

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, December 12, 2017

7:00 PM

Town Hall – Selectmen’s Meeting Room

Members present: Brad Cote, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, & Brian Boyle

Members absent: Connie Benjamin

Call to order: Chairman Cote called the meeting to order at 7:09 PM. The entire meeting can be viewed by going to:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DFa-wRi2BY&list=PLu94OVLkDQ\\_LWB3HSPkcuIG6ztnCxFowO](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8DFa-wRi2BY&list=PLu94OVLkDQ_LWB3HSPkcuIG6ztnCxFowO)

### Agenda Item #1: Discuss and vote on new Advisory Committee member

- Chairman Cote recapped our process for selecting the sixth member of the Advisory Committee and thanked Ann Hurd for volunteering her time.
  - **MOTION:** Joe Myerson moved to approve Ann Hurd as the sixth member of the Advisory Committee; seconded by Ted Kirchner. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (4-0).**
- With Ann Hurd present, Brad briefly explained our plan for getting through the FY19 budget. Among other things, he discussed the liaison program and how it assists in our review of departments’ budgets.

### Agenda Item #2: Follow-up discussion of Firefighter/EMT staffing proposal

- The liaisons to the Fire Department (Brad Cote and Joe Myerson) had not yet had an opportunity to meet with Chief Mentzer regarding the staffing proposal that was outlined at our 11/14 meeting. Brad and Joe planned to reach out to Chief Mentzer prior to our January 2, 2018 meeting to get more information.

### Agenda Item #3: Review overall FY19 budget

- The committee went through a high-level review of the entire FY19 budget. What follows are notes regarding certain departments’ budgets:
  - Moderator (114): Brad will ask about the reason for the proposed increase from \$10 to \$50.
  - Selectmen (122): Ted wants to be reminded about what “Purchase of Services” is for, and he also suggested that “Supplies” be reduced from \$150 to \$50.
  - Town Administrator (123): Brian asked whether cost-of-living-adjustments (COLAs) are applicable to positions with a contract. This can be clarified during our session regarding labor/personnel policies.
  - Town Accountant (135): We would like to know what the “Purchase of Services” line is for.

- Board of Assessors (141): It looks like the FY19 explanation regarding “Purchase of Services” is duplicative of the explanation offered for FY18. We would like to get clarification about that.
  - Treasurer (145): There is a salary decrease because our prior treasurer had several years of service.
  - Human Resources (147): We have a new position because the HR function has been extracted from the Treasurer’s functions.
  - Legal Services (151): We have questions about this budget given the relatively high two-year run rate. Brian requested that we invite the Law Committee to the meeting when we discuss the Legal Services budget.
  - Conservation Commission (171): We should submit questions about this budget to Joe Myerson so that he can speak with them prior to the full Advisory Committee meeting.
  - Planning Board (175): Brad noted that it’s very helpful that we received early drafts of all the potential Planning Board articles.
  - DPW (421, etc.): Ted mentioned that he will be working with the new DPW Director, Joseph Lynch, to analyze best practices, including plowing/sanding, fleet management, etc. Brian asked Ted to confirm whether the “EMT Summer Help” was properly budgeted in FY18, because otherwise it looks like an increase for FY19. Brian also asked Ted to confirm whether the DPW was consulted about the Public Ways Safety Committee’s proposed warrant article.
  - Police (200, 210): The department’s only capital request (which is included as a line item in the operational budget) is for a pick-up truck, in lieu of a cruiser, in the amount of \$47,400. In their liaison meeting, both Brian and Brad came away with a positive impression of Chief Nelson’s overall budget.
  - Fire (220): Brad and Joe will try to get together with Chief Mentzer prior to our January 2, 2018 meeting.
  - Board of Health (510): There is a proposed increase in wages that we can discuss during our meeting on January 16.
  - Council on Aging (541): Brad would like to know if the COA has a five-year plan. Ted would like to know more about who the COA’s customers are. Brian agreed to follow up with the COA to get more information.
  - Human Services & Safety (590): Brian will connect with HSS to get more information about their budget.
  - Library (610): Joe and Connie will reach out to the Library to get more insight into their budget prior to the full Advisory meeting. Ted would like to know whether the adjustments we made last year have worked well.
- The committee also discussed revisions to our liaison assignments for FY19. We agreed to assign liaisons as follows:

Department(s)	Advisory Liaisons
Board of Assessors	Brad Cote
Conservation Commission	Joe Myerson
Council on Aging and Health & Human Services	Brian Boyle
Department of Public Works	Ted Kirchner & Ann Hurd
Fire / Ambulance	Brad Cote & Joe Myerson
Library	Connie Benjamin & Joe Myerson
Parks & Recreation	Ann Hurd
Planning Board	Brian Boyle & Ted Kirchner
Police / Public Safety Building	Brad Cote & Brian Boyle
School Committee	Brian Boyle
All Other Departments & Boards	Brad Cote

Agenda Item #4: Discuss 2018 Advisory calendar and potential addition of (1) session regarding labor costs and policies and (2) session regarding revenue sources/opportunities

- Brad informed the committee that we are going to add a session to our calendar regarding labor costs and policies, including our salary administration policy / salary schedule.
  - Ted noted that salaries are a major component of our operational budget and it is therefore important for us to understand the practices and standards currently being implemented.
  - Brian requested that we receive any written materials a couple weeks before that session so that we can submit specific questions in advance.
- The committee also agreed to hold a discussion regarding potential revenue sources, such as the meals tax, solar farms, and recreational marijuana. Brad noted that our town accountant agrees that our committee should discuss revenue opportunities.

Agenda Item #5: Discuss pre-STM and pre-ATM Advisory Committee procedures

- On the day of the Special Town Meeting, Brad compiled a list of anticipated capital items for FY19 and shared that information during the STM to provide some perspective about how the citizen's petition might fit into the larger financial picture. Joe and Brian both expressed that they wished there had been more time for the Advisory Committee to review that information and discuss what message we as a committee would deliver during the STM regarding the warrant article.
- Ted noted that ideally the Advisory Committee should issue a "signing statement" when it votes on major warrant articles. Brad noted that individual Advisory Committee members have the right to speak and offer additional information during a town meeting.

Agenda Item #6: Transfer request from Treasurer - \$300.00 to Line 913-5172 for unemployment

- The Treasurer requested to transfer \$300.00 into the Unemployment Insurance line. This expense was unforeseen because the town could not anticipate the employee's

departure and the subsequent filing and awarding of an unemployment claim. The committee had some questions about which fiscal year this transfer would apply to (it seemed to be for FY17).

Agenda Item #7: Review and approve meeting minutes

- The committee briefly discussed the draft minutes for our 11/14 and 11/27 meetings. There were some blank spaces in the 11/27 minutes regarding motions made on the floor of the Special Town Meeting. Joe Myerson previously emailed regarding his approval of both sets of minutes.
  - **MOTION:** Ted Kirchner moved to approve both sets of minutes (11/14 and 11/27) subject to Brad filling in the blank spaces for the 11/27 minutes; seconded by Brian Boyle. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (4-0).**

Adjourn: **MOTION:** Joe Myerson moved to adjourn at 9:22 PM; seconded by Brian Boyle. **VOTING IN FAVOR:** Brad Cote, Ted Kirchner, Joe Myerson, and Brian Boyle. **VOTED AND PASSED. UNANIMOUS (4-0).**

Documents Referenced

Departments' FY19 budget submissions

Approved by Advisory Committee 1/10/18