

TOWN OF PEMBROKE
APPROVED
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
06 AUGUST 2020

Linda Peterson, Chairperson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee via ZOOM/PACTV- VIRTUAL and read the statement pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law at 6:00pm on 06 August 6 2020.

Also present were Stephen Walsh, Kelly Seifert, Sandra Beaton, Tim Landy, Matthew Norton and Matthew Rushing.

Guests: Bill Chenard, Town Manager and Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager

Linda welcomed Bill to discuss several topics noted on the agenda:

CARES Act Update:

Pembroke will receive its first check from the CARES Act submissions on August 10, 2020 in the amount of \$61,302.11. Tom O'Brien from Plymouth County will be presenting the check to the town; all are welcome to attend. Both the town and schools are currently looking at their HVAC and filtration systems. We don't have the experience in house and are using contracted services. Linda said the bills submitted for payment of services for items we bought for COVID-19 issues, should the money go back to areas that spent the money. Bill said no; they thought ahead and isolated those costs into one area pending reimbursement; this will offset those costs directly and not go to departments. Bill was asked about the next round or reimbursements. We don't know, Plymouth County has asked us for a number of receipts; still submitting pieces of that. The allocation in the first three rounds is 1.5M for Pembroke. He will be presenting to the Board of Selectmen on August 26, 2020 additional priorities.

Small Business Covid-19 Relief:

The working group met and looked at the guidelines and had terrific input. The application and guidelines have been published on the town website. To date we have received several applications. The deadline is August 14, 2020.

Budget Changes:

None at this time; we'll talk about the Reserve Fund at the September meeting along with HVAC issues. Bill will send information in advance. The Fire Department Collective Bargaining Agreement has been completed and he would like to discuss at Advisory's next meeting. This item will also be added to the next Town Meeting.

Town Manager FY21 Priority List

- He noted that this is a work in progress and will make several updates; some will get added and some will come off. He highlighted areas he identified by categories 1-5; 5 being high priority. Bill shared his computer screen with the committee.
- The non-collective bargaining folks had agreed to take a half year salary, that is on the priority list to restore; it's a small number and important to note that.
- Reduced BOS office and Pond vegetation removal; restoring.
- Reduced Town Council; restoring
- Reduced Advisory Clerical and Reserve Fund; restoring and adding funding to Reserve Fund at a future town meeting. He is scheduled to meet with the Town Accountant tomorrow and the School Superintendent next week.
- Cut all OT costs for Town Hall; this was unrealistic, staff covering night meetings or working through the process.
- Data Processing is an area of concern of his; technologically is behind; some costs being covered by the CARES Act. This is an area for discussion.
- Town Clerk's office; restoring the OT. This is related to the upcoming elections and lot more mail in requests and absentee ballot requests. Also looking at postage; will be adding, the cost is \$.0.65 per unit.
- We had cut a custodian; that probably wasn't a good idea. We're going to need to take a close look at that. We will be restoring.
- Police Department, looking at Lieutenants; the Chief announced his retirement and is leaving early. Restoring.

- Fire Department – we have an interim Chief for now, however, we will plan for a permanent Chief in FY21. Restoring those numbers.
- Municipal Inspectional Services; restoring. Inspections are continuing and building permits are healthy; these have not dropped.
- Animal Control – non-union; restoring.
- Schools are a high priority and with the costs associated with the Hybrid Model. Want to get as much through the CARES Act as we can but not all costs will be eligible. The deadline for next phase that we have to submit is September 30th but we want to submit just after Labor Day. We will be working through that process and be presenting to the BOS on 8/26/20.
- DPW – First two lines are half year salary numbers; money they gave up. Numbers highlighted, we took a look at when budget was flat. We were lucky in the last few years where heating oil dropped. We are anticipating that heating oil will increase; heating fuel and electricity. The cost for heating this building was over \$10,000 .
- Council on Aging – restoring. We cut an Out Reach employee that was asked for, we are working through that.
- Library and Recreation - same thing.
- Town Landing – cut \$10,000 from budget because we are not offering swimming lessons – Hoping by next June that isn't the case so adding back in \$5,000. There has been a huge demand for our beach services. Bill took a moment to pause and make a public service announcement. "If residents are using our beaches and see inappropriate behavior, please call police. Please pick up your trash or use the trash cans where available."
- Group Health Insurance – if we restore employees that we previously cut both the town and school we'll have to restore.
- Town Meeting voted to support the South Shore Community Action Council Article. If the BOS execute a contract we want to make sure we have this in place.
- Snow & Ice; it costs more than \$150,000; we want to make sure we have a handle on that otherwise FY22 is going to have a hit on it.
- Bill was asked to confirm if the column highlighted in "Blue" on his spreadsheet. Bill said this was approved at Town Meeting. The proposed total for restoration is \$917,000.
- Bill said both State Representative Cutler and State Senator Moran are working with the Legislature to level fund state aid and we should be able to fund some of these proposed restorations. Also, Meal tax came in a little higher.
- Bill said he wants to thank legislation by both State Representative Cutler and State Senator Moran for funding passed for the schools related to COVID-19 in the amount of \$100,000. This will help with the hybrid school model. Pembroke also received funding of \$70,000 for a Van for Council on Aging which will allow us to provide local rides. Bill was asked if we have a driver for this van. He said yes and we also have volunteers.
- Linda asked about the October Town Meeting. Bill said the BOS voted to remand the warrant articles back to the requesters. Bill said it is at this point; but isn't great for timing. We may have to look after the first of the year; BOS are scheduled to talk about it this on 8/26/20. Sandy asked Bill if he had received any feedback from the way Town Meeting was held. He said he spoke to at least three people and all were positive. He did not hear of any official complaints.
- Matthew Rushing asked to examine other areas and avenues where Advisory could be of use/service to the town. Bill said that's a great idea; there are a lot of things where Advisory could play a very important role.

Linda thanked Bill for providing this information to Advisory tonight

Linda began the discussion about Advisory vacancies; four applications have been received. She is suggesting the committee interview all applicants at our first meeting in September. Sabrina confirmed eligible dates from PACTV. These dates available for Advisory are Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 7:00PM, Thursday, September 10, 2020 at 6:00PM and Thursday, September 24, 2020 at 6:00PM.

Matthew Rushing said he wants to understand the process. There is lack of clarity in the by-laws and guidance of who's responsible for this appointment? If Advisory is appointing to fill existing vacancies of the remainder of someone's term, then it's the Advisory Committee? The document says it's an appointing board made up of the Advisory Committee and BOS. Linda explained that traditionally Advisory receives the applications and interviews the candidates. The committee will decide who would be the best fit for the committee based on their expertise and the skill and strengths of the current members. Once voted by Advisory, it's reported to the BOS office for their confirmation vote and appointment to the Advisory Committee. It's a one-on-one appointment by Advisory and BOS. Linda said she has always involved the Town Moderator in the interview process because he is involved in filling vacancies.

Kelly wanted to clarify that we as a committee have to work together and in her experience on the committee, we seem to have a diverse group of backgrounds and have a mix of different opinions. Matthew Rushing said we should clarify what's written in the by-laws as its unclear and should be re-written. Linda agreed the by-law should be re-written for clarity. It would then have to be submitted on the next Annual Town Meeting Warrant as it requires a Town Meeting vote. Tim suggested this should be done in parallel, putting together a group to write down what the rules should be and next time there's a warrant, we submit them. It was then suggested a working committee of Advisory members be established to draft something and bring it back to Advisory for review and future submission as a Town Meeting Warrant Article for a vote. Matthew Rushing, Kelly Seifert and Tim Landy volunteered. Bill Chenard recommended using the language of "working group" and not "working committee".

Upon motion moved by Matthew Rushing and 2nd by Tim Landy to establish a working group of Advisory members to review existing language of the Advisory bylaw and draft a recommendation

VOTED¹: To establish a working group of Advisory members to review existing language of the Advisory bylaw and draft a recommendation via **Role Call:** Stephen Walsh YES; Kelly Seifert YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Matthew Norton YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Tim Landy YES; Linda Peterson YES

Upon motion moved by Matthew Norton and 2nd by Kelly Seifert to appoint Matthew Rushing, Kelly Seifert and Tim Landy to the Advisory working group to review existing language of the Advisory bylaw and draft a recommendation

VOTED²: To appoint Matthew Rushing, Kelly Seifert and Tim Landy to the Advisory working group to review existing language of the Advisory bylaw and draft a recommendation via **Role Call:** Stephen Walsh YES; Kelly Seifert YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Matthew Norton YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Tim Landy YES; Linda Peterson - YES

Linda asked if this "draft" could be ready for review by the September 10th Advisory Meeting.

The committee agreed to schedule the four candidates for the next meeting scheduled for September 2, 2020 at 7:00PM in 20 minute increments. Sandy asked if ZOOM has the capability of keeping the candidates in a "wait" status so their interviewed individually. Sabrina will reach out to PACTV and ask; she will let the committee know.

Upon motion moved by Sandra Beaton and 2nd by Tim Landy to approve the revised meeting minutes of July 23, 2020.

VOTED³: To accept the revised meeting minutes of July 23, 2020 via **Role Call:** Stephen Walsh YES; Kelly Seifert YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Matthew Norton YES; Tim Landy YES; Linda Peterson YES

Sandy asked if the committee was going to reorganize as discussed prior to Town Meeting. Tim noted that we may want to wait until the two new members are appointed. All agreed.

Linda asked Sabrina how many Warrant Articles were on the original Town Warrant before being cut. Sabrina said 47; 2 dropped as unnecessary; 15 were addressed; there were 30 handed back plus all Capital items. Tim asked if the Warrant was going to be open again. Sabrina said yes.

Tim noted that he's been on this committee since last fall and has had challenges with getting numbers and waiting for numbers. Tonight we got numbers with a voice over. He asked Bill what can Advisory do to get more engaged so we better understand these numbers before he meets with Advisory. Are there things where Advisory can add value? Bill said as we work through the process, it's been very challenging dealing with COVID issues, significant changes, conflicts in bylaws. Town Manager Act has been a challenge. He wants to present his budget process as we start to build budgets for next year. He has department heads working on job descriptions, and working on CBA's. We need to update roles and process and the budget process. The workload will become much more efficient; he apologized that he's not there today. Linda told Bill he was very valuable and we can revisit after we see how things start working. Kelly told Bill she is impressed so far and looks forward to working with him.

Matthew Rushing said it would help when someone comes in and speaks with Advisory if it's an information brief or decision brief. What we're intended to do with this information so we can listen with context. This would be helpful moving forward. If we don't put it on the agenda it won't get done. We should all be on the same page. For example we heard about the priorities today. Is there something we are going to be doing with this information? Linda said she agreed and we could do that. In a previous meeting Bill had said he was developing a priority list and agreed to present this information at our August meeting.

Bill said if the committee has strong feelings about something he does want to hear that. It's important that we have that working relationship. Tonight was more of an informational process. This is what I envision for our next town meeting; this is the gross number; this is what we see what's out there that we need funded. When we get our revenue number in line we can then come back to the table. Here are our new revenue numbers and why and ask you to support in a revised budget that goes before town meeting. At that meeting we will be asking for your support and input. Maybe we do two meetings and present our priorities and take two weeks and think about it and give us feedback in between and ask for a vote for support before we go to town meeting.

Sandy said some of the topics she would need some time to get facts and information and then come back.

Stephen Walsh said we in Advisory always find out everything 5 minutes before it hits town meeting floor. What he would like to see is what the town is looking for, so we can help you find funding for that, whether it's a grant or a proposal or go to the legislature or federal government so we can try to find that money and save the town that expense. A lot of our capital items we find out a week before it goes to town meeting floor; we probably could of done something else but it's too late and then we're into the expense. He would like to see more of an open format of what departments are looking for.

Bill shared his Capital Projects binder (700 pages) from the Town of Natick. We want data on capital projects so we have all information for capital planning. We don't know what's out there and what isn't. We don't know today what's out there and what's necessary. We should know about every building and every piece of equipment in this town. When was it installed, what does it cost, do we have the funding to replace it. We want to be proactive. Bill said in his opinion, as far as a Capital Committee goes, Advisory should play that role. Help with studies, collecting data and adding to spreadsheet; looking at metrics. For example: how many gallons of gas do we use; need to budget for it, same for Utility use. We will get there.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday September 2, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Advisory adjourned at 7:40PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Walsh, Clerk