

TOWN OF FOXBOROUGH

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

MARCH 29th, 2017

Committee Members Present: Sue Dring, Thom Freeman, Sean McCarthy, Stephanie McGowan, Seth Ferguson, Brent Ruter, Rob Canfield, Heidi Krockta, Bernard Dumont, Michelle Raymond

Members Absent: Jessica Allen, Javed Hussein

Others Present: Virginia Coppola, Paige Duncan, Lisa Sinkus, Bill Keegan, Randy Scollins, Jim Devellis, Heather Harding, Deborah Giardino

The meeting was brought to order at 7:05 by Susan Dring.

7:04 PM Paige Duncan presented on Article 24, Amend Zoning Bylaws Section 4.1.3.4 of Chapter 275 language pertaining to Height. Paige stated the article was for housekeeping, stating the recent iteration contained language changes from “can” to “may”. Michelle suggested the changes to be more in line with law practice etiquette. Sue asked if there were any changes to the Storm Water Bylaw, Paige stated there were changes but they are in the process of rewriting the article to reflect to those changes. Sue asked if Paige could present on it when it’s done. Paige stated that Chris Gallagher, the town engineer, was the best individual to speak to regarding the redraft. Sue then asked Paige about the article regarding Marijuana General Bylaw Prohibition Language. Paige stated that she knew the article was going to ballot and she further suggested getting the word out to the community to support either side at town meeting.

7:13 PM Mark Morse of the Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School presented on the Charter School budget and its impact to the town. Mr. Morse reported that their FY18 budget was 26 Million based on local assessments and state aid, serving nine communities. In regards to Foxboro: attendance went up by 1 student in the school’s 3.3% increase in enrollment, with a -2.0% in transportation costs. These changes led to an increase of \$25,000 for the town of Foxboro to cover. While the school charge is the same for every community, cost per student is different per state aid. Seth inquired how the cost for the town is reached. Mark stated it is based on a state formula made up of student enrollment, percentage of the community/district, and a Revenue Growth Factor. Seth further inquired why the towns of Mansfield and Foxboro were different in terms of cost even though they are relatively similar. Mark stated that as Foxborough is doing well financially the state aid to offset the cost of student enrollment is less. Heidi inquired about the impact of losing students with a rising budget. Mark stated that losing a student means losing aid for the community the student is from, while the school is gaining students elsewhere causing the cost of the school to go up.

Seth inquired if this was an anomaly or a trend, to which Sue responded that this is normal. Sean asked where he could find a breakdown of the figures used to develop costs for the town, as he was concerned that Foxborough was higher than Sharon or Mansfield. Mark stated that some of that information is located on Department Of Revenue or Department of Education websites. Randy stated that the value of a community is the aggregate taxable value of the property within the town. Bernard asked if the increase was across multiple years, Randy responded yes. Thom asked if the 3% increase included new teachers, and additionally if the teacher contracts were similar with Foxborough public schools. Mark responded that the increase included new staff and that he was unable to provide an answer as every school contract is different. Mark reported that the current population at the school was 375 students enrolled, further stating the school is at capacity. Thom asked if that information could be used to create fixed costs. Mark stated that it is possible.

7:39 PM Voting on minutes commenced.

7:41 PM Vote on minutes March 1st. Brent motioned to accept the minutes, seconded by Sean.

Vote: 9/0/1

7:42 PM Vote on Minutes March 8th. Sean asked to withhold a vote on the minutes, which Sue allowed.

7:44 PM Sue stated that the final vote on the articles would be on April 12th, with all write ups due by the 5th.

7:48 PM Before calling for adjournment, Sue called for any other issues to be brought before the committee.

7:49 PM Jim Devellis, for the record appearing before the committee as a resident of 4 Mckenzie Ln, presented on the history of the Turf Field project. Mr. Devellis was involved in the early stages of the development of the Turf Field at Foxborough High School. Started in 2008, Mr. Devellis and others started a 501 c3 to fund for a turf field with lights. He applied for a grant and sought potential sites for this field based on a criteria that benefitted the youth, had room for parking, reduced construction costs, ample lighting etc. Mr. Devellis stated that the Superintendent and the Athletics Director supported the project early on, and that he reached out to all the youth sports teams for their interest in the project as well. During the end of the high school reconstruction project the project experienced some changes. The field was redesigned to meet MIAA standards, took it off town water, and designed it to reflect the needs of the sports using it and the wishes of the school committee. Between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Turf Field construction project the town hall project was completed. Mr. Devellis stated that the group that brought this request forward had in good faith completed every task asked of it to bring it before the School Committee (SCOM), and that it was not “dumped on it”.

Bill Keegan stated in the last phase there were complications regarding direction of the project, with gaps in understanding between the two phases. Randy Scollins and Jim Devellis exchanged opinions on Capital Improvement Project (CIP) budget requests. Sean was concerned about the process of obtaining the funds to complete the project, likening it to a business loan without a business plan. Bill Keegan stated that understanding the history of the project and clearing up who is responsible for finishing the project would go a long way in resolving the issue.

The Town Manager stated there was a clear plan for phase 1 no clear plan for phase 2, suggesting a sub group should be developed to address the need. Heidi acknowledged the creation of an asset for the town and stated the need to best use it without costing the taxpayers more money in the process. Virginia Coppolla stated that there is a credibility issue from the SCOM in regards to their handling of the CIP request for \$1,200,000 for the field. Heidi suggested speaking with the SCOM. Jim Devellis stated that it came as a surprise that the money for the field is on the CIP instead of being put forward to the town at town meeting. Sean asked how an item gets on the CIP list. Bill stated the requestors need to pass a budgetary request and go through the proper channels. The CIP board makes a recommendation that goes before the Town Manager, the ADCOM and the Board of Selectmen. The discussion that followed concerned the investigation and implementation of policy in regards to CIP requests, specifically which ones would go before a CIP meeting and which should go before town hall. Sue stated that there should be a rule that anything over \$500,000 should be a warrant article. Bill stated that the request should be broken down into purpose and amount. Michelle stated that the process needs to be evaluated, while Bill stated the need to identify the mechanism to resolve issues such as this going forward.

In regards to the field, the Advisory Committee (ADCOM) discussed how to identify which parties want to rent the field and gauge the level of interest. Thom stated that School and Recreational Departments all had a hand in the project, with Mr. Devellis asking if the field is on school property who would get the final word. Heather Harding, Chair of the Recreation Board, stated that the relationship between the School and the Recreation Departments (SDEP and RDEP) has been very positive, furthermore responding to the question that the SDEP handles the upkeep and management of the Turf Field while the RDEP does everything else like scheduling, coordination of other fields, and managing the rental account.

Next meeting to be held in April 5 in the McGinty Room.

8:30 PM Adjourned. Bernard motioned to adjourn by, seconded by Rob.


Vote: 10/0/0

Minutes Taken by Matthew Mackenzie

Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting:

Vote:


Signature of Chairperson

on behalf of the group

Signature of Vice Chairperson