
  - Town assessors decrease due to staff wage differences and software needs
  - Treasurer collector position separated to treasurer and tax collector: now 2 positions
  - Legal services have no change but historically is used relatively quickly into the FY
    - Will continue to look at whether this should be increased in budget planning going forward
  - MIS increase largely due to software support and tech needs
  - Town clerk wages increase and supply increase request
  - Increase in elections because there will be several coming up this FY
  - Street listing/registrars increase; unsure for what, will have to look further at this

- Conservation commission decrease
  - Planning board up \$7200 largely due to wages
  - No change to appeals board or agricultural commission, no change to economic development budget
  - Town buildings request slight increase
  - Town hall request: will look further into request to add gas-mileage line item rather than moving it into repairs and maintenance or another account line
  - Will need to look in more detail and have further explanation provided re: changes in insurance policies, cost and line items
  - Question related to increase in request for public safety phone line item
  - Police department in contract period, may see changes due to contract negotiation. Question raised about amount of increase in wages; flagged cruiser request as item that may need further explanation as well as gas line item and why that is so much lower than FY19 with request for new cruiser?
  - Fire and EMS departments combined as of 1/1/20; committee agreed that combining and making this more condensed will alleviate confusion going forward
    - ALS (Advanced Life Support) previously provided by Woods which was a private company. They are being relocated too far away (Lancaster to Gardner) so Bolton would like to establish ALS capacity here and share cost and services with neighboring towns
    - Flag for further review of increase in firefighter wages
  - Regional dispatch increase may not stay as high as budget currently reflects but there was a significant contract renegotiation for dispatchers leading to salary/wage increases
  - Education: Assume 3% increase. No capital requests from the schools yet.
    - Post-secondary voc ed increase is an educated guess at this time
  - Transfer station increases largely due to new contracts and terms. Flag for more information on some of these line items
  - Council on Aging: propose revolving account for MART drivers
  - Flag veterans services request for FY21 request for accuracy as well as reason for meetings increase
  - Flag parks and recreation request for increase in supplies; are there other alternatives for protecting lights at field?
- Review of capital requests
    - Brief review of current requests
    - Forbush Mill property acquisition? More information requested.
  - Ongoing meeting schedule for this committee will be assumed as each Tuesday at 6:30pm, agenda TBD. Next meeting is 1/14/20.

- Goal to start meeting with department heads/smaller departments; police, fire/ambulance, DPW, Library individually on different nights. Other departments could be consolidated into smaller groups.
- Brian to review and send draft schedule for groupings in future meetings

