

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
25 July 2016

Chairperson Linda Peterson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Pembroke Town Hall at 7:30PM on 25 July 2016. Also present were Stephen Curley, Timothy Brennan, James McCollum, John G. Brown, Jr., Stephen Walsh, Richard McManus and Elizabeth Monks.

Linda reminded members they will adjourn to meet with the Board of Selectmen to have a collaborative discussion on the following topics:

- The vision for the future of the town
- Financial concerns including the Plymouth County Retirement Fund, Health Insurance, Snow and Ice Deficit and Fire and Police Stations

The Special Town Meeting is scheduled for October 18, 2016. Opening of the warrant will be August 15, 2016 and will close on August 26, 2016.

The Advisory Committee adjourned 7:45pm to meet with the Board of Selectmen.

The Board of Selectmen welcomed members of the Advisory Committee.

Chairperson, Linda Peterson started the conversation noting Advisory Committee had no clear understanding of some things that came before them during this past fiscal year and suggested having a general discussion with the Board of Selectmen. She continued by saying the Board of Selectmen is an elected Board and responsible for the financial tone in Pembroke asking "what is the Board of Selectmen's view for the next five years? In the past the town had a five year Capital plan for example: DPW, Fire & Police stations.

Chairman, Lewis Stone responded noting the Town has a lot of projects and we have talked about a lot of issues. Arthur Boyle, Clerk noted – We did have a five year plan. The Town missed an opportunity to have a Medical Marijuana facility; this would have generated revenue. Leasing the land around 53/14 is an idea for financial stream.

Linda said we need to be cognizant of what we have such as the snow and ice deficit, the cost of healthcare to the town. There should be consideration for increased employee cost sharing. Town expenses should be seriously looked at; need to tighten our belts.

Willard Boulter noted "we are more reactive than proactive". Linda said as an example "the purchase of the land on Routes 53/14." Advisory learned about this at Town Meeting Floor. The Board of Selectmen said that decision was made in "Executive Session" and could not be discussed.

Tim Brennan noted he has been a member of Advisory Committee for two years. He asked "who is setting the vision for the Town"? By-Laws say the Town should have a five year plan; how did we get away from that. Ed Thorne, Town Administrator said the Capital Plan is updated every year. The town had an intern from Suffolk University to assist. There have been two strategic planning retreats in recent years. It's a great idea and money well spent. Tim referenced the DOR report for establishing a Town Charter; this would make the town stronger.

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

Dan Trabucco said there was a Town Government Committee established about 1 ½ years ago but interest weaned. It is starting to gear up again. Should the town have a Town Manager or a Town Charter? Town Manager from Taunton came to town four years ago; this question went before Town Meeting and was voted down on Town Floor. One problem was there was no job description.

Tim noted that he reached out to Bill Keegan, Foxboro Town Manager and he would be happy to meet with Pembroke staff. We should have a clear plan for the future.

Linda Peterson suggested as a way to get buy-in from Department Managers that the discussion of “how we’re going to provide in the Town of Pembroke” be part of Ed’s monthly Department Manager meetings.

Changing topics, Tim Brennan noted the Plymouth County Retirement has very lofty expectations presented to the town as totally funded. There are problems with the way it’s presented. We should be asking questions of the Board running it “what is the best and worst case scenario”? They’re saying 8% return.

Linda asked about the Healthcare contract – Ed noted The Mayflower Group is a big community of area towns. Pembroke has 640 people in the healthcare plan and only has one vote. He feels there is an inequity in voting. Pembroke negotiates with unions to get rid of the most expensive plans. Ed would like to have a better seat at the table – high priority w/contracts paying more healthcare costs.

Richard McManus suggested department managers research the availability of grants for example: police department received funding for bullet proof vests. Researching grants should be first before requesting funding from the Board of Selectmen and Advisory Committee.

Stephen Curley gave an example of one town department requesting funding for something. Advisory let them know that Pembroke was eligible for a grant; they just needed to complete the application. They responded by saying they will find a way to get it out of their budget.

Ed noted that both the Fire and Police Departments’ have been awarded several grants. This information is not always publicized. Linda said maybe it would be money worth spent by hiring a Town Planner. The Board of Selectmen noted that the Planning Board Assistant has been hired and started tonight. He has a degree in Urban Planning.

Stephen Walsh noted that the town should consider consolidating purchases re: school department, town hall such as copy machines – one main contract. Also should consider consolidating the Finance system.

Collective Bargaining Agreements – Legal Representative should be working – Dan Trabucco noted that it’s difficult to negotiate as a municipality. We do bench mark against other towns.

The Board of Selectmen thanked Advisory. Stephen Curley said this was a good start and suggested meeting a few times a year – the Board of Selectmen agreed.

Advisory adjourned their meeting with the Board of Selectmen at 8:15PM and reconvened their Advisory Committee meeting.

Linda reviewed the correspondence received:

- Conservation Commission Reorganization
- ATFC Annual Dues of \$236.00

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

Upon motion moved by James McCollum and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Stephen Curley to pay the ATFC Annual Dues of \$236.00

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To pay the ATFC Annual Dues of \$236.00. Timothy Brennan, Stephen Walsh, John G. Brown Jr., Richard McManus and Elizabeth Monks supported the motion.

- Response from Gene Fulmine, DPW Director re: Town Property Maintenance. Gene indicated he doesn't have the staff to care for "Common Grounds Dept.". Tim noted if he doesn't have the staff, how come he never brought that up? The committee will review this topic again at their next meeting.
- Linda noted that Michael Buckley, Town Accountant said there are no transfers for FY16. No action needed by Advisory Committee.
- Re-appointment as Special Municipal Employees - Conflict of Interest – all members must review and sign. The document should be returned to the Board of Selectmen's office.

Upon motion moved by James McCollum and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Elizabeth Monks following the discussion it was

**VOTED<sup>2</sup>:** To accept the meeting minutes of 27 June 2016. Stephen Curley, Timothy Brennan, Stephen Walsh and John G. Brown Jr. and supported the motion. Richard McManus abstained.

John Brown asked about the GATRA bus transportation service in Pembroke. He met an 83 year old woman who couldn't get on the bus without assistance. He asked if the Town pays for these services how can this happen. Linda said it's not the Town's responsibility and the drivers are not allowed to assist passengers. Linda suggested he contact Anna Seery, Director, Council on Aging.

The Advisory Committee's next meeting is scheduled for Monday, September 12, 2016 at 7:30PM; that meeting is scheduled to be recorded by PAC TV. Tim Brennan noted he will be away.

The Advisory Committee adjourned at 9:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Curley, Clerk

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