

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
02 MARCH 2022

Linda Peterson, Chairperson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee at Town Hall at 6:35PM on 02 March 2022.

Also present were: Sandra Beaton, Tim Landy, Robert Kenney, Liz Benotti, and John Scholl

**Absent:** Matthew Rushing, Kristi Cullinane and Stephen Walsh

**Guest:** Bill Chenard, Town Manager; Gretchen Emmetts, Director, Council on Aging; Marcie Walsh O'Connor, Library Director; Gene Fulmine, DPW Director; Jessica Fulmine, Acting Director, Recreation

Linda opened the meeting and welcomed Bill Chenard.

Bill asked for a moment of silence for the people of Ukraine.

Bill outlined his agenda for tonight:

- One change to the budget for discussion. He allocated funds from one budget to another as they will hire a Water Superintendent.
- Community Center Building Update – Close to bidding; it will take some time to prepare the inside of the building for demolition. His office and Jessica Fulmine have been working closely with the Pembroke Schools, Erin Obey, Pembroke School Superintendent and the school committee to utilize classroom space for Recreation programs. Sabrina Chilcott and Laurie Jacobs have been working on this project on transportation as students participating will be coming from two schools one school (Bryantville) for the after-school program. Bill thanked everyone working on this project. Summer programs will also continue this year, sign-ups have started.
- Bill will present FY23 budget number for Council on Aging; Library; DPW, Snow & Ice and Recreation
- Department Directors will present their department structure and talked about their operations except for Jessica Fulmine. This is her first year and Bill is mentoring her through the budget process.

Linda asked Bill if he had an update on COVID. Bill said COVID numbers are great. All of our buildings are open for public meetings and schools, no masks mandates. Pembroke's numbers are at zero and we're looking at not posting this any longer; this state is looking at this too. The state-wide positivity COVID rate is 1.8%. The Chamber of Commerce is hosting a state of the town this Friday, Bill will be attending along with several members of the Select Board. He will be reviewing the Town Warrant with the Planning Board as you see a place holder on the warrant. Want to talk about it more and make sure it was put on the warrant for economic growth.

**Council on Aging** – Bill noted that this budget is funded from many sources and grants such as GATRA which covers the transportation and a grant that covers half the salary of the Outreach Coordinator. Wages & Salaries \$279,067; Expense side \$46,675. The salary changes are based on contracts and also COLA is built in to this line item. The expenses this year include building repairs and motor fuel. Bill is concerned about energy; costs are going up.

Bill introduced Gretchen Emmetts, Director, Council on Aging. Gretchen reviewed her department structure and praised her team for their amazing work. She outlined what the COA does:

- **Nutrition** – delivered 9,500 Meals on Wheels; 365 Food Pantry Deliveries; 641 Grab & Go meals; 100 meals for the different holidays to those in need and alone.
- **Transportation** – This did slow during the pandemic. They provided 5,246 rides via their vans and 800 medical rides from Volunteer medical drivers
- **Health, Wellness** – vaccination clinics, we did 820 COVID, booster and Flu shots.

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

- Caregiver support – Memory Café, home visits, referral services, family assistance, grief support, family support groups.
- **Outreach** – they had 1800 “everyday” outreach situations and 5,200 situations dealing with COVID.
- Council on Aging has **over 45 active volunteers**, if put in the budget would cost over \$36,000 per year.
- The EOEA has announced that the formula grant as of FY23 will be based on the 2020 Census at the current rate of \$12.00 per senior. Currently they receive \$36,256 per year for 3,013 seniors. She doesn’t have a senior count; the town has over 5,000 over 60 years old. Gretchen noted that 21% of the Massachusetts population are seniors and is expected to be 30% in the next ten year. Looking forward to the new building so they can expand.

#### **Questions:**

##### **What is the percentage of seniors that utilize the COA?**

They have 1,700 active members that use the COA for some reason or another. They recently added night time classes to attract the younger senior demographic that are still working.

##### **What is Memory Café?**

This program is for families dealing with memory loss of its for seniors such as dementia, Alzheimer’s. They would come in together and the caregiver would attend a support group while we mentor the senior listening to music or with arts and crafts and get their minds working. They do this every other month. This service is covered by a grant.

##### **What is the radius for transportation?**

GATRA travels to surrounding towns such as Plymouth, Norwell, Hanover, Duxbury, Hanson, Halifax. There’s not a mile radius. The COA van will travel to Boston.

**What is the difference in pay increases, noticed a difference in the budget numbers?** Annual Union increases have step and longevity (clause in contracts) increases and there is also COLA (cost of living). It depends on years they’ve been employed; no set number. Half of Outreach salary covered by grant and all of the Outreach Admin is covered by a grant. The GATRA drivers and transportation coordinator is covered by a grant. The COA gets them every year. The COA pays a Cherry sheet every year and get this money back. Bill noted that the COLA for FY23 is 1.5%. Union contracts based upon the contract.

**Ideas for the new building** – Bill said there are a lot of ideas out there right now.

**Pembroke Library** – Wages and salaries \$603,975; we received some grant funding. You’ll see a decrease in Department Head salary due to the previous Director, Deborah Wall who maintained the entire Town of Pembroke website.

The Library is used as an emergency shelter. Bill took a moment to thank the Pembroke Public Library staff during the recent weather events using the building as a warming shelter. This is an older building (23 years) and requires a lot of repairs. You’ll see an increase in the budget line for Contracted Services and Building Repairs. We want to make sure we’re maintaining our buildings.

Bill introduced Marcie Walsh O’Connor, Library Director. Marcie has seven full time employees and 20 part time staff. The Assistant Director has been phenomenal to me taking the helm. She does a lot of the admin work, hiring, firing of staff and payroll.

- Youth Services Librarian is one of the hardest working children’s librarians I’ve ever worked with, she does all the children programing. The other day she was doing read to a dog which allows children to increase their confidence with reading out load.
- Adult Reference Services Librarian does all the programing, our newsletter ordering of the adult side of the program. She is phenomenal.
- The Circulation Manager handles ever issue that comes up, the other day our book drop wasn’t working (it’s on Marcie’s capital plan) but she got it to work. She does all the technology.
- Technical service assistants, aides and pages. The aides are the ones that work the desk and are the face of the Library.

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

- Some of you may be aware the Library is a passport agency. This is an amazing asset to the town. They may come in for a passport but end up checking out books.
- The library has more than just books. They have DVD's, audio books but also have a library of things. We just got a karaoke machine, bubble machines, croquet sets, sewing machine you can check these items out. If you want to try sewing and don't want to purchase a machine, this a valuable service. They also offer services for copying, faxing and scanning.

## **Questions**

### **Is the passport service advertised?**

This information is posted on the town website.

### **What are Dues?**

Bill said when he took a look at dues he wanted to make sure we're paying dues for everyone and not just an individual. To be sure membership is in the appropriate areas and for the appropriate people.

**Department of Public Works** – Bill noted the DPW Assistant Director salary half was in Water and half in DPW. They will be moving his full salary back to the DPW budget so he can take on some additional responsibilities. They're going to hire a Water Superintendent to take over those duties. Gene is planning to retire in a few years.

Temporary Staff – because of winter operations they're not allowed to take time in the winter so this would be for summertime coverage. Regular staff use their comp time during the summer time. Temporary staff are not eligible for benefits.

The Governor proposed a supplement to the budget through the legislature which is huge for Pembroke:

- Special projects
- Wind damage repair – if they use the same formula as COVID 19 that could net Pembroke \$280,000
- Chapter 90 supplement which could be an additional \$280,00 for road projects and a catch-up.

Bill will get Advisory a copy of the Pavement Management Plan which is part of the Capital Plan.

Bill said they did apply for a traffic mitigation grant which they could use to install flashing signs and islands to slow traffic in some areas. Not sure if they'll get the grant.

Bill introduced Gene Fulmine, DPW Director. Gene shared his department staff structure. He has an Assistant Director for public works, highway, cemetery, two Forman and a mechanic. Total for that division is 14 people.

The state and federal projects for route 14, 27 and 36 are designed by the state and federal government and have been a 15-year project. He's looking for one more three-year project and bringing in a Water Superintendent so he can share his 35 years of knowledge before he retires. The biggest issue he sees in the next three years is getting more road work done. This was our 3<sup>rd</sup> Pavement Management Plan. We're 10.5M behind. Most people Gene speaks with want road repairs; it's the biggest complaint. They also want sidewalks but we can't fund it. He said when adding sidewalks, you must design, install drainage, follow ADA compliance. He noted the damage to the roads are caused by the change in temperature going from cold to warm.

## **Questions**

### **Are we short plow drivers from last year?**

Bill said yes, about 8-12 less than last year. Every town is experiencing the same challenges.

### **What happens to roads like Monroe Street that are in such bad shape and it's been so long?**

The town has to get additional funding in the budget. Pick those roads to get them done but it's going to take capital funding. He said if they pave Monroe Street with the Chapter 90 funding, they wouldn't be able to do any other paving for the town for two year.

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

**Can chapter 90 funds be used for unaccepted roads?**

Bill said no. Pembroke has several unaccepted roads, most surrounding the ponds that weren't built to town standards. The cost to get these roads accepted would be the responsibility of the property owners through a betterment program.

**Is the Road Maintenance in the Capital five-year plan?**

Bill said it needs to be updated to include the school buildings and fund roadways. We're 10.5M behind.

**Why did the license line item drop by \$1,000?**

Bill said he looks trends when budgeting that line item.

**Who maintains the islands on Center Street and Oldham Street?**

State put them in town maintains it. It was designed to slow traffic down but it doesn't work.

**Where is the DPW Building plan?**

It is In the Capital Plan at the end of the five-year plan

**Recreation** – Bill said Wages & Salaries are about the same \$112,634. General Expenses \$10,940. The rest is Revolving Funds; fees represent our cost and we project that out.

**Community Center** – We'll be transferring the phone line out and keeping active. General expenses \$4,400. We may occupy the new building by 2024.

**Questions**

**Longevity?**

Yes – it's part of the Public Service Contracts

**Does Recreation work with Athletic Departments at the schools?**

Bill said no. It's very different.

**Revolving account is showing at \$50,000 for Recreation; is this correct?**

Bill said he's not sure but it should be more; he will get back to us.

**Snow & Ice** – Bill said this is the only line item that can have a deficit spend without a revenue source. We don't want to overbudget but be close to average. Bill shared a Snow & Ice Chart 2007 -2021. Last year we budgeted \$175,000 and spent \$376,000. FY23 we budgeted \$185,000 and anticipating a spend of \$500,000. We currently have salt (calcium chloride) on order and the last storm has not yet been submitted.

Linda and the committee thanked Bill, Gretchen, Marcie, Gene and Jessica for their presentations tonight.

Upon motion moved by Tim Landy and 2<sup>nd</sup> by John Scholl to approve the meeting minutes of February 16, 2022

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To accept the meeting minutes of February 16, 2022. Tim Landy, Robert Kenney, Liz Benotti, John Scholl, Sandra Beaton supported the motion.

The next Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 6:30PM Town Hall.

Advisory adjourned at 8:00PM.

Respectfully submitted

Stephen Walsh, Clerk

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