

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
02 SEPTEMBER 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 7:00PM on 02 September 2020.

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

**Absent:** Kelly Seifert,

**Guests:** Steve Dodge, Town Moderator; Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager

**Member Applicants:** Bob Kennedy, John Scholl, Carly Levy, Kristi Cullinane

Linda noted that the committee will interview four applicants; two applicants will dial in and two will connect virtually. PACTV will utilize the "waiting room" feature for each candidate so they join the meeting at their scheduled time and allow for 15 minutes.

The committee discussed the process to execute the vote for membership. One vacancy is a full three year term and the other expires in 2021. After a brief discussion the committee agreed after the applicant interviews they would vote on each applicant; each member casting two votes. Steve Dodge as an observer suggested they could ask the applicant voted for membership which term they would be interested in filling.

Linda welcomed Bob Kenney and asked why he is interested to be a member of Advisory Committee. Bob said during the last election he noticed the open position. He has been living here for three years and is happy with Pembroke. He is Civic minded and will be retiring at the beginning of next year and looking to contribute to the town. He has been a detective for 32 years, served in the military and has his Masters in Criminal Justice. He was a member of his union bargaining committee and has labor experience in law enforcement; no mechanical experience. He did watch one Advisory meeting. Bob was asked with his CBA experience in law enforcement, would he be able to be non-bias. Bob said you can't only be interested in your own well-being; you also need to be reasonable and objective. He is a tax payer and doesn't want to give the shop away. Linda noted that Advisory has no control over contract negotiations; it is the responsibility of the BOS and the Town Manager. Bob was asked what he views as three opportunities in town that could use attention or improvement. Bob said he hasn't given it a critical eye but has visited the Police, Fire, Library and Senior Center and have met some very nice people. He hasn't found anything that is a problem. He has no children in the education system. He was asked if he had been to a Town Meeting. He said yes but not the last one. It was explained to Bob that Advisory spends a lot of time on the budget. Bob said he is not an Accountant and has no experience in Finance but understands it. He could help the committee understand the police department. Bob was asked if he had any questions for the committee. He asked about working groups. Linda explained they're voted by the committee to work on projects/documents that require more information gathering. She explained the meeting commitment; at this time meetings are held virtually on Thursday evenings at 6:00pm. When Town Hall was open, Advisory met on Monday evenings at 7:00pm

Linda thanked Bob for applying.

Upon motion moved by Matthew Rushing and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matthew Norton to approve the revised meeting minutes of August 6, 2020.

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To accept the revised meeting minutes of August 6, 2020 via **Role Call:** Stephen Walsh YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Matthew Norton YES; Tim Landy YES; Linda Peterson YES

Linda asked if there was an update from the working group on revisions to the Advisory By-Law language. Matthew Rushing noted the group put together a draft and will have ready for the next meeting.

John Scholl scheduled for 7:30pm will dial in at 8:15pm due to a connectivity issue.

Linda welcomed Carly and asked why she is interested to be a member of Advisory Committee; what is your strongest point to offer to the committee. She said she wants to be more involved in town. She has been a Girl Scout leader, soccer and softball coach and sits on the Pembroke youth baseball/softball board. She brings

varied experience to this position. She has experience in emergency preparedness. When she was at the Mass Dept. of Public Health she was in charge of logistics and management. She brings that unique lens of how you manage resources during a pandemic. She was there during H1N1 pandemic 2009. She is a faculty member at MCPHS University. Always takes it upon herself to do professional development and education and have had unique experiences which include hiring, managing budgets and how you do more with less. She has experience in grant management, managing budgets and resources. She is easy to work with; friendly, amicable, works well on teams; and brings a lot of experience to leverage technology, she considers herself an early adopter of technology. She can make some great contributions to the committee. Linda said we are truly an Advisory Committee. We work with the BOS and Town Manager and ask what we can help them out with. We support the entire town. Linda asked if she has witnessed a town meeting or Advisory Committee meeting. She said yes, she has attended several town meetings and is familiar on how they run would like to attend more and would also like to see how we could leverage technology so we could bring more people in. When you increase transparency only good things can happen. She thinks that Advisory is a great role as they bring an outside perspective to it and in a unique position to have global oversight of things and this is what the town can do and advocate for all the committees. Matthew Rushing noted that Carly has lived in town for 10 years now and asked her where she sees opportunities for the town to improve processes, organization or resources. Carly said she has seen tremendous growth in the last 10 years bringing new people into town; have a real opportunity to leverage that growth. Two things: 1) more community building and community organization; getting the town together to do community service events bringing people together. Open recreation plans for the new facility. 2) Develop systems to support the growth of the town. There's a real opportunity to leverage technology in a way that would support health and well-being of all of us such as education and wellness; organizing hiring practices. Look at the ways things are written. Linda said she doesn't disagree but how do we collect funds to do that. Carly said part of it is when you're looking at healthcare you look at administrative waste; are we running things efficiently. Sandra asked if she would have the time commitment and ability to set aside time each week. Carly said she would prioritize her time. Linda explained the meeting commitment; at this time meetings are held virtually on Thursday evenings at 6:00pm. When Town Hall was open, Advisory met on Monday evenings at 7:00pm.

Linda thanked Carly for applying.

Linda welcomed Kristi and asked why she is interested to be a member of Advisory Committee and asked what strengths she would bring to this committee. Kristi said she would like to be a member of this committee as she is a member of the community and as a stay at home Mom it's about her children but also the community to where their growing up and how she would shape it for current and incoming families. What she would bring to the table is the fact that she's a mom of triplets and knows chaos and efficiency and would be a fresh perspective. Linda asked if that would create an issue with triplets and time management. She said she has a supportive husband and her children are now ten and a little more self-sufficient. Linda said she noticed on her application that she is a current member of the Recreation Commission and believes she cannot hold an appointment on both. We provide funds to the commission making you ineligible. Matt Norton agreed as he was also a member of the Recreation Commission. She understands that and need be is ready to make that decision. Matthew Rushing said Kristi has been in town for 5 years and asked her where she sees opportunities for Pembroke as a town to improve. She said to come into 2020 a little bit more with community outreach and getting to our younger families and get them involved. So far what she has seen it's the same people that volunteer for school and sports. Kristi said letting people know what's out there and going to PTO meetings and these are the things we have available; come on down we'll tell you more about it. If they stay in the community we have a long road with them. Linda said she understands her perspective on that, so is it her goal to be more youth oriented. Advisory is for all residents we balance finance with everyone in the community. She said her answer was more towards all open positions in Pembroke and understands it's the entire community. There's something to be said to having a voice in the whole community instead of just one part. Linda asked if she had attended any town meetings. Kristi said yes, and found it interesting. There's not a lot of the whole community being represented at town meeting. Linda mentioned that we have the town moderator with us tonight who is always trying to get people to attend town meeting. Kristi said she's sure we can work on that together. How did you hear about the vacancy on Advisory? She has a group she started in Pembroke and someone gave her a list of open positions in town. Sandy asked Kristi about her PTO membership and mentioned that this was asked of her when she came on Advisory. Would you have an issue in the ability to be objective? Kristi said no, she has the ability to put her heart where she is and can put things in compartments and see the big picture. Matthew Rushing asked if she could identify any

challenges or problems she had to tackle as a member of the Recreation Commission. She said they had to deal with the day care that was once in the preschool and managing safety. The recreation center has dwindled due to the state of the building. Only use for preschool and we don't go over there. It's all about working together to come to an agreement. Tim said Advisory spends a lot of time looking at the budget and asked about her experience. Before children she was in Retail Management and it's all about numbers and that does not scare her away. Linda noted the budget process has changed recently with the Town Manager's responsibilities and we have a little bit of a learning curve to how the budget is put together. Working with Town Manager to see how things will evolve in the future. Matthew Rushing said that the new town manager has mentioned a couple of times that he's looking into broadening the role of Advisory outside of just the budgetary process. He is personally looking to get involved in more things across government whatever that may be, so he thinks there will be an expanded role in the coming year and/or 1 ½ years for Advisory. Linda said yes – that is a work in progress. Linda explained the meeting commitment; at this time meetings are held virtually on Thursday evenings at 6:00pm. When Town Hall was open, Advisory met on Monday evenings at 7:00pm.

Do you have any questions for Advisory? Kristi said she would love to know in the eyes of the committee what does an ideal member look like. Linda said in the past it's been anyone interested would apply and willing to join. It's rare that we have an opportunity to have a discussion and make the choice on multiple candidates. Linda said she would like to see a variety of people with different skills to get some discussion amongst ourselves on some of the issues that come before the committee for a better discussion and formulate questions to go after answers we might not have answers to. Sandy agreed. Matt Norton said he believes that collaborative skills and decision making skills are key, especially with the new Town Manager onboard. Tim said besides the skills it's also the variance, if you look at the town budget and money in revolving accounts like Recreation and it would be nice to get an insight to what's going on. Linda noted that the Recreation Commission decides their own programs what they feel the towns folk would have the children involved in and its seed money so they can pay their bills without having to keep coming back to town hall. Tim agreed but if we're going to fund a new recreation center then you'd need to understand what that money is and how it's being used as well. Other than that you're not looking at the whole picture. The discussion continued around the new proposed Community Center building, cost, where the money is going to come from. Stephen Walsh said it would be a good idea if the BOS put together a Finance committee to look at how to fund.

Linda thanked Kristi for applying.

Linda welcomed John and asked why he is interested to be a member of Advisory Committee and asked what strengths he would bring to this committee. John said this is his thing, financially oriented, love going through numbers, profit and loss statements. He ran his own company for years on the insurance benefit side and enjoyed doing it. This is a great way for him to help the town as you know he was on the planning board for a couple years which was nice as well but this gets him into the nuts and bolts of how the town is operating and with his background he could offer a lot. He's also familiar with things that are happening on the expense side of the town. His company serves as the health benefit purchasing cooperative that Pembroke participates in for benefits. This may be a conflict of interest and wanted to bring it up. He's familiar on how that program works. He does not work on it directly and doesn't generate any revenue as a result of it. Linda thanked John for that and opened it up for questions from the committee. Linda said John has a financial background and knows a lot about the town with his planning board experience. She asked John what he sees as the big issues for the town. John said, it's a massive struggle to generate enough revenue to support the expenses in town and its impacting all organizations but in particular, public entities of which Pembroke's one of them. All human capital expenses outpace revenue generally, income generation, so it's a problem for most organizations. There are union contracts that place certain requirements on the town no matter how well you're doing from a revenue perspective. That is different from businesses that most of us work in. The bottom line is generally speaking most companies are operating in providing employee compensation, benefits on how well the organization is doing from a revenue perspective. One of the ways he can help is there are other avenues to approach to ease the pain on expenses and generate revenue not only for the town but the town employers where we do some collaborative activities where we can do some things that benefit the town and local employers. Steve Dodge asked John for further clarification on how his company would be a conflict. John said Pembroke participates in a group purchasing organization for several benefits, primarily with Plymouth County. The way it works is you use your buying power collectively to lower expenses in administering medical and dental benefits that are offered. His company "Gallagher" recently acquired the consultant who services that program. It's a new relationship for

Gallagher. Steve Dodge asked where the funds come from to pay Gallagher. John said he would assume there is a consultant fee that is set up to pay the cooperative so in essence a portion or share will come directly from Pembroke. The payer of those fees is the cooperative, not the town of Pembroke. The cooperative is Mayflower. He does not work directly with the Mayflower group. Tim noted the conflict should be disclosed but cannot be resolved tonight. Matthew Rushing noted that John has been in town for 11 years now and asked where he sees opportunities for Pembroke across the community to make improvements. John said he would like to start seeing the kind of increases to pay benefit expenditures across the board with some type of wage inflation for town residents. He is all for police, fire and teachers and all employees in town if tax payers in town are cranking it and doing well and everybody is making more money, they should benefit. But when times are tough and things are not going well and tax payers don't have anything more in their pay, really question why town government workers are still getting their 3, 4 percent increases. And their regular allowances on the benefit program. He would love to see an effort to tie the two together. So when things are good everybody is winning, when times are tough everyone is sharing in the tough times we're experiencing. That would be a top priority for him. Sandy noted that certainly puts 2020 back in the fore front if you sat in on any of the school committee meetings. Linda said it's been tried in the past but most employees have union contacts. As a Benefits Advisor communication is a big deal, you don't just present a change a few months before you try to enact it. This is something that is years in the making and he has generally found if you start laying the ground work early. If want something to take effect in five years you start getting the employees engaged and help them understand and eventually they'll begin to buy in. Sandy asked if John had any barriers in time commitment for attending meetings. John said no, if you look at his record for Planning Board he attended and some ran long; no problem. Linda thanked John for applying.

The committee discussed all four candidates at length and voted as follows:

Upon motion moved by Matthew Norton and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Stephen Walsh to support the appointment of the following two candidates as members to the Advisory Committee.

John Scholl - full three year term

Kristi Cullinane - unexpired term that expires in 2021

**VOTED<sup>2</sup>:** to support the appointment of the following two candidates as members to the Advisory Committee.

\*John Scholl - full three year term

\*\*Kristi Cullinane - unexpired term that expires in 2021

via **Role Call**: Matthew Norton YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Stephen Walsh YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Tim Landy YES; Linda Peterson YES

Steve Dodge supported the vote.

\*An email will be sent to Bill Chenard, Town Manager regarding the possible conflict of interest with John Scholl's employer. Both new members will be scheduled for confirmation with the BOS at their meeting on Wednesday, September 23, 2020.

\*\* Kristi Cullinane will be asked to resign her seat on the Recreation Commission.

All candidates will be notified as to the results of the Advisory Committee vote tonight.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday September 10, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Advisory adjourned at 9:31PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Walsh, Clerk