

TOWN OF PEMBROKE  
MASSACHUSETTS

APPROVED  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
23 February 2015

Chairperson Linda Peterson opened the meeting of the Advisory Committee in Pembroke Town Hall at 7:30 PM on 23 February 2015. Also present were Stephen Curley, Timothy Brennan, James McCollum, Anthony O'Brien, Stephen Walsh and Mark Gould.

Mark Gould's membership was confirmed by the Board of Selectmen on this day.  
Rachel Michael was absent.

The Committee met with Richard A. McManus, Jr., Advisory Committee member candidate. The committee asked why he was interested in joining the committee. Richard explained he has lived in Pembroke for four years and would like the town to be fiscally responsible. He has a banking background. Linda noted that the Advisory Committee meets every Monday night, September – April and asked if this would work for him. Richard noted he travels one week a month for work but sometimes he may not.

Upon motion made by James McCollum and seconded by Steve Walsh following the discussion, it was

**VOTED<sup>1</sup>:** To approve the appointment of Richard A. McManus, Jr. as a member of the Advisory Committee. His confirmation by Board of Selectmen will be scheduled for 02 March 2015.  
Stephen Curley, Timothy Brennan, Anthony O'Brien and Mark Gould supported the motion.

Linda Peterson, Chairperson noted that she spoke with Eugene Fulmine, DPW Director and Police Chief Richard Wall regarding rescheduling their budget meetings with Advisory. Both are available on 03 March 2015 depending on weather conditions. An email will be sent to confirm their appointments.

Upon motion made by James McCollum and seconded by Stephen Walsh following the discussion, it was

**VOTED:** To accept the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2015 as amended.  
Linda Peterson, Stephen Curley and Anthony O'Brien supported the motion.  
Timothy Brennan abstained.

Frank Hackett, Pembroke School Superintendent, Erin Obey, Assistant Superintendent, School Committee Vice-Chair Michael Tropeano and School Committee members, Patrick Chilcott and Virginia Wandell met to review their FY16 budget.

Michael Tropeano distributed the presentation for the FY16 budget and noted an increase of \$1.4M (4.8%) from last year's budget. The teacher's contract was scheduled to expire on 6/30/15; it was just extended for one year. There will be an \$800,000 budget shortfall. State funding (Chapter 70) is challenging with the school department only receiving \$25.00 per student, down to 45%. The Department of Education formula is based on student enrollment and the Communities ability to pay (median homes, demographics). Pembroke ranks 317 of 323 per pupil expenditures for FY14; we are paying less per student. Pembroke dropped from 9<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>. History on reductions was discussed.

Pembroke School department currently has 234 teachers with a total of 370 employees. In 2012/2013 Pembroke brought the Special Education program in-house. Mandated by state law, the town must provide education for

all students; special education costs can be as high as \$100,000. The school accepts students from outside the district; which is revenue generated. Michael Tropeano reviewed the prior reductions including staff. The committee asked about teacher morale? Patrick Chilcott stated that our teachers are "all in". They continue to drive programs; and are invested. People are nervous.

Fees will be increased by 11.7%, approximately \$70,000. This includes a high school annual parking fee of \$30 for students. It was asked if other fees were considered. They also increased transportation, athletics and full day kindergarten/preschool.

Targeted reductions for FY15 will further reduce headcount and impact the services provided to students. The reductions are non-personnel (elimination of technology purchases) to administrative (elimination of three full time positions) to instructional support (librarians) to classroom based (four elementary teachers).

The committee noted if there are 136 non-teaching positions in the school department, could cuts be made there instead of teachers? Frank Hackett stated "we are as lean as we can be". There are approximately 80 meetings scheduled during the year and every support staff position is critical. Also, there are 35 cafeteria workers and 18 custodians.

The committee asked if the school department knew why students are attending private schools versus attending Pembroke High School. Michael Tropeano said it is not for the quality of education but could be what's best for that student. Some attend Vocational or Religious schools. If a student attends school outside of town; the state mandates the school pay for that student.

How does the state calculate administrative costs? Erin Obey stated some of the Pembroke School administrative costs include technology software and legal advice. If you look at the state website both the administrative line and technology line should be combined to be accurate for Pembroke School administrative costs.

Frank Hackett thanked the Advisory Committee and will submit his detailed budget electronically to the committee.

The next Advisory Committee is scheduled for Monday, 02 March 2015. Both the Police Department and DPW are scheduled to review their budgets. In case of inclement weather, a "tentative" agenda for Tuesday, 03 March 2015 will also be posted.

There being no further discussion the Committee adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Curley, Clerk