

approved June 3, 2020 Via Zoom Meeting

Advisory Committee Meeting

March 25, 2020

Meeting via Zoom

Present: Arthur Frontczak, Jon Hurwitz, Mike Hough, , Susan Klein, David Lutes, Jackie Katz and Kristen Balash. Not in attendance Brian Beachkofski.

Blythe Robinson, Town Administrator, Todd Lindmark, Finance Director, Barry Lavierve, Interim DPW Superintendent, Kevin Kalkut, Selectperson.

Ed Haddad participated through Zoom.

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM by Arthur Frontczak.

Agenda:

7:00 PM DPW:

Barry Lavierve will be presenting the budget for the DPW. Barry said this is new process for him as well as the DPW staff. He said he sat down and made adjustments on things that were traditionally either higher or lower. He and Todd worked this afternoon on finalizing some of the salaries. They made last minute tweaks to make the budget tighter than it has been in the past. Arthur asked if David Lutes the liaison had any questions on the budget. David asked if he was the Acting/Interim Barry responded that he is the Interim. Blythe said that she wanted to weigh in on that. She said the DPW budget is reduced from the current year by 3.4%. There have been retirements in the last two years and Barry is the interim DPW Director. Blythe said that they wanted to identify where to best allocate those salaries. They wanted to add one person to the grounds crew for a full time position and they would be hiring some additional help in the summer time.

The Select Board felt that in a town our size did we do not need as many positions at the top. They would have one Superintendent instead of three. It does include a DPW Director with a top salary and a position below that (it is not exactly defined) they eliminated funding for a Superintendent altogether. It does keep funding in for a new grounds position but they have continued to try and balance the budget by removing two summer intern positions. Blythe just want to clarify where we stand at this time. DPW can get the work done and manage the projects with two people but it will not give us the ability to be as proactive as they would like to be. The work will get done but not necessarily in the time frame residents may expect.

David said that he wondered if the reductions in the Administrative Budget were discussed in her prior conversation. Blythe said it is a bit of both they have made a decision to shift a small amount of the cost to the Water Enterprise Fund. Dave asked what the number of employees in DPW is compared to the current fiscal year. Dave said he would like that information as soon as possible.

Arthur asked if this was a level service budget. Barry said that it was their attempt to have a level service budget. His example was that line striping the roads make take a bit longer. The mission was to reduce costs without reducing services.

Barry said that Blythe summed it up pretty well. The management side is not optimal but they will get done what they need to get done.

Susan Klein said that they discussed changing some things like stickers/bags she wondered if that had been discussed. Blythe said they went over that with the Select Board and that she felt they were generally supportive of the change. Blythe said that they are going to go back to the board at a meeting in April and ask them to approve those changes. They have adjusted the revenue slightly and perhaps they may have more people using the transfer station with the economy headed where it is.

Ed Haddad asked if there was revenue that we are not seeing in this budget. Blythe said that she would answer that question as a no. Ed Haddad said that it does not reflect on this sheet. Blythe said it will still cost more to run the transfer station and they are simply trying to close the gap. Ed said there is revenue that we are not seeing.

Todd said we were on the expense page and the revenue was included but it is on the revenue sheets and there is nothing hidden. Todd said it is incorporated but on the revenue side.

Mike had a question regarding the 11% increase in town vehicle fuel and he wondered what was driving that. Barry said that town fuel was usually underfunded; this budget used what was actually spent each year and that is why there is an increase.

Blythe said that the historical information is in the budget book and if it is helpful they will send it out again the mid-year is already in the books and she is happy to get that to everyone as well.

Warrant Review:

Blythe said she could give us a quick run through on what's changed with the budget since we last discussed it. They have moved ahead with changes within the budget keeping in mind that the retiree's health insurance would not change. Blythe said there are three modest revenue changes within the budget within the transfer station, ambulance receipts to balance to the budget there have been some reductions from Treasurer, Police, Library and Norfolk Schools. She said they need to go back to the board on April 7th to see if they are open to some change on retiree health insurance or not. They have also sent out a letter to all employees to see if they will consider coming off of the Town's health insurance. The State would like us to add Mendon and Millville to the MECC that may have some positive effects to the budget but she does not have those details at this time. It may help long term but she does not believe it would be beneficial at this time.

Susan Jacobson said that the new date for Town Meeting date June 9th and June 11th. She also said that she would like to keep the meetings going forward. Susan expressed some concerns on what businesses may or may not be open in order to get Warrants mailed to residents. She suggested that she and Blythe will work together to accomplish this task.

David said he would like to know the impacts to each department and he hopes the Select-Board will keep this information. David would like to know what the ripple effect will be on all of the departments and he would like to see that before the Select-Board makes a decision on the retirees cost share. Blythe said that she calculated it out based on the retirees we have today, The Selectboard expressed that was quite a large amount and she said one option would be a 5% change, which would be worth about \$40,000. She cannot tell us until then what may be put back in a budget.

Arthur said he would like to defer any changes to the fall instead of ½ and hour before Town Meeting. Dave said that he is concerned about them raising the retiree's portion of health insurance payment.

Kristen asked if it was still an option to keep it what is currently is or can they try and break it out between people? Blythe said based on feedback from the Labor Attorney it should be an all or nothing otherwise it could be considered discrimination.

Ed Haddad said that there was discussion about getting the public the same information that the Advisory Committee receives for the meeting. Susan responded that it will be available on the www.mytowngovernment.org website.

A motion to adjourn was made by David Lutes. It was seconded by Susan Klein and so voted. All were in favor.

Meeting adjourned @ 7:56PM.

Respectfully submitted,

David Lutes, Clerk