

Cohasset Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday February 15, 2023

Virtual Meeting-Zoom Video Call

7 pm

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

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rob Hillman at 7:01 pm., Present – Jeanne Astino, Present – Mike Barclay, Present- Patrick Kennedy, Present- Mark Maggi, Present- Ellen Maher, Present – Mary McGoldrick, Present - Meg Wheeler, Present – Rob Hillman

Mr. Collins joined the meeting immediately after roll call.

Guest: Town Manager Chris Senior, Police Chief William Quigley, Fire Chief John Dockray, Town Finance Director Jen Mullen, Assistant Town Manager Michele Leary

Chair Hillman welcomed the presenters. He advised that the School Facilities Committee was not available to present tonight. As liaison to both the Police and Fire Departments, Mr. Barclay advised that he had previewed both budgets with the Chiefs and found their requests to be completely needed and reasonable.

Chief Quigley presented the Police Budget. He advised that from 2021 to 2022 there was a 26% increase in call to the SHREK call center from Cohasset. Two officers are planning retirement, Sergeants Hunt and Trainor. All contracts are settled, final budget is 6.4%. The Natural Resource Officer is shared with Norwell (25% payroll contribution), and he is also used as a patrol officer when needed. Overtime is required as the FTE's support Safe Manning Levels which require 3 for coverage and if one is out, coverage is required. Chair Hillman inquired about the SRO and Chief Quigley advised it is funded "above the line" out of the Town budget. Mr. Kennedy commented that most of the budget request is for needed personnel. The SHREK Regional Dispatch Center is 10 years in, and some equipment is near end of life. Towns' contributions are based on population, call volume rate and local budget. Mrs. McGoldrick inquired if adding FTEs could reduce OT and Chief Quigley said it might if they added 1, but there are benefits and PEB to consider. Regarding the contract it is 2%, 2 ½% and 3%. The steps were changed to be more in line with neighboring departments.

Chief Dockray presented the Fire Department budget. Decrease in Administrative Salaries is due to former Chief Silvia's retirement. Contract agreements are all in place. The staff is 4

Captains, 4 Lieutenants and 16 firefighters. OT can fall into one of 16 categories and is planned up due to new contracts. Materials and supplies are planned up due to increased shipping costs on the purchase invoices. Chief Dockray overviewed the complexities of now dealing with Electric Vehicle fires. It takes over 10,000 gallons of water to douse one. The flames from a lithium-ion battery are difficult to douse. Each truck is equipped with new fire blankets for EV to suppress the fires and reduce water usage.

Mr. Barclay commented that he felt both departments' Capital Budget requests were very reasonable at 2 new cruisers (per replacement cycle), tasers and 3 sets of firefighter gear due to new hires.

Both Mr. Barclay and Mrs. Maher commented on the feasibility of a new Public Safety Building, and it was agreed that would be another conversation.

Chair Hillman inquired of Mr. Senior and Ms. Mullen if these budget numbers fit the town's overall budget. Ms. Mullen advised that she presented a balanced budget including these numbers to the Select Board, however she is waiting for numbers on state aid and workers compensation to come in. Chair Hillman requested the 10-slide presentation she did for the Select Board.

Mr. Senior led a brief conversation over potential warrant articles; for Capital Budget the water/sewer membranes installed 2 years ago are failing, may be under warranty but need addressing, there also might be an article regarding the Veterans Valor Act which would allow tax workoffs by Veterans.

Many of the Zoning Bylaw articles are cleaning up form and content and updated language as well as correcting to be compatible with current state law

- Articles 4, 5 not ready yet as full accounting not completed
- Article 6 will follow policy
- Articles 10, 11 are proforma annual articles
- Article 12, CPC, in progress
- Article 15 Town Hall: the working group is meeting with the Select Boards Feb 28
- Article 16 Field and Courts, there will be a public meeting in about 2 weeks. Chair Hillman inquired how this endeavor came about and Mr. Senior advised it was a Select Board driven initiative. Chair Hillman requested that this Field & Court Committee get in front of Advisory

Mrs. McGoldrick commented that Articles 14-18 represent potentially \$30-\$40 million in spending. How do we think about and prioritize each one was her question. Mr. Senior commented that multiple parallel conversations are happening. His office is working on the numbers for what the town has financial capacity for and how that debt cost would impact the average taxpayer. Mrs. McGoldrick then furthered inquired into the Long-Range Planning

Group and where they weigh in and Mr. Senior commented that there is a mini-group working from this committee.

Mr. Thomas Hickey, Superintendent of Schools, South Shore Regional Vocational District joined the meeting to present requested warrant article for Cohasset that would extend membership to Marshfield. Each member town must vote by 2/3 majority to accept Marshfield Cohasset was one of the original 6 schools that formed the district in 1959-1960. Mr. George Cooney (appointed by Select Boards) is the Cohasset representative on the SSRV school committee. Mr. Hickey explained the process and the financial commitment Marshfield would be making to join the SSVT district. Mr. Hickey also advised that SSVT district has been invited into the next stage of process with MSBA after 7 applications, highlighting the following:

- \$300 million dollar building discussed with MSBA, going from 656 students to 975 students
- MSBA contribution estimated at 55%
- Each town would have a share of the adjustable debt based on the number of kids at SSVT as a % of the number of kids in their home district
- Estimated cost not turnkey ready
- Current new equipment in existing building would be used
- Considerable concern from SSVT about operating expenses of such a large building including staffing and maintenance.

SSVT is also requesting language changes in the charter regarding voting rules for a member town withdrawal as well as default method for the SSVT SC to authorize debt. Chair Hillman requested the specific language and advised we would vote at a future meeting with the language in front of us.

Chair Hillman thanked Mr. Hickey for his overview and request for the warrant article.

The Advisory Committee resumed its overview of the Warrant. Mr. Senior continued

- Article 1; requested vote to adopt the Annual Town Report, but we don't have it
- Article 2, there are no reports of Committees
- **Article 8, Departmental Revolving Funds-Annual Spending Limits.** Mr. Senior advised this is required to be vote on each year. A motion was made to recommend adoption of Article 8 in the form presented in the 2-15-2023 Draft Warrant by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mrs. Astino. Roll Call: Aye – Jeanne Astino, Aye- Fran Collins, Aye – Mike Barclay, Aye- Patrick Kennedy, Aye- Mark Maggi, Aye- Ellen Maher, Aye – Mary McGoldrick, Aye - Meg Wheeler, Aye – Rob Hillman
- **Article 10 Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 91 Liability;** Mr. Senior advised this was required for the Parker Ave Boat Ramp work. A motion was made to recommend adoption of Article 10 in the form presented in the 2-15-2023 Draft Warrant by Mr. Collins, seconded by Mrs. McGoldrick. Roll Call: Aye – Jeanne Astino, Aye- Fran Collins, Aye – Mike Barclay, Aye- Patrick Kennedy, Aye- Mark Maggi, Aye- Ellen Maher, Aye – Mary McGoldrick, Aye - Meg Wheeler, Aye – Rob Hillman

- **Article 11 Additional Real Estate Exemptions, Annual Renewal.** Mr. Senior advised this is an annual renewal that allows exemptions for seniors, veterans, low income or legally blind residents. A motion was made to recommend adoption of Article 11 in the form presented in the 2-15-2023 Draft Warrant by Mr. Collins, seconded by Mr. Kennedy. Roll Call: Abstain – Jeanne Astino, Aye- Fran Collins, Aye – Mike Barclay, Aye- Patrick Kennedy, Aye- Mark Maggi, Aye- Ellen Maher, Aye – Mary McGoldrick, Aye - Meg Wheeler, Aye – Rob Hillman

Chair Hillman overviewed the next several meetings and objectives. We will need to vote on the SSVT once we get final language.

- March 1 we should see School Facilities Committee and Town Hall Building Committee and maybe Fields & Courts with Michele Leary. Mr. Kennedy requested clarification on the SFC request; is it \$1.5 million as warrant article or is it \$2.0 million in Capital Budget plan. It was also noted and requested to see the SFC maintenance list that they were compiling
- March 8 we should see DPW, IT and other town departments
- March 15 we should see Water/Sewer and have an update on the Sewer Plant
- March 22 we should see Zoning Bylaw (they are having a public meeting on February 27)
- March 29, April 5, April 7 we should keep open

Mrs. Maher inquired if there were any Citizens Petitions and Mr. Senior advised there were none.

Motion to accept the minutes of February 1 as presented made by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mrs. Astino. Roll call Aye – Jeanne Astino, Aye- Fran Collins, Aye – Mike Barclay, Aye- Patrick Kennedy, Abstain- Mark Maggi, Aye- Ellen Maher, Aye – Mary McGoldrick, Aye - Meg Wheeler, Aye – Rob Hillman

Motion to accept the minutes of February 8 as presented made by Mr. Kennedy, seconded by Mr. Collins. Roll call Aye – Jeanne Astino, Aye- Fran Collins, Aye – Mike Barclay, Aye- Patrick Kennedy, Abstain- Mark Maggi, Aye- Ellen Maher, Aye – Mary McGoldrick, Aye - Meg Wheeler, Aye – Rob Hillman

Chair Hillman requested a motion to adjourn at 9:04 pm which was made by Mrs. Astino, seconded by Mr. Maggi. Roll Call: Aye-Jeanne Astino, Aye-Mike Barclay, Aye-Fran Collins, Aye-Patrick Kennedy, Aye – Mark Maggi, Aye-Ellen Maher, Aye-Mary McGoldrick, Aye-Meg Wheeler, Aye Rob Hillman.

