

## Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2020

Present: Arthur Frontczak, Susan Klein, Michael Hough, Jon Hurwitz, Dave Lutes, Susan Jacobson, Kristen Balash.

Blythe Robinson - Town Administrator, Todd Lindmark – Finance Director, Deputy Fire Chief Pete Petruichik.

Arthur Frontczak opened the meeting at 7:03PM

Arthur Frontczak introduced Deputy Fire Chief Petruichik and Blythe Robinson: Reserve Fund Transfer Request

Blythe said they are not here tonight for a reserve fund transfer, because they have determined that there is more than enough available in the vehicle maintenance salaries line item. She indicated that when the end of year transfer come up, they will ask that you vote to approve a transfer to cover the repair of the transfer. Deputy Chief Petruichik said there have been some problems with Emergency 1 truck. There have been multiple problems over the last several months; after some diagnostic testing there seems to be a problem with the motor. Blythe said that funding will be available in the DPW budget because they did not replace Paul Vito at the DPW and that is why they have additional funds in the salary line.

Arthur asked Blythe to give the Committee and update on budget deliberations.

Blythe said they continue to work on the budget and a number of things have come into play since the last Advisory Committee meeting. The town has determined that the Health insurance increase will be 3.67% for next year. The schools have presented their budgets. Blythe said that they are going to go over some things and they presented a 2.83% budget to the SelectBoard; two of the three Selectboard members were in agreement. They are looking at the fees at the Transfer Station, which have been the same for the last eight years. Losses in the Transfer Station Budget loss has gotten more significant in the last two years. They are planning on proposing a change in the contribution rate that is paid toward retirees health insurance. They are presenting a budget next week to the Selectboard.

Todd Lindmark then discussed town revenues. He said revenues from each of the budget years are presented on a handout, which the committee received. He spoke about the revenues from each year and what is expected to come in for next year. (see attached sheet). The main revenue sources are Total Levy Base, Estimated Receipts, Education/State Aid, Total General Government/State Aid, Total Operating Revenue.

Blythe spoke about some changes in the way the transfer station is working to cover more of the costs and not have as much of a deficit. Jonathan Hurwitz asked if we are required to have a transfer station and if not, should we move away from having a transfer station. Blythe said that they are going to look into some options to help breach the gap.

Dave Lutes said that he is the liaison to the DPW/Transfer Station and he will keep the group updated.

Kristen Balash asked about the increase of the ambulance receipts and wanted to make sure they were mindful of the costs associated for residents if they are transported in an ambulance.

Mike Hough said this is all based on experience and he wondered why we did not have the actuals he feels that both numbers are helpful.

David asked about cemetery numbers are zero. He wondered if there will be a number in that box. Blythe said we need to decide if we want to remain in the cemetery business.

Jonathan said that he has a lot of concerns about the FY21 budget; some things are recession proof, many of the other things will be affected. He believes there is going to be an ebb and flow. For instance, shouldn't we expect

flat growth in motor vehicle excise taxes. He feels there are a lot of overestimations. He believes keeping some of these things flat from where they will be a risk. He is concerned that we will have a short fall and we should be considerate of a potential recession.

Blythe said that it will depend on some additional things that may be helpful. The retiree contribution and the health insurance buy out.

Arthur asked what the next steps were as far as the budget is concerned. Blythe said that they will go back to the Selectboard they will be going back with a lower budget. If those changes don't happen. Arthur said they will like to know about any cuts. The DPW has had some changes made and how many people are needed at the top. We have had someone retire and they may not replace those people.

Jonathan asked about a contingency plan if we are not able to hold Town Meeting. Blythe, Susan Jacobson and Kevin Kalkut all said that the Town Moderator is following this closely and will keep Blythe and the Selectboard informed.

Susan J. suggested that each liaison watch the Department Head Budget Presentation so that they are better informed.

Kristen asked if the library budget was going to receive any cuts. Todd said that they have not reduced.

Blythe said that the part-time IT person position will not be filled and Blythe has spoken with the Library Director and said they may need to get some help from their IT person.

Blythe said next Tuesday nights Agenda for the Selectboard will be posted and will include some of the necessary cuts and what they will be.

Mike asked Blythe to explain the retiree cuts.

Blythe said that currently contributes 65% of the cost of their regular plan and or the Medicare supplement plan. They would reduce that to 50% to all retirees and future retirees. Norfolk chose to have the retirees be the same contribution rate from 65% to 50%. Mike asked if making this change caused any heartburn.

Susan J. will schedule the Norfolk and King Philip schools for next week.

She will mark March 25<sup>th</sup> for the DPW and Police

Susan J. and Blythe will send the Selectboard packet to the Advisory Board tomorrow.

Blythe walked the committee through the Draft Warrant Annual Town Meeting Articles. There was discussion about the Citizens Petition. Susan Klein said that Town Moderator Jay Talerman always looks for Committee Members that represent the town.

There was general discussion about the articles.

Meeting adjourned

A motion to adjourn at 8:31PM by David Lutes seconded by Kristen Balash and so voted. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

David Lutes, Clerk

Susan Jacobson, Administrator

**\*These minutes were approved at the 4/15/2020 Advisory Meeting via Zoom\***