

TOWN OF PEMBROKE
APPROVED
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
06 JANUARY 2020

Linda Peterson, Chairperson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Pembroke Town Hall at 7:00PM on 06 January 2020. Also present were Stephen Walsh, Sandra Beaton, Kelly Seifert, Patrick Chilcott and Tim Landy. Matthew Norton arrived at 7:02PM

Absent: Maria Karas

Linda Peterson opened the meeting with the request for transfer from the reserve fund received from Deborah Wall, Library Director in the amount of \$4,987.50. This bill is to pay for multiple HVAC tech visits to diagnose and repair heating system. This system is 21 years old, was mostly working at the beginning of the season. This expense was approved by Michael Buckley, Town Accountant.

Upon motion moved by Stephen Walsh and 2nd by Kelly Seifert to approve the request for transfer from the reserve fund received from Deborah Wall, Library Director for the Library heating system in the amount of \$4,987.50 was

VOTED¹: to approve the request for transfer from the reserve fund received from Deborah Wall, Library Director for the Library heating system in the amount of \$4,987.50. Stephen Walsh, Kelly Seifert, Matthew Norton, Sandra Beaton, Patrick Chilcott and Tim Landy supported the motion.

Linda asked committee members for their feedback on the appointment of Matthew Rushing as a member of Advisory Committee. Sandra Beaton said as long as he signs the disclosure document recommended by town counsel. Linda agreed that any member of Advisory with a family member conflict should complete the disclosure form and have on file with the Town Clerk's office. Tim Landy and Matthew Norton agreed. Patrick Chilcott asked about the previous applicant Haley Devlin and whether anyone had reached out to her. Linda said no but she was contacted by Stephen Dodge and was sent an email following her interview. Her first interest was Conservation. Patrick Chilcott said he was in favor of Matthew Rushing's appointment. Stephen Walsh expressed concerns as to the way it looks having a member of the Board of Selectmen spouse as a member of Advisory. Department heads maybe hesitant to have an open discussion, speaking in front of the boss's spouse. Tim Landy said we take notes and it's all published anyway.

Upon motion moved by Patrick Chilcott and 2nd by Matthew Norton to approve the appointment of Matthew Rushing as a member of the Advisory Committee was

VOTED²: to approve the appointment of Matthew Rushing as a member of the Advisory Committee. Patrick Chilcott, Matthew Norton, Sandra Beaton, Kelly Seifert and Tim Landy supported the motion. Stephen Walsh abstained.

Linda asked that an email be sent to Matthew Rushing advising him of Advisory's vote and also email Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager and arrange a confirmation appointment with the Board of Selectmen. We will also communicate this appointment/vote to Stephen Dodge, Town Moderator.

Advisory did not receive the FY21 individual department budgets as requested from Ed Thorne, Town Manager. Advisory did receive an email from Ed Thorne quoting the Town Manager Act as follows "in reference to preparing and submitting a balanced budget at a public meeting to the select board and advisory committee not later than 90 days prior to the annual town meeting in a written proposed balance budget for town government, including the school department, for the ensuring fiscal year." He said he was working on that goal of a balanced budget by the end of the week. In addition, him and Michael Buckley, Town Accountant is scheduled to meet with the School Committee on Friday (1/10/20).

Linda noted that Advisory requested copies of FY21 individual department budgets and not the complete FY21 budget. Committee members agreed to send Ed another email with a copy to the Board of Selectmen

¹⁻³The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

and further explain that Advisory is requesting the department individual budgets to assist in preparing a trending and analysis report.

Tim noted that Michael Buckley, Town Accountant has provided him with department budget actuals for the past three years. Linda asked Tim to send to Donna so this information can be distributed to all committee members.

Stephen Walsh asked if Advisory should request a list of town vehicle inventory for this year. Patrick Chilcott asked "what's the purpose". Matthew Norton said it's good to see; curious to see what's on the list. Linda suggested the list be of "insured" vehicles. Stephen Walsh said we question why \$184,751 has been spent to date for Snow & Ice; is this only being used for Snow & Ice. The vehicle inventory is increasing. Patrick Chilcott said it would be good to know what vehicles we're insuring. We want to be really careful as there may be good reasons and not to use the number of employees to compare the number of vehicles. The committee agreed to send an email to Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager to request a list of town insured vehicles.

Stephen Walsh asked if anyone knew how many town buildings the town owns. He asked questions such as, are the tenants paying rent, who's paying the utilities. Patrick Chilcott said he had this information in an old file and he could take a look. Stephen Walsh also asked if anyone knew how many plots of land the town owns. Is there any we could sell and develop? There is a program "Mass Development" that offer grant money for programs that are specifically designed to improve economic development in town communities. Patrick Chilcott said last he heard 52% of Pembroke is open space. Stephen Walsh noted the town purchase of several cranberry bogs. He asked if the town would be able to combine elementary schools as enrollment drops and re-purpose one of the schools. Patrick Chilcott said "no";- this is due to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), we still owe on repairs. We must wait until the bond is paid. It would also have to be used as a school. For example, Hobomock is the smallest school and was built for children. It would be too expensive to re-purpose for older children and/or adults. The committee discussed the need for a Town Planner. Kelly Seifert agreed to do some research on Town Planner grants and report back to the committee.

The committee agreed to send an email to Kathleen McCarthy, Town Treasurer/Collector to request a list of plots of land owned by the town.

The committee reviewed FY20 Operating Budget as of 12/31/19 received from Michael Buckley, Town Accountant. Kelly Seifert asked about the Town Accountant general expenses line item at 97%. Linda said Mike indicated that there are annual expenses that get paid at the beginning of the fiscal year. Linda noted that the Police Department budget is at 48%.

Linda drafted the Annual Report for Advisory. This report is due to the Board of Selectmen's office by January 31, 2020. Once we receive the transfer fund expenditures from Michael Buckley, Town Accountant, we will submit.

Linda forwarded the information from the state legislature enacts final fiscal 2019 closeout budget with fund for many municipal accounts. Stephen Walsh said the town of Plymouth received \$400,000 for the 200th birthday celebration. Not finalized yet.

The Board of Selectmen confirmed their 2019/2020 calendar through the May 12, 2020 town meeting.

Upon motion moved by Stephen Walsh and 2nd by Sandra Beaton the meeting minutes of December 9, 2019 was

VOTED³: To accept the meeting minutes of December 9, 2019. Stephen Walsh, Sandra Beaton, Matthew Norton, Tim Landy, Patrick Chilcott, and Kelly Seifert supported the motion.

¹⁻³The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

The committee discussed remote access to meetings if members are unable to attend. Patrick Chilcott confirmed that the Board of Selectmen voted to approve remote access for all boards approximately five years ago. The technology does not work in this room but if Advisory is able to move to another room for their meetings does the committee want to permit remote access for its members. Linda said she is a member on various committees that allow remote access and it's difficult to hear. Sandra Beaton asked "how would we set parameters" so it's not abused. Linda said the chairperson would have to address those concerns. It's meant to be the exception. Patrick Chilcott noted that there would need to be a member quorum present; the person on the phone would not be included as part of the quorum. The lack of the appropriate technology in the meeting room still exists. This discussion will be ongoing.

Stephen Walsh mentioned that the Community Center Task Force is submitting an article for the spring Town Meeting. This will be the largest expenditure to date. The committee discussed various ways to inform resident voters of the upcoming town meeting warrant articles and proposed budget. Agreeing it would be an unbiased opinion. Would it be through social media, a general mailing; maybe insert with a town bill such as tax, water, and excise or utilize the town website. It would not be the responsibility of this committee to advocate but to inform. Tim said Advisory would neutrally inform the residents with the facts. What would be the best communication vehicle? Sandra Beaton shared one possibility of communication she found the town of Plymouth using via social media. The committee agreed to table to the next meeting.

The committee also discussed new building requests such as Police, Fire and DPW and the possibility of a trash and water bill increase. Stephen Walsh said the legislature proposed funding for public safety buildings has made it to the Ways & Means Committee. The funding could be 75% reimbursement for a combined public safety building.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 13, 2020 at 7:00pm.

Advisory adjourned at 8:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Walsh, Clerk

¹⁻³ The Chairperson did not vote on this motion