

Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 11, 2017

Present: Arthur Frontczak, Stephen McDonough, Todd Lindmark, Joyce Terrio, Arlie Sterling, Ann Marie Duggan/Town Treasurer, Carol Green/Town Clerk Jim Tomaswecki and Pat Snead.

Steve McDonough called the meeting to order 7:00 PM.

A motion to approve the meeting minutes dated October 4, 2017 was made by Arthur Frontczak. It was seconded by Pat Snead **and so voted**. All were in favor.

Ann Marie Duggan/Treasurer:

Ann Marie spoke to the Committee about the two articles brought forward by the Treasurer's Office. The first article is an amendment to the modernization act. Joyce asked if a taxpayer was not able to afford the \$100 bill because of a difficult situation, does the office work with those taxpayers to help them. Ann Marie said that if a bill goes beyond the due date, interest would begin to accrue at the 14%; however, if someone does come with a hardship they will try to provide a payment plan that works. This allows the town to bill in a single installment and the residents to pay in a single installment.

The second article is also an amendment to the modernization act. Currently, we can sign a good standing certificate if they have delinquent taxes for 12 months or less. This change allows the Treasurer to not provide that certificate. This is an opportunity to be more proactive in collecting taxes that are overdue. Steve asked if this would apply to commercial properties as well. Ann Marie said it will. Joyce presented a scenario that might put someone in a position where this would be problematic for someone to sell property that was left to them. Steve asked if this situation arose in town would we be able provide guidance and help that person. Steve believes the language change allows for flexibility.

Pat asked if more changes should be anticipated based on the modernization act. Todd said that as we move along and go through the different sections the town may choose to act on more changes.

Carol Green/Town Clerk:

Carol is here to discuss making the Town Clerk an appointed position instead of an elected position. Carol feels that it should be an appointed position. She said 1/3 of the towns in Massachusetts are appointed. She feels like the position has changed greatly over the years. Joyce asked what the provision in the M.G.L. on who appoints the Town Clerk. Carol said it does not specify who makes the appointment it is either the Board of Selectmen or the Town Administrator. Joyce asked why the Town Moderator would not appoint the Clerk. Carol said she has minimal contact with the Town Moderator it's only during Town Meeting. Joyce wanted to know who would be the designated person/position to appoint. Carol said after it should be specified at Town Meeting. This would be done in the motion at Town Meeting. Pat asked who does the hiring and firing currently. Susan said that the Town Administrator has the responsibility of hiring and firing.

Carol said that she does not think that autonomy is in the best interest of the Town. She said that she hears that she reports to the taxpayers and that the average tax payer does not know what she is doing day to day. Steve said the position has become much more technical over the years. They now have open meeting laws, ethics, and voter registration. Someone being voted in with little or no experience could be very difficult. It can put a town into receivership and this has happened. Carol feels like this is the best thing for the town. Arlie said the board has consistently supported this.

Carol also would like to have the minutes stored as permanent record. Some of the committees have not been as diligent in taking the minutes. She is now collecting all minutes and scanning them. She has requested all boards to follow this. This would make it an official town bylaw.

Todd Lindmark/Finance Director:

Todd said that a lot of the transfers are putting money back into budgets that were removed because of the KP Budget. The KP budget came in a bit lower \$129,002 is our portion and with those monies he is restoring some of the monies that were removed from budgets. See sheet for specific breakdown.

Todd said the stabilization fund balance is \$1,450,000. He will be transferring an additional \$250,000 to the fund. Todd would like to transfer an additional \$250,000 this would give the town a balance of \$2,000,000.00. We have received a double AA rating we received 9 bids for the bond. Continuing to add to free cash will show us being more stable. Once funds go into the stabilization fund it does require a town meeting to withdraw from it. It requires a 2/3rds vote. Joyce asked if there was any thought given to taking the voting machines out and putting them in the capital budget. Todd said he has not discussed capital items with Jack yet. Todd is looking at other options such as bonding, leasing or using free cash to purchase items. Todd is trying to figure out what is in the town's best interest on how to get these items. He can place them back into capital but the money would be coming from free cash. Jim said we generated a lot of free cash, was it because of conservative revenue estimates and keeping expenses down as well?

Arlie said it bothers him that we are taking \$129,000 back from King Philip. Arlie asked if KP capital requests have to be approved by all three towns. Todd said he was not aware of specifics of that but he would look into this and get back to Arlie. Arlie said it's a shame that KP did not meet the budget that we had approved. Is it possible to turn some of this money back if they had capital request. Pat said he believed it would take all three towns to agree.

Susan Jacobson/Affordable Housing Director:

Susan Jacobson told the Committee that the Trust is looking to make this a bylaw. We currently require developers who build a ten or more home subdivision to provide one affordable home for every ten built. This cash out option would allow developers a cash buyout. The dollar amount would be determined by current market rate housing sales. The Trust would take the funds and purchase a home to add to the SHI Inventory. There was discussion about how the specifics would work.

A motion was made by Arthur Frontczak to appoint the Town Clerk position. It was seconded by Jim T. **and so voted.** All were in favor.

A motion was made to by Arlie Sterling to accept the minute/recordkeeping bylaw. It was seconded by Arthur Frontczak **and so voted.** All were in favor.

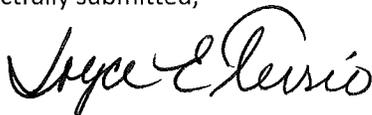
A motion was made by Pat Snead to approve the first of the two Town Treasurer articles to consolidate small bills into one bill. Seconded by Arthur Frontczak **and so voted.** All were in favor.

A motion was made by Pat Snead to approve the second article to change the one year delinquent tax article. It was seconded by Arlie Sterling. Arthur Frontczak said that dealing with different organizations with payment delays he was trying to think through and he does not feel this is overly aggressive. Joyce said that Ann Marie does not have very many delinquent accounts. Joyce does not like this proposal if the town does not have a large number of delinquent tax payers Joyce does not believe it needs to be changed. Pat said he thinks a year is a long time to wait. He feels that is not something that happens frequently. Pat is happy to leave it to their up to the Treasurer, he is in favor of it. Steve believes that the town will take care of this appropriately. Arlie is uncomfortable with the language the word "enforcement" is a broad term. "Distribution of lists", concerns Arlie, he wondered who got these lists. Steve suggested we table this and have Ann Marie come back and speak to the article. Pat Snead withdrew his motion. A motion was made to table the second Treasurer Article by Joyce Terrio. It was seconded by Arthur Frontczak **and so voted.** All were in favor.

A motion was made to approve the NMAHT cash buyout option by Jim T. It was seconded by Steve McDonough. Jim said it adds to their ability to purchase property. Joyce said this is not a bad tool and allows for options and she does not feel the larger developer will utilize this tool. Arlie said that he has concerns about the SPGA and the qualifications to execute. Steve asked if a consultant was needed would the Trust look into that option. Susan said that the towns have used consultants in the past for first time projects. Arlie said that bringing in expertise is more comforting to him. Following discussion the It **was so voted.** All were in favor.

Motion to adjourn was made by Steve McDonough @ 8:58.

Respectfully submitted,



Joyce Terrio, Clerk



Susan Jacobson, Administrator