

Foxborough Advisory Committee

Wednesday, February 12th 2020

In attendance:

Bernard Dumont, Seth Ferguson, Thom Freeman, Jr., Sharon Weiskerger, Brian Guild, Jack Martin, Larry Ooi, Dennis Keefe, Dan Peterson, Paul Ivanoff

MINUTES

7:02PM - Meeting called to order by Seth Ferguson

Seth opened the meeting by acknowledging Stephanie McGowan in the audience and announcing that she had pulled papers to run for the Board of Selectman seat in the Spring election , thus she has to step down from the ADCOMM. Seth then referred to the plans for the 2021 budget season incorporating major changes with increased headcounts and increased resources.

7:07PM – Board of Health

Director Pauline Zajdel presented for the Town Health Agencies and introduced Mr. Sullivan to speak to the Foxborough's participation in the ARC program for developmental needs of Norfolk County. The ARC budget request is for level funding \$9750, the same as it has been for 15 years. These funds are combined with State funding grants to meet the living needs of heating, rent and other support systems.

Dennis K – How many clients does ARC serve?

Mr. Sullivan – approximately 2000.

Jack M – How many of those are in Foxborough?

Mr. Sullivan – 161 residents receive @ \$1.6M in services.

Pauline Z then reiterated her request for another position, a sanitarian/inspector.

Seth F – What is the trending that supports this request?

Pauline Z – There are more business establishments requiring inspections while staffing levels in the health department has remained the same.

Seth F – Does the increase in permits lead to fee growth?

Pauline Z – There has been a measurable growth in the number of live events: stadium, Normandy Farms, the common, which are demanding inspection staffing, and these events tend to happen on the weekends which can culminate in overtime hours.

Seth F – I would ask for a projection for the 'all in' costs for 2021, showing a clear trend of growth in resource duties.

Larry O – Are you asking for an additional 16 hours or new staffing?

Pauline Z – I'm looking for another 35-hour employee.

George S – Bill K added a ½ person with the understanding that fees would cover most of that expense.

Dennis K – Does your department have any responsibilities with the new Partners facility?

Pauline Z - No, we do not.

Jack M – What is the net change of inspection businesses?

Pauline Z – New businesses are charged a \$200 fee. Then there is a fee to establish seating, then additional physical inspections.

Thom F – Are there any new mandated inspection standards or timetables that will incur more manpower?

Pauline Z – New food codes were instituted in 2018 which allowed for a 'risk-based' inspection system. Weight is given to frequency of testing due to riskiness of the food handling environment. As for unfunded mandates, there are new codes being discussed on Beacon Hill. We are still waiting on swimming pool and housing rule updates.

Seth F – Would adding straight time proposals (19 hours) help the concern for OT?

Pauline Z – There are more weekend events and events outside the normal working hours.

Dennis K – Where was overtime expensed in the 2020 budget?

Paul I – Is the 54K fully loaded?

George S – fixed costs are in the \$8M Gen Govt line item. Estimate @ 30% for fixed costs and 24% for pension obligations.

7:38PM – Council on Aging

Director Marc Craig introduced himself by passing out ViewMasters depicting Seniors participating in activities. He then proceeded to explain how there has been a marked increase in services rendered and visitors participating in activities sponsored. Mr. Craig then advocated for the importance of the social worker aspect in addressing the needs of senior citizens who may not have any other outside contact and how that can move expediently to correct a desperate situation. The expected growth of Seniors in Foxborough by 2030 is @ 38% while the overall population growth is @ 3%. This growth projects to @ 115 visits per day.

Seth F – This is a good story of how the same staffing levels can serve twice the number of visits.

Dennis K – Please describe 'professional services.'

Mr. Craig – those would include support groups and counselling.

Dan P – What is the \$40K in 2021 for 'professional'?

Mr. Craig – That is from last year’s budget passed at Town Meeting. We requested 2 personnel and were approved for 1. The building is open 45 hours including 2 nights. It has been requested by younger seniors the facility be open on Saturday mornings.

8:00PM – Historical Commission

Mark Ferencik presented to the ADCOMM a rundown of the Historical Commission’s properties and responsibilities. The HC is proposing a level-funded budget from prior year- there are no salaries.

The ADCOMM had no questions and thanked him for his time and appearance.

8:05PM – Library

Director Manny Leite introduced members of the Library Board and proceeded to advocate for their request to bring on board a Young Adult Librarian. He claimed that ‘Young Adults’ is a group that has been consistently ignored by studies and the community.

Sharon W – What age range are we talking about here?

Mr. Leite – 12 -18 years old. Many surrounding towns are already engaged to meet those children’s’ needs. Many kids are already in the SAILS network and Foxborough is in competition with other towns, especially after school. The offerings can range from Anime, Comics, Dungeons and Dragons, Magazines, Games, even breakdancing. The Boyden already has facilities dedicated to this demographic that are going unused due to a lack of engagement by a specialized staff. We are willing to work with the schools. There are opportunities to provide services for college prep/testing and for establishing a teen advisory board which could facilitate: Teen TEDx, safe spaces after school, movie nights, Comic – Cons, photography and even animal shelter drives.

Mr. Leite continued by demonstrating that from 2017 – 2019, the library has seen visits increase from 61406 to 62776, programs have increased from 231 to 304 and circulation (including e-books) has increased from 152K to 157K. Continuing, Mr. Leite stated that a Supervisor currently making \$76K was retiring and a replacement was coming in the fall @ \$60K, therefore those savings could be used towards the new position sought after.

Jack M – Every additional person is pushing on purse strings. That isn’t to say that it wouldn’t help the community.

Brian G – Will there be any collaboration to get students there after school?

Bernard D – 1) How many from out of town utilize the Boyden’s resources?

Mr. Leite – Approximately 30%

Bernard D – 2) In general, why isn’t PTO encouraged more instead of cash payouts at retirement? 3) I see a challenge of digitalization going forward. There could be a big problem with streaming of services.

Paul I – If we can get a ½ position, could evaluations curb the need to go to a full-time position. It is important that the school libraries are in support.

Brian G – Could you pull data on the enrollment/participation rates of surrounding towns who have this position?

8:41PM – Veterans

Director Ally Rodriguez addressed the ADCOMM by stating that there are 224 unique veterans for compensation assistance in Foxborough amounting to @ \$328K. Under a new 'Blue Water Navy' ruling, new claims for Agent Orange are eligible for those serving in Laos and Cambodia.

MGL115 (MA is the only state) is a program for indigent veterans after they have exhausted all other benefits. In Jan2019 there were 28 cases / in Jan 2020 there are 38 cases. Those under 62 can get employment assistance – Foxborough's vets under this statute are all in their 70's (1 is 92 yo). Reimbursements are paid back to town in the following fiscal year @ 75%.

Thom F – What does the \$5K in additional 'departmental expenses' refer to?

Ms Rodriguez – This was an additional expense to replace flags and plaques. We are also looking to scan all historical paper documentation (which the department is mandated to preserve) to save space. The rate is @ \$54/1000 pages.

Thom F – Has there been any attempts to use 'social media' to reach out to more veterans who may qualify for benefits?

Ms Rodriguez – We are gradually doing more, as time permits.

8:56PM – Recreation

Director Deb Giardino presented the Recreation Department's budget, indicating that the entire department is self-funding except her salary. The 2 assistants are funded from programming fees. There is no expectation for any CIP requests for another 2 years, and then probably for the Tot Lot Playground area.

Seth F – What is this \$1000 item for 'longevity'?

Deb G – That is for 20 years of service for me.

9:05PM – Housecleaning

Seth F reminded the Board that the rescheduled budget meeting is for February 25th; it will be a presentation by Bill K and the approach to constructing the budget. Bernard added that the outcome to the General Budget always seems to focus here at ADCOMM.

9:15PM - Adjournment

Sharon W – made the motion for Adjournment

Paul I - 2nd

Vote: 10 – 0 – 0

Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting: 12 February 2020

Vote:

Signature of Chairperson

Signature of Vice Chairperson