

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
8 APRIL 2021

Linda Peterson, Chairperson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee via Remote ZOOM/PACTV 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 8 April 2021.

Also present were: Sandra Beaton, Kristi Cullinane, Stephen Walsh, Matthew Norton, Matthew Rushing, Tim Landy, Robert Kenney and John Scholl

**Guests:** William Chenard, Town Manager; Deborah Wall, Library Director, Gretchen Emmetts, Council on Aging Director, Stephen Dodge, Town Moderator, Matthew Heins, Planning Board Assistant

Linda welcomed Bill Chenard, Town Manager for a continued discussion of FY22 Budget. Bill provided an option for Advisory to meet next week to discuss and vote on the Special & Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles. He said he would have the final details. The ZOOM meeting date is Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 6:00pm. All committee meetings members were in agreement.

Bill shared his screen and introduced the first presenter, Deborah Wall, Library Director:

Deborah reviewed the following information:

- Library Mission Statement
- Vision Statement
- Organizational Structure
- COVID-19 – the Library closed on March 17, 2020 and jumped to ZOOM for knitting groups and Face Book for Story time. The Book club also went to ZOOM. The staff worked from home helping patrons and working on projects. When staff could return to the building they began curb side delivery in June 2020.
- The Library reopened in August 2020 with restrictions and closed again December 2020 after a spike in cases and reopened again in February 2021. Curbside pickup is still an option. Mobile printing added with CARES ACT funds. The Library is still available as a warming station or shelter if needed in an emergency. No meeting space being offered. Meeting rooms are being used as furniture storage.
- Deborah shared pictures of the changes to the Library interior for COVID-19 safety.
- She provided the 2020 year in review: physical items circulated 68,571; online item: 27,715; over 73,000 in-person visits in 2020; over 7,000 computer use sessions.
- FY22 Budget is personnel, operations and materials. Deborah noted that the Fines account is gone, been suspended; meeting the materials budget will be a challenge.
- Capital needs: side walk repair \$35,000; technology \$10,000. Future needs include replacing carpet in the main area and children's area; window repair (termites) and roof repair; HVAC and expansion of the children's area.

**Questions:**

- Robert Kenney asked if windows have termite damage, why not repair this year. Deborah said termites have been treated and continue to be treated every three months.
- He also asked about the roof damage; couldn't this lead to other structural problems, why not repair? Deborah said every time shingles are blown off, she has them replaced.
- John Scholl asked how many unique library cards in Pembroke. Deborah said 11,850 for Pembroke with a total of 13,000 total holders.

Linda thanked Deborah for her presentation.

Gretchen Emmetts, Council on Aging Director reviewed the following information:

- Mission Statement
- Organizational Structure
- Registered seniors 5,400 (ages 60 – 102)
- What COA does –Nutrition; Transportation; Health, Wellness, Education; Caregiver Support; Arts, Cultural Travel Support; Outreach.

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

- In person events halted on March 13, 2020. Over the next month staff called over 4,000 residents over 60 years of age. Food pantries closed; Gretchen, her family and members of her staff shopped and delivered food to over 80 different families. This was made possible by generous donations. The HOPE fund was created.
- In July 2020 they were able to welcome back small groups pre-registered for different programs following the safety guidelines.
- In preparation of the Vaccine roll-out, Gretchen and her staff identified residents both 75 and older as well as 65 and older; this was in excess of 500 residents. All who received vaccination information 75 and older have been vaccinated. They're still working on 65 and older.
- Gretchen said she is in need to fill her Outreach Coordinator position. She said her annual budget is \$302,000 and she receives \$146,000 reimbursements. She said she has put her Capital item requests on hold not knowing what will happen with the Community Center Article.

#### **Questions:**

- Bill noted that these are not line items in the COA budget, but they were grant funded and not shown in previous budgets. Bill supports this budget.
- John Scholl asked if anyone pursues funding. Gretchen said they do have a Friends Group; they do give them money for certain events. She said she would like to expand funding to things like a golf tournament but not with COVID at this time.
- Gretchen said if the Community Center is approved she would like to keep the current COA building as an Adult Day Program; there is a great need.

Linda thanked Gretchen for her presentation.

Margaret Stuzik, Town Clerk reviewed the following information:

- Her office has two full time staff, herself and Andraea McEttrick, Assistant Town Clerk.
- What does a Town Clerk do? Chief Election Official; Recording Officer; Public Records Officer; Licensing Officer; Public Information Officer.
- Information collected for municipal purposes; school needs – student population, estimating number of teachers required. Growth and planning needs. Resident identification for police and fire (street list). Collection of dog information. Proof of Residency. Veteran Information. Determine inactive voter status which is required by National Voter Registration Act.
- Elections; register voters; hire and train election workers; nomination papers; ballot preparation; test ballots; set up polls
- Town Meeting – record votes; keep attendance; prepare certified articles; send in debt/borrowing articles to DOR; send general zoning charter article changes to Attorney General; wait for approval.

#### **Questions:**

- Bill noted that the Town Clerk budget is three parts; Elections which is flat funds; Registrations (also flat funded) and Wages/Salaries & General Expenses.

Linda thanked Margaret for her presentation.

Bill presented Recreation and Community Center in the absence of Susan Roche: Sue had a prior commitment and was unable to join tonight's meeting.

- Organization Structure
- Programs are spread throughout the town such as parks, playgrounds, trails and fields. Many programs for children and adults.
- They're very lean. The Director salary and maintenance services are funded through the municipal budget. Other costs such as Assistant Director, program instructors, program counselors, fields, courts rentals and maintenance are funded through the Revolving Account.
- Bill did speak with the CPC for funding but they missed their funding deadline. He said if we know in advance our needs we can apply for grants and CPC funding; we'll have that list prepared by August 1, 2021.
- Pembroke is currently in RED COVID-19

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

- Summer program registration will begin soon.
- Community Center will open to the public April 19, 2021
- Bill noted no huge changes in the budget for FY22

#### **Questions:**

- Matthew Rushing asked about repairs to Magoun Baseball Field; he said it's currently unsafe. Bill said repairs are included in his Capital budget and encourages Advisory to vote their recommendation.
- Matt also asked if we have any information on potential programs that will cover the new Community Center. Bill said he's working through that. We have a revenue estimate and expense estimate. The estimate expense is being prepared now for the new building. He's encouraged but hasn't seen the final numbers yet. Huge revenue opportunity. Bill will be presenting this information at the Select Board meeting next Wednesday if anyone wants to join that meeting. Matthew Rushing asked Bill if Advisory could get a copy at the same time as the Select Board.
- Robert Kenney asked where does the beach come in on the Recreation. Bill said they are separate; there is a Town Landing Committee and it's a separate fund. The waterfront programs are user fee based to pay for life guards. Robert also asked who is responsible for maintenance and repair of docks. Bill said the Town Landing Committee and Chief of the program; the DPW also supports them with the maintenance. Bill is aware of this and they're working on repairing the docks; parts have been ordered.

#### **Board of Health**

- Bill shared the Organization Structure – Department of Municipal Inspections and Board of Health staff paid for out of DMI budget but expenses paid from the Board of Health budget. Bill said one thing they've learned from COVID-19 is we need to ramp up our nursing services. They operate vaccination clinics and work with the state for set up as well as flu clinics. CARES Act has helped us pay for them.

#### **Veterans Services**

- Incredibly robust. Bill thanked David McPhillips for returning to this position on a part time basis. David retired but agreed to come back part-time. David and Assistant Mary Williams do incredible work for our Veterans.
- They provide financial assistance; medical and prescription reimbursement; administer federal benefits: assist with retrieving lost records or medals, Funeral Assistance.
- Budget is flat

Linda thanked Bill for tonight's FY22 budget update.

Linda welcomed Mike Guimares presenting on behalf of Andrew Sullivan – Community Center Article #33

- Mike has been a Pembroke resident for 12-13 years and they spent a lot of time reviewing the town center and what would fit and support all ages. This process was taken very seriously. He is hoping for Advisory's support. The building will have two main resources: Council on Aging and Recreation. It's much better laid out and supports the needs of the town. In looking at current costs, the tricky point was what future uses would look like; what programs can be utilized and what programs could be expanded. They did a deep dive.
- The Architects provided them with information on buildings constructed in other towns to review.
- The new gym is a lot more flexible and sectioned off for multiple uses. The walking track utilizes the upper space. One impact that COVID has had on the construction phase on these types of municipal buildings is the demand has shrunk. Many towns put their construction on hold. This has increased our ability to shop for pricing; the Architects are seeing 10-12 bids on each project. We have a better opportunity to lower costs. The Town of Sandwich has a project that is similar and did see a 20% decrease in their project from when they first estimated. Once BK&A went back and estimated our project, the price tag for the Community Center project decreased from 23M to just under 19M. This does include buffers and overage expectations if something to change. These building are mostly constructed with steel and concrete products, very little lumber products.
- The estimated cost is around \$135.00 for the average tax payer. This is before they can go out for and source grants and federal and state aid. One of the things that is required is that we have an approved project from the town, so they have to wait for the vote before they can start this phase of the project.

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

- They reviewed the town's current debt and what expires over time and know there are many needs in town, Police, Fire and DPW. It goes back to 2004/2005. We have a plan in place and are ready to move forward. If the town can start to think about a longer term approach planning for all of our buildings then this is just the first step to revitalize the town services and the buildings that support our residents. We're hopeful that the building in the center of town is more of a focal point and will bring our town together; we all need that after COVID has distanced us more than we're used to.

#### Questions:

- Linda Peterson asked if the building schematics or architectural drawings are available. Mike said the schematics available and is a starting point. Bill may have them as well.
- Kristi Cullinane said she wants to be sure that all the work that has been done up to now and before tax payers join in paying for the new building has been paid for personally. Mike said funds were allocated a few years ago for a professional analysis and schematics; the amount approved at town meeting was \$75,000. This project was completed by Joel Bardwin of BK&A.
- Stephen Walsh asked Mike if he knew what type of grants other towns with similar projects received. Mike said he did not have that information but he did speak with State Representative Josh Cutler and Josh sent him the recent relief package. Mike does believe funds are available.
- Linda Peterson asked if the outside structure is final. For example, it doesn't look colonial enough or somewhat different or maybe put solar panels on the roof. Is this still up for discussion. Mike said yes it's still up for discussion; the front and rear are not final because it's in an historical district. There has been no discussion about putting anything on the front of the building. This is a large site 34 acres and nothing is done with the lower ball field; there's potential to utilize that space for solar if they want.
- Bill shared his screen with the building schematics. Council on Aging has their own space; the uses overlap. Matthew Rushing asked what is included with the building cost. Mike said furniture and equipment; multiple types of tables and seating set-ups and gym equipment.
- Linda Peterson asked if the building could host Town Meeting. Mike said yes.
- Bill was asked if grant money would be available if the building was to be used as a shelter. Bill said they would have to go to FEMA to have the building reclassified. He was surprised to learn that people travel to Pembroke for sports tournaments such as basketball. John Scholl said not being familiar with some of the gym uses asked if the current gym was not able to support these uses. Bill said there is a need for gym space as well as a demand.
- Linda spoke to the need for maintenance staff and looking at the revenue stream. Bill said they'd be adding a building monitor 6am-9pm and he's still working through that. Mike noted that the new building is the same size square footage as the current building but will be a more efficient building. Bill reviewed the tax projection and shared his screen. Project cost 19M term 25 years: rate 2.0% - level principal. The town's bond rating is an AA at 1.70%; he will work with the financial advisors. The rates have been stable for the past 60 days.
- Kristi Cullinane asked how quickly he could apply for bond. Bill said 45 days and if we want to work with our financial advisors and make the best call; we would be 6 – 9 months away from ground breaking.
- Stephen Walsh asked Bill if he looked into a USDA loan. Bill said yes, he has been emailing/working with them to see what they can do; waiting for a response.
- John Scholl asked if the cost includes demolition of the old building. Bill said yes. Matthew Rushing thanked Mike and Andrew Sullivan and acknowledged there is a lot of momentum behind them.
- Linda thanked Mike.

Linda welcomed Matthew Heins, Planning Board Assistant to speak to their Warrant Articles:

- Article 21 is the Flood Plan - This is necessary to keep Federal plan insurance, the town must update to FEMA maps. This was delayed due to COVID. Town Counsel updated the verbiage per the Federal Government. The new Zoning bylaw for the flood plan never would allow development with special permit. This will put Pembroke in line with other towns in Massachusetts.
- Articles 22, 23, 24, 25 covers the change of Business District to include single family houses into the two industrial zones as well.

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

- Article 26 – relates to new zoning bylaw to allow cluster development 55+ in residential district. Gives more flexibility of where open land can be placed.
- Article 27 – Kennels and dog care services, i.e. grooming dog care. This is a growing business and will clarify kennels and define more clearly what dog care is and what overnight boarding is. Still working on language.
- Article 28 – Mixed uses for Center Protection District. Mixed use was prohibited two to three years ago. This is reversing that and allowing mixed use again. The language needs to be better defined; still working out the details and classification. Linda asked Matt to find out if the Planning Board feels strongly enough to move forward or pull the article and submit at a later time. Matt said the Planning Board will be reviewing the language at their next meeting on Monday, April 12, 2021 and should have the details by Friday, April 16, 2021.
- Kristi Cullinane asked Matt if they would include the Explanations on each Planning Board Article. Matt will mention this at their April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Tim Landy said this is a process issues that the Explanation is not included in the Article when submitted. Maybe the By-law needs to be changed. Linda said this a good idea for next year's town meeting.

Linda thanked Matt for coming.

Linda welcomed Stephen Dodge, Town Moderator to discuss the selection of the Consent Agenda for the Annual Town Meeting.

Sabrina Chilcott, Assistant Town Manager, prepared the consent agenda to include four articles. Article 7- CPC Allocations; Article 8 Revolving Funds; Article 31 Town Reports and Article 32 Annual Town Election. Steve said these are fairly routine and he would treat them as one with the lottery system at town meeting versus vote all as a consent agenda. If anyone objects, we'll put it back in the barrel. Bill suggested Article 15 Amend Leash Law Violation be included in the Consent Agenda as it is a requirement under state law. Steve said dog articles are controversial and it's not clear in the Article what violators will be charged. He suggested leaving this one out. All agreed.

Upon motion moved by Matthew Rushing and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Tim Landy to approve the Annual Town Meeting Consent Agenda to include: Article 7- CPC Allocations; Article 8 Revolving Funds; Article 31 Town Reports and Article 32 Annual Town Election

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To accept the the Annual Town Meeting Consent Agenda to include: Article 7- CPC Allocations; Article 8 Revolving Funds; Article 31 Town Reports and Article 32 Annual Town Election via **Roll Call**: Stephen Walsh YES; Matthew Norton YES; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Kristi Cullinane YES; John Scholl YES; Tim Landy YES; Robert Kenney YES

Stephen Dodge spoke to the scheduled date for the Annual Town Meeting, Tuesday, May 11, 2021. The Select Board voted 3-2 in favor. Steve said he suggested delaying; both the Board of Health and PEMA agreed and have sent letters to the Select Board. He noted the Community Center Article and expects lots of questions and the effect on resident tax bills. He would like as many people to attend as possible. With more people getting vaccinated they'll be comfortable to attend. If the meeting is inside they will use three rooms; outside would be the football field and that requires a lot of planning, i.e. with school still in session. Steve said he will be attending the Select Board meeting on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 to discuss. Per state law, the Select Board can delay town meeting prior to posting, after that in consultation with the Select Board and Town Moderator, they can postpone town meeting.

Matthew Rushing noted that if town meeting is postponed the town election will go forward. Town Counsel confirmed that the town election can be held prior to town meeting.

Linda thanked Steve for coming and invited him to attend Advisory's meeting next week when they will be discussing and voting their recommendations for the ATM & STM Warrant Articles.

Linda asked Bill if he would be available to present the FY22 School budget and FY21 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Revenue/Expenses at Advisory's April 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Bill said yes.

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion

Upon motion moved by Kristi Cullinane and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Stephen Walsh to approve the revised meeting minutes of March 25, 2021

**VOTED<sup>2</sup>:** To accept the revised meeting minutes of March 25, 2021 via **Roll Call:** Stephen Walsh YES; Matthew Norton abstained; Matthew Rushing YES; Sandra Beaton YES; Kristi Cullinane YES; John Scholl YES; Tim Landy YES; Robert Kenney YES;

Bill said he was having trouble sending the PowerPoint template for Annual Town Meeting to Advisory. He suggested he would send it through the Microsoft platform.

The next meeting is scheduled to meet on Thursday, April 15, 2021 at 6:00pm and following that one Advisory is scheduled to meet Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 7:00pm

Advisory adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Walsh, Clerk

<sup>1-2</sup>The Chairperson did not vote on this motion