

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
28 MAY 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 28 May 2020.

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

Tim Landy left the meeting at 7:00PM

**Guests:** Bill Chenard, Town Manager; Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager

Linda welcomed Bill Chenard, Town Manager, invited to present FY21 Budget Overview:

- Bill reviewed his power point presentation with the committee and began with his budget request of \$64,022,153 with estimated revenue of \$65,912,860. Mandatory expenses include Trash, Water, real estate and town assessment numbers of things we don't know.
- Bill explained his revenue slide in detail noting \$400,000 in new growth as a less than conservative number but we'll get there. Bill was asked if Pembroke could claim loss of new growth due to COVID-19. Bill said lost revenue is excluded from the CARES Act. He also estimated state aid to be \$15,154,379; a decrease of 5% and/or \$686,343 from FY20 state aid appropriation; we don't know what our number will be but looking at end of August for a number. There have been dips in state aid for Pembroke and he is being relatively conservative; not a lot of consistency. Bill was asked about the school committee budget assumption of it being flat this year and Chapter 70 being 85% of state aid, if that dips are we going to have to make it up. Bill said no, because of the way we allocate. It's a budget as a whole, must allocated by statute. School gets a substantial amount of our budget.
- Local receipts – Excise tax projected even initially then reduced to 2.9. Looked at our receipts and it will be very close to it.
- Bill spoke about the reduction in meal tax revenue; even after opening, restaurants will be operating at 25% capacity. People will be nervous congregating in restaurants and what if COVID-19 comes back in the fall. We may also be able to adjust at our 2<sup>nd</sup> Town Meeting. Don't want to overestimate this number and what if COVID-19 comes back. Other available funds estimate is \$2,182,739.
- Bill was asked "what if" residents are not able to pay their tax bill. He said he hasn't heard anything yet but could account for that with the Overlay. Right now we're doing OK.
- Bill reviewed his Expense Detail slide acknowledging a mistake and challenged Advisory to spot it. He said most are concessions; cutting back or not taking increases until January 2021. Bill was asked about the Stabilization Fund and where we should be. Bill said we should be at 2 ½% to 5%.
- Bill held a department manager meeting last Wednesday and told them to be prepared if our revenue estimates are too high; where are we going to cut. On a positive note with the department managers he told them if we get good CARE Act money and good state aid, what are your priorities? He had the same conversation with the school department.
- Bill was asked to review Appendix B for Article Operating Budget. Linda noted that Advisory Reserve Fund was reduced to \$25,000. She asked Bill if this fund would continue to be used to cover emergency and unexpected expenses. Bill said yes and agreed he could change it back to \$50,000.
- Bill reviewed the Solid Waste and Recycling Slide. He said the tipping fees for trash and recycling have increased over 37%. We are held to the contract today and tied to another year. Bill also reviewed the Water Enterprise slide noting an increase to the budget. He also noted the water rates were increased this year.
- Other questions addressed were:

- Changes to the Animal Control Officer budget. Pembroke and Hanover have combined resources providing residents of both towns for this shared service. Pembroke is paying the Animal Control Officer \$48,000 and Hanover is paying Pembroke \$34,000, which is an offset.
- IT new staff position has been removed from the budget for FY21. Bill said he has a strong IT background including existing staff. He will continue to outsource some IT expenses.
- Could some recurring expenses be offset by CPC funds? These cannot be expensed through CPC.
- Planning Board wages have been moved to Department of Inspectional Services.
- Emergency Management Wages & Salaries line increased. The Director's include Police Chief and Fire Chief. The Health Agent was included this year due to the COVID-19 health emergency.
- Bill was asked about any savings in salaries in Recreation Department. Bill said these are not in the town budget but in the Recreation Revolving budget.
- Is the Golf Course development part of new growth? No. They have not been to the Planning Board yet.
- Legal Services expenses. Bill said this is a priority for him and will do an internal review and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen.
- Bill also noted that infrastructure is one of his three priorities. He prefers to do this as a working group; we'll get there, he said.

Linda thanked Bill. He said he did not do this alone and acknowledged his staff; Kathleen McCarthy, Town Treasurer & Town Collector; Michael Buckley, Town Accountant; Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager and all Department Managers.

The committee discussed voting on Articles 1 & 3 of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant tonight given the budget update provided by Bill Chenard, Town Manager.

Upon motion moved by Patrick Chilcott and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Kelly Seifert **FAVORABLE ACTION** on Article 1 – Departmental Transfers and Article 3 – Operating Budget.

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>: FAVORABLE ACTION** on Article 1 – Departmental Transfers and Article 3 – Operating Budget via **Role Call**: Kelly Seifert YES; Patrick Chilcott YES; Stephen Walsh YES; Matthew Norton YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Linda Peterson YES.

Upon motion moved by Kelly Seifert and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Matthew Norton to approve the meeting minutes for May 21, 2020.

**VOTED<sup>2</sup>:** To accept the meeting minutes of May 21, 2020 via **Role Call**: Kelly Seifert YES; Patrick Chilcott YES; Stephen Walsh YES; Matthew Norton YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Linda Peterson YES

The Board of Selectmen voted to change the Annual Town Meeting date from June 16, 2020 to June 23, 2020. The Legislature is expected to sign a bill regarding Town Meeting Quorums this week. The Town Warrant date to post is now June 9, 2020.

The committee discussed the Town Meeting process in regards to assigning the motions to members of Advisory who in turn will introduce and read the Article Motion when called upon by the Town Moderator. Linda explained that in past years Advisory would prepare a budget presentation for town residents and present in an open forum a few weeks prior to Town Meeting.

Sabrina mentioned that this year in an effort to share this information to residents prior to Town Meeting, it was suggested that Bill Chenard, Town Manager do a spot on PACTV presenting the Articles and Budget.

The Emergency Management team had their last meeting today.

The Town Hall is scheduled to open to the public on Monday, June 1, 2020 for daytime hours only. Assembly restrictions are still in place.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 4, 2020 at 6:00pm Virtual via PACTV/ZOOM. Advisory adjourned at 8:00PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Walsh, Clerk