

**Cohasset Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, February 4, 2021**  
**Virtual Meeting Zoom Video**  
**7:00 pm**

Pursuant to MGL c 30A Section 20(b), following Governor Baker's declaration of state of emergency in the Commonwealth arising from COVID-19 Pandemic, the Committee will meet virtually utilizing technology. **All votes will be taken by a Roll Call Vote.**

***This meeting was recorded.***

**Documents received:** 11 budgetary documents relating to revenues and expenditures, sent on January 25, 2021 by Justine Hunt to the Advisory Committee members. Two e-mails contain information sent by Chris Senior and Don Piatt on January 25, 2021 to Advisory Committee members. Don Piatt sent a follow-up e-mail on February 5, 2021 containing an attachment relating to indirect costs.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm.

Members in attendance: Helene Lieb, Mary McGoldrick, Jeanne Astino, Meg Wheeler, Robert Hillman, Lee Jenkins, Fran Collins, Jean Healey Dippold.

**Reorganization of Leadership & Committee Assignments**

**Chair:**

Fran C. nominated Mary M. as Chair of the Advisory Committee. Jeanne A. seconded. Mary M. would prefer to serve as vice-chair and for Rob H. to serve as Chair. Motion for Mary M. for Chair was withdrawn.

Mary M. nominated Rob H. as Chair. Seconded. All Advisory Committees voted (8-0) for Rob. H as Chair.

Fran C. thanked Helene for her hard work.

**Vice-Chair:**

Election of the vice chair. Rob H. nominated Mary, seconded by Fran C. All Advisory Committees voted (8-0) for Mary M. as Vice-chair.

**Committee Assignments:**

A variety of committee assignments need to occur. Rob H. will send around the full list of current assignments and when those committees meet, so all can consider. Committee assignments will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

## **Financial update – fiscal year budget through end of 2020 (Don P.)**

### **General Fund:**

#### ***Revenues – 50.5% of budget collected through 12/31/2020.***

Local Receipts are 35.7% of budget collected, due to timing of motor vehicle excise and betterment commitment/collections. The MV excise is expected in February. All local receipt activity, except for motor vehicle excise and betterment revenues, continue to meet or exceed expectations, which is a good indicator for the rest of the year.

Year over year, local receipts are down (4.6%) mostly due to interest earnings which was expected (interest earnings are at 83.4% of budget).

#### ***Expenditures – 49.8% of budget expended through 12/31/2020.***

No issues noted within the departmental budgets.

The majority of approximately \$370,000 of expenditures reported within departmental budgets are reported in the Emergency Management department and those are expected to be reclassified to the CARES or FEMA grants.

Currently, Cohasset has spent about \$800,000 (allotment is \$750,000), with that amount to be split between the CARES and FEMA grants. It is unclear where we are FEMA-related grants until June 30<sup>th</sup>. Cohasset has sufficient money to continue with COVID-19 efforts unrelated to the vaccination.

As to vaccination costs, this is largely an operational cost with respect to staffing up the clinic, including with first responders and nurses. Because local communities are only being given 100 doses a week, there are not significant operational costs. Cohasset is, however, prepared to vaccinate more, if and when more vaccine becomes available. As to the cost of the vaccine, we have not received written confirmation yet but the state is committed to pay for each shot. Also, FEMA is committed to 100% reimbursement for a vaccination clinic for eligible expenses (overtime, etc.) All applicable costs will be categorized as vaccination.<sup>1</sup>

### **Sewer Fund:**

#### ***Revenues – 55.4% of budget collected through 12/31/2020.***

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<sup>1</sup> Side discussion as to how property taxes are determined, e.g., the tax levy from the prior tax year is used to project the current tax levy, after which debt payments are excluded, and the town adds 2.5% of that amount. The resulting amount is then divided by the assessed property value to calculate taxes.

Usage and connection fees were at 56.5% and 275% received, respectively. 130,000 were collected alone in November. Usage continues to trend ahead of target due to increased usage/commitments over the prior year.

***Expenditures – 62.2% of budget expended through 12/31/2020.***

General expenses are at 43.0% of budget. Next month, Cohasset will do a total bill/commitment. Jeanne A. asked what indirect costs constitute. Piatt explained that a portion of certain shared costs, such as auditors' time, finance department time, property casualty insurance, is attributed to water and sewer. These indirect costs are based on an agreed-upon allocation method, such as 1-2 hours a week of Don's time. Don P. agreed to send a breakdown of such costs, which he subsequently did by e-mail to Advisory Committee Members on February 5, 2021.

**Water Fund:**

***Revenues – 59.7% of budget collected through 12/31/2020.***

Usage and connection fees were at 82.4% and 204% received, respectively. Usage continues to trend ahead of target due to increased usage/commitments over the prior year.

***Expenditures – 68.2% of budget expended through 12/31/2020.***

General expenses are at 41.7% of budget. Question and discussion about selling water to Hingham.

**State Budget Update (C. Senior):**

The Commonwealth did adopt the budget from last year and the governor released his proposed budget. The Commonwealth is not in as bad shape as thought: income and corporate taxes were not as bad, even though sales and usage tax are down. There is a high level of uncertainty about state aid, which is approximately 6.7% of the budget.

**Agenda & Schedule for Town Meeting the Upcoming Advisory Committee Meetings**

Chris Senior walked through the ATM 2021 Schedule, ATM is currently scheduled for May 24, 2021. First big joint meeting is Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Next Advisory Committee meeting: No reason to meet for February 23<sup>d</sup>. The Town Hall Building committee is presenting to the Select Board on February 16, with the Town Hall being the biggest single item for ATM. The Capital Plan is being reviewed, including as to big items for the school, such as the track and field. There are a couple of large public works items, such as salt works shed, which has to be replaced. They also want to find a place for school bus parking. Budgetarily it's tight. Chris Senior has committed not to balance the budget off the backs of the town employees.

Contract negotiations are ongoing on the town/school side. Select Board will be ratifying a contract with the Cohasset Patrol Officer's Union, ongoing negotiations with the others. There is a meeting tomorrow with Pat Sullivan to talk process. Long term labor deals with money are impossible and the Town can't make a commitment beyond 2022. Further discussion can occur in Executive Session.

The next meeting on Thursday Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 to discuss committee assignments and a proposed calendar going forward.

### **Approval of Minutes**

November 19, 2021 Executive Session Minutes: Motion by Fran, Second by Lee. Amendment to minutes to correct Susan Owens name. Jeanne Astino- aye, Fran –aye, Jean Healey Dippold-aye, Lee Jenkins – aye, Helene Lieb – aye, Mary McGoldrick-aye, Meg Wheeler –abstain. Rob Hillman – aye.

Chris Senior advises that we hold the filing of the Executive Minutes until he can determine the correct process to file the minutes.

January 7, 2021 Minutes: Motion by Helene, Second by Lee Jenkins. Jeanne Astino- abstain, Fran –aye, Jean Healey Dippold-aye, Lee Jenkins – aye, Helene Lieb – aye, Mary McGoldrick- abstain, Meg Wheeler –abstain. Rob Hillman – aye.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn by Mary, Second by Meg. All members presented voted for the motion.

/s/ Jean M. Healey Dippold