

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
27 FEBRUARY 2017

Chairperson Linda Peterson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Pembroke Town Hall at 7:30PM on 27 February, 2017. Also present were Stephen Curley, Timothy Brennan, James McCollum, John G. Brown, Jr. Stephen Walsh, Richard McManus, and Elizabeth Monks

Guests: Ed Thorne, Town Administrator  
Police Chief Rick Wall and Erin Obey, School Superintendent

Linda Peterson began the meeting reviewing correspondence:

- Received a “draft” copy of the Audit Financials for FY16 received from Michael Buckley, Town Accountant; all members were sent a copy electronically.

The committee received a Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund from Catherine Salmon, Chief Assessor to cover the unanticipated advertising expense for a position of Principle Clerk in the amount of \$531.00.

Upon motion moved by Stephen Curley 2<sup>nd</sup> by Timothy Brennan following the discussion

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To approve the Request for Transfer from the Reserve Fund from Catherine Salmon, Chief Assessor to cover the unanticipated advertising expense for a position of Principle Clerk in the amount of \$531.00. James McCollum, John G. Brown Jr., Stephen Walsh, Richard McManus and Elizabeth Monks supported the motion.

Linda Peterson welcomed Ed Thorne, Town Administrator to review the towns FY18 Budget. Ed began by noting the budget is balanced. In order to get to that mark available revenue from tax levy allowable 2.5% increase and \$300,000 in new growth. New growth for FY16 was \$339,032 and FY17 \$379,588. For FY18 state will be minuscule 0.9%, Chapter 70 (0.5%) and 3.9% from lottery. Local receipts have some flexibility; town receives revenue from the three cell towers; building permits; Title V. Ed referenced the Local Receipts; they would take FY16 actuals and push over to FY18 budget; this will get us a lot more in revenue.

- Linda mentioned attending the recent MMA meeting where some spoke about revenue generated from Airbnb's; they were checking into it. Is this something to think about?
- Stephen Walsh noted the Legislature is considering increasing the meal tax from \$.75 to \$1.75 on take-out food “over the counter”. You see prepared foods sold at Seven Eleven, Cumberland Farms and even Stop & Shop. It would come from the Board of Health office. This could be additional revenue for Pembroke. Ed Thorne said they may need to be registered as a restaurant but he would follow-up.
- Ed said the Solar project will be completed and up and running by May 8, 2017. There should be a savings in electricity. The projected revenue for this project is approximately \$250,000 a year; he will send the raw numbers to Advisory. PowerOptions had the state contract; the EOEA selected Sun Edison to construct. Sun Edison went into Chapter 11; project was on hold for one year. GCL-Poly bought Sun Edison and Onyx bought Pembroke's project. The town will receive rental revenue for property to put solar panels on.
- Ed said all department budgets were level funded with the exception of a 2% increase in the school department. There is \$15,000 left in free cash. Snow & Ice expenses

<sup>2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion.

currently total \$400,000. The two storms in February cost \$192,000. Ed will forward the report to Advisory.

- Ed said he will be attending a meeting with Mayflower this week; a membership meeting is scheduled for 3/23/17; membership has decreased from 11,000 to 7,000. Pembroke ranks 4<sup>th</sup>; when Scituate and Hingham leave Mayflower, Pembroke will be 2<sup>nd</sup> behind Marshfield. The expected increase in healthcare costs to the town could be as high as 19%; they have budgeted 21%. The town saw an increase of current employees enrolling in the town's healthcare plan. The town is looking at other options such as GIC (state plan) Myer (they only offer BC/BS) 40% of employees are currently enrolled in Harvard Pilgrim. Mayflower has a GIC look-a-like plan (they have joint purchasing agreement with other towns). Rockland and Abington left Mayflower and are looking around they could consider self-insurance like Plymouth and Duxbury. Pembroke has contracted with Cook and Company to examine these options.
- Police Chief Wall noted due to level funding of FY18 Budgets he would have to go to Plan B. Calls have increased by 2,500 from last year. He proposed hiring two patrolmen so he could get them enrolled in the Academy by June. He is expecting one retirement in September and another will be turning 65 in May and anticipates his retirement. When he became Chief 4 ½ years ago his staff was at 24; today his staff is 29. We are not keeping up the town population. The police cruisers approved at the fall Town Meeting have been delivered and should be ready in March. He has cars over mileage an out of warranty.
- Erin Obey, School Superintendent acknowledged the 2% increase to the school department FY18 Budget totaling \$627,000 however, the increased cost due to the Collective Bargaining Agreement totals \$894,000. Erin said they may have to consider lay-offs. John Brown asked about the school department itemized budget; Advisory has only seen the total line item. School department is scheduled to meet with Advisory next week. Linda asked if anything was new. Erin said the School Committee planned to cover the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
- Ed Thorne noted some possible revenue options for the town is new development at Pembroke Corporate Park. Stephen Walsh asked if building height restrictions work against Pembroke for example to build a hotel. Ed said no; the height is 4 stories and most hotels built in the Plymouth area are not more than 4 stories. Stephen Walsh noted there is state funding available; the town would need to contact Jay Ash from the Economic Development office to apply.
- John Brown asked Ed Thorne about the Community Compact. The Board of Selectmen must approve joining. This information was sent to the Board of Selectmen asking them to consider joining this program. Timothy Brennan noted that economic development in Pembroke is why the town needs a Planner and a long term plan. Pembroke has no master plan (it's expensive); we're going to have to ask the tax payers to fund one.

Advisory thanked Ed Thorne, Police Chief Wall and Erin Obey for coming.

- Stephen Curley noted that the state cut funding of 2,130,000 in 2003 the town asked for a \$1.1 million dollar override and it failed. That resulted in layoffs for police, teachers, etc. That was a messy time. The town should consider moving healthcare to the GIC state plan to reduce these costs. The Board of Selectmen is not in a "crisis mode"; no long term thinking. If the town moved to a Town Manager; they would be negotiating contracts. Healthcare is our biggest issue; unions are part of Mayflower and have a seat at the table. Whatever the town is saving, they must save 28%.
- Stephen Curley will create a spreadsheet from the debt and maturing debt received from Kathleen McCarthy, Town Treasurer and will forward to committee members.

<sup>2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion.

- The Annual Town Meeting Warrant opened. The deadline to submit articles is March 3, 2017.
- Advisory January financials report was reviewed.
- The Board of Health is requesting to meet with Advisory to discuss their FY18 Budget. If there are no specific requests they may not need to meet; have them submit a copy.
- The school department is still planning to meet with Advisory next week; email Erin Obey to reschedule or move to a later time slot.

Upon motion moved by James McCollum 2<sup>nd</sup> by Stephen Curley following the discussion it was

**VOTED<sup>2</sup>:** To accept the meeting minutes of 06 February 2017. Timothy Brennan, John G. Brown Jr., Stephen Walsh and supported the motion. Elizabeth Monks and Richard McManus abstained.

The next Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 6, 2017 at 7:30PM.

The Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:00PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Curley, Clerk

<sup>2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion.