

Foxborough Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 10th 2019

In attendance:

Sean McCarthy, Bernard Dumont, Seth Ferguson, Larry Ooi, Jennifer Frank-Bonnet, Brian Guild, Sue Dring, Sharon Weiskerger, Michelle Raymond

MINUTES

7:00PM - Meeting called to order by Sue Dring

7:02PM – Accepting Prior Meeting Minutes

Bernard D made the motion to accept the Minutes for February 27th with minor adjustments for attribution.

Brian G - 2nd

Vote: 8 – 0 – 0

Seth F made the motion to accept the Minutes for March 6th without edits.

Sean M - 2nd

Vote: 8 – 0 – 0

7:10PM – CIP Budget

Sean M - began the discussion by raising concerns over the decision by Water/Sewer to remove the street sweeper from the CIP schedule and pay for it with water rates.

R Hill – That is only the first-year payment on a 5-year lease. The next 4 years will come from rates.

Sean M – Do you need Water Board approval?

R Hill – I already had it.

Sean M – How much would a new street sweeper have cost?

R Hill – About \$75K per year

Sean M – I'm just a hawk and I'm concerned for the funding sources and how that could change during the CIP meeting.

Seth F – I think we're spend too much on outdated copier technology. The govt needs to get more digital; why are we buying 4 new 'big honking' copiers? I'd like to see the town dial it back on this activity and, if noticeable, it could spur new efficiencies. I'm not going to belabor this issue – just that over 8M copies comes close to 15K per student. We should be finding ways to spur new tech and retire old tech.

Larry O – asked if budgeting only 3 copiers would be shorting one school.

Sue D – The schools have \$36M and 22 copiers now; if they need one more, they can find a way.

Bill K – Bill Yukna made a compelling argument to replace these units every 4 years. I think you should speak to him before you start cutting. The schools may be buying fewer books but still need more materials.

Sue D – But if it is a recurring expense it should not be in the CIP budget.

Bill K – It's in the CIP budget because the items are over \$25K.

Michelle R – How many are there and how long do they last?

Bill K – There are 22 and each has a 4/5-year lifespan.

Sean M – The Union requires that copiers be made available.

Seth F made the motion to reduce the CIP budget by \$10K

Sue D - 2nd

Vote: 3 – 6 – 0

Bernard D – In the business world, the question from managers in charge is: 'how can we do more with less?' But back to people in charge, with deference to Michelle, there are still those that prefer to function with paper.

Sean M made the motion to accept the CIP budget as presented.

Larry O - 2nd

Vote: 7 – 2 – 0

7:25PM – Article #14 (Parking By-law)

Larry O – This update updates Section 1 regarding fines and manner of badge display. Section 2 has no changes. Section 3 updates to \$50 fine. Bill k, we need to have the numbers updated on the Warrant.

Larry O made the motion to accept Article #14 (as presented)

Seth F - 2nd

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0

Article #26 (Retail Tobacco Store)

Michelle R – This article defines what a tobacco store IS and where it can be located in a proactive move to restrict one from opening in the Town Common area. This is sponsored by the Board of Health.

Michelle R made the motion to accept Article #26

Larry O - 2nd

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0

Article #15 - (Amend Sign By-laws) (prev #16)

The specific amended elements mentioned were: Section 3 – changing the number of days to appeal a Zoning decision, Section 5 – adding digitization, Section 6 – replacing a sign is equated to a new sign, Section 8 – if a petition is rejected, it can't be re-applied for 2 years, Section 9 – the owner cannot transfer the sign permit without the OK of the Zoning Board, Section 10 – primary signage can be digital.

Lorraine Brue – unless we are talking about a specific sign, this is basically a 'housekeeping' section of the by-laws.

Sue D – This applies to all digital signs?

L Brue – Yes, within the limits of zoning for that area.

Brian G – This gives the Building Commissioner more strength to enforce rules.

Seth F made the motion to accept Article #15 as presented

Jen F-B - 2nd

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0

Article #16 - (Billboards)

This is the 3rd time this proposal has been made to Town Meeting (having failed twice before) Electronic billboards garner more visibility over static signs. Their distraction factor does pose a safety concern. Beach Street already gets a lot of light pollution. There is also no guarantee that the town will receive any mitigation funds.

L Brue – There are landowners who would like the opportunity to make their wetland areas profitable, even for static with the option to go electric in the future.

Larry O – It would be silly not to have the availability for revenues to the town through this option.

Sue D – We do want to attract people and businesses to Route 1.

Brian G – This does not mean that all applications will be approved.

Larry O – It is still up to the BOS to exact mitigations for signage.

Bernard D – I have been distracted by Powerball images.

Michelle R – Accidents aren't happening near the existing signs.

Sue D – Is this really taking away from Route 1's potential. If not on the Common, why on Route 1?

Seth F – This is a move into the 21st century – going digital.

Larry O made the motion to accept Article #16

Seth F - 2nd

Vote: 7 – 2 – 0

Article #6 – (Fire Contract)

Sue D -asked for the contract and the associated costs in writing.

M Johns – I can't respond in 15 minutes. You asked before this meeting. I've been trying to get last week's minutes. The numbers haven't changed.

Sue D - We were told at the last meeting we would have the contracts before this meeting. We can't vote on the contracts themselves, only on the numbers needed to fund them.

Sean M made the motion to accept Article #6

Seth F - 2nd

Vote: 9 – 0 – 0

Article #8 - (Library Contract)

Jennifer F-B stated that there were no distinct changes over the FY2019 budget

Jennifer F-B made the motion to accept Article #8

Bernard D - 2nd

Vote: 7 – 0 – 2

Article #7 – (Dispatch Contract)

Seth F – stated that: ‘it is what it is’; there are no real questions here.

Seth F made the motion to accept Article #7 as presented

Larry O - 2nd

Vote: 8 – 0 – 1

8:00PM – Other ADCOMM Business

Sue D explained the write-up procedures for publication and reminded all that they were due on April 11th.

M Johns – asked about the Stabilization funding.

Sue D – Informed Mr. Johns that the committee already voted on that article.

Bill K – I hoped you would contact me or put me on the agenda. I was asked not to be here – that there was no need to be here.

Sue D – The Finance Director asked if she needed to be here. I told her she did not, but could I text her if we had a question. She said that was OK.

Bill K – pressed about budget procedures.

Sue D – stated that the ADCOMM is an independent board – that it makes recommendations.

Bill K – asserted that there can be significant impacts to departments by ADCOMM’s decisions. The Charter ****
(inaudible)

Sue D – Claimed that she took great offence to Mr. Keegan’s inference.

Bill K – This is supposed to be an open forum for discussion.

Sue D – It is.

Bill K – But not to cuts!

Sue D – We don't need your permission – the taxpayers get to decide.

Bill K - The selectmen approved a budget and you changed it.

Sue D- Bill, we made a recommendation. We're an independent board. We don't need permission from you to make an independent recommendation.

Bill K - Not according to the town charter, you're not. If you recommend something different from the selectmen and town manager, we should at least have a conversation.

Sue D- We'll have that conversation before voting at town meeting,.

Bill K – It has to be said, that departments have the chance to talk.

Sue D – That conversation will be had at Town Meeting when the taxpayers can be involved.

Bill K – The budget creators should be consulted.

Sue D - **** (inaudible)

Bill K – How about a dialogue?

Sue D – You are upset that we aren't a rubber stamp.

Bill K – So no discussion? A half million in cuts is significant! Some dialogue would be nice.

Sue D – The cuts amount to less than ½%. You get a rubber stamp every year.

Bill K – This has never happened.

Sue D - Well, it's happening now.

Bill K – I take exception to not being put on the agenda. I assumed last week only contracts were for discussion. There was no speaking of the budget.

Sue D – This came about due to increasing pension debt and increasing hiring.

Bill K – Saying **** is unfair, but no one spoke ... there was no discussion of cuts. If I'd known, people would have been in the meeting.

Michelle R – Discussion of the budget is on the agenda.

Bill K – I was told I was not needed – I was duped!

Bernard D – Where we are today – from the start: in a 2-page detail of requests, FY2020 for \$73.7M. Through your review that was reduced to \$73.1M. In the first interaction, \$600K was deducted. The process every year had been that Randy had items in red until they were balanced.

Bill K – The Chair and Moderator are to present a balanced budget. Things were different this year, but a balanced budget was presented as requested.

Bernard D – What has happened since, in this open forum, has taken in context the last 10 years. On an annualized basis, the budget has risen 3+% per year, which is more when compounded. Unfunded liabilities; every year we see no control – are we going to be at our target in 2030? Twofold -every year sees a rise in expenses which taxpayers will have to feed with property taxes. When looking at the reason for increases we see more debt through funding. The budget may be balanced, but it is higher than each prior year. Can we afford to do increases every year?

Bill K – At the meeting 2 years ago, revenues were up 4% and the budget presented was < 4% growth. We're not trying to grow business greater than the revenues to support it. The OPEB program is better than 90% of all other towns and we're still making annual contributions. We are current with the pension program by the State and Health Insurance fell. On the Operational side, it's identical how we are paying for staff. We gave the BOS a choice: level funding or level services ... or a blend. The BOS chose blending. We are a AAA rated town. That doesn't happen by accident. It's troubling that we aren't without **** (illegible)

Sue D – I'm looking at 48% increase over 5 years in Insurance and Pension. \$49.4M of revenues comes from levied taxes. We're required to pay 14.5 M in insurance and pensions annually. We're looking at the big picture. The budget increased by \$3.5M – that's close to the amount in the Stabilization Fund. Fixed debt still has to be paid. What happens when we do not have revenue growth?

Bill K – State Aid & Receipts. Foxborough has weathered a crisis.

Sue D – Then we have to agree to disagree.

Seth F – Attendance tonight is up 1000%. There is the discretion of the Chair. Looking at the BOS as the best forum for perspectives to be heard. There is Town Meeting, BOS and ADCOMM.

Sue D – We don't have to make a recommendation that matches the BOS.

Seth F – The discussion needs to continue, but all department have made their input known to us.

Bernard D – Annual increases to employees. 2% + 2% Steps/COLA ... why are those automatic? We went through all these details ... all the minutia.

Bill K – Unfortunately, it was not discussed with Administration, and I'm troubled by that. You asked me not to be here.

Sue D – Why didn't you ask me if we were going to be making cuts? The Assistant Town Manager was at the meeting. Why would you both need to be at the meeting? You want to put pressure on this committee. You can present your version at Town Meeting.

Bill K – When were the votes taken? Was there a quorum?

Seth F – Would members of the BOS in attendance like to provide their observations?

Mark Elfman – I'm curious where all the changes came from - \$500K. This should be resolved before Town Meeting ... and the ADCOMM meetings should be televised.

Sue D – I'm willing to take this under advisement. Are we willing to adjourn?

Larry O – For the last 2 years or all last year, there has been a BOS representative at ADCOMM meetings, but not this year.

8:35PM

Bernard D – made the motion for Adjournment

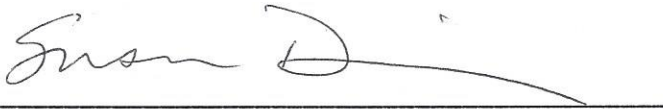
Sue D - 2nd

Vote: 6 – 2 – 1

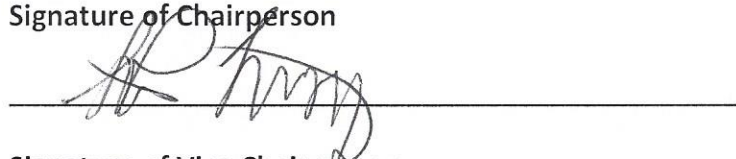
Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting: 10 April 2019

Vote:



Signature of Chairperson



Signature of Vice Chairperson