



**Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Community Room, Scituate Public Library
Thursday, March 8, 2018
7:00 pm**

Committee Members Present: Lincoln Heineman, Chairperson; Mark Sandham, Vice Chair; Jamie Gilmore; Sean deLacy; Anthony Antoniello; Patrice Metro; Jerry Kelly; Geoff Burns

Committee Members Absent: Mike Westort

Also in Attendance: Nancy Holt, Finance Director; Bob Gallagher, Historical Society; Ron Griffin, Superintendent; Paul Donlan, Director of Business and Finance; Tom Hickey, South Shore Regional; Mike Hayes, School Committee and Jim Boudreau, Town Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm by Lincoln Heineman

Lincoln Heineman made a motion to accept the Agenda, seconded by Mark Sandham; Unanimous Vote (8-0)

Departmental Budget Reviews:

South Shore Regional (310) – Tom Hickey

- Budget increase of 3.73%
 - Chapter 70 Aid projected increase in FY 2019
 - \$7,989,569 slightly less than the previous year
 - Small increase in Scituate
- More transportation aid
- Projecting an increase in non-residential tuition

Tom Hickey reviewed the following: (*South Shore Regional School District Presentation*)

- Operating Costs, Debt Services and Capital Costs
- Preliminary Assessments FY19
- FY19 Budget Proposal
 - New Bus lease, increasing the number of buses (recommend leasing 11 buses) due to increased enrollment
 - Health Insurance is projecting a good year
 - 17% of budget is not typically found in school budget: OPEB, Insurance, unemployment, etc.
- FY19 Capital Requests

\$250,000 added to Stabilization, would like to have sufficient funds so they don't have to come back and for additional funds; they are well positioned for Fiscal 19

Need to renovate older parts of school, but they do not need a new school just would like to get existing building up to code

Over the next 6 - 9 months are going to start looking for an asset protection plan because they will have a lot expenses in the near future.

- The roof on the 1992 addition needs to be replaced
- Window in the addition need to be replaced
- Sprinklers in old building need to be added and then ceiling restored

Will probably need to take out a loan for some of the projects; Scituate's share of any debt would be 8% divided over the length of the note.

Lincoln asked about the proposed charter changes, Tom said they are on the website under Regional Agreement. He further stated that he is pleased with the new draft, no fundamental changes. Just clarified old language and added Chapter 70. **Tom can provide an itemized list.** One major change would be to switch the requirement for a unanimous vote to make changes to a 2/3 vote.

Jamie asked what the increase of "out of district" was attributed to; Tom said it was "word of mouth" the majority of the increase is from Pembroke. He explained that the State set tuition comes from town the student is from.

Geoff asked about salaries; the 15% Custodial increase and the 10% Administrative increase and Tom explained that the custodians are licensed as bus drivers and the existing administrator was reclassified.

Jerry asked about the "government is one town--one vote rule " and wondered if larger towns are at a disadvantage, and if there was any chance of changing it and Tom said no and that it has not come up from any of the larger communities, they do not show any dismay in the way the voting works now.

Mark asked, what the total capacity of enrollment was, because every town was up a little (except Abington, but they have a new High School). Tom felt they were probably at capacity this year, he explained that the 4 lunches were full; science lab was filled at 24 kids [which is max]. He said the school could not go up to 700 students.

Lincoln asked about outstanding liability \$651,000, Tom said they are now budgeting \$25,000 - \$30,000 now for retirement (OPEB). He felt they were ahead of the curve, but municipalities have since caught up.

Historical (691) – Bob Gallaher, Chair

Budget:

- We have 3 properties without revenue streams right now that need to be maintained
- Would like to request \$18,000 instead of the \$15,000 allotted by the Town Administrator [requested in letter dated November 17, 2017]. The increase would pay for electricity, gas maintenance of building, building inspector, etc.

Lincoln asked what kind of damage the lighthouse sustained in the storm; Bob said mainly the walkway, the flagpole and a lot of rocks. Water in the basement, but the utilities were elevated in the past years. They were wondering if insurance would pay for the damage.

Jamie wanted to know what happens if they do not receive the additional funds and Bob said that the Cudworth house would not get painted.

Jamie asked what shape the Society was in, Bob said their insurance bill is expensive and hard to manage, but a senior person just retired, which would add money back into the budget. He is concerned because they have been withdrawing 9% -10% off of a million dollar account and it should be more around 4%.

Lincoln asked about CPC projects, Bob said they were just asking for a WWI memorial to be cleaned.

Lincoln asked if they found the Lawson Tower sign and Bob said he was told that they did.

Mark said he doesn't think we put enough money in the budget and he feels the original budget [\$18,000] should be approved. It is run by volunteers and the budget is thin to begin with. The Town should dedicate more money and resources because it adds value to Scituate.

Lincoln asked if \$18,000 is enough or what would they ask for if the sky was the limit. Bob said they have \$21,000 worth of work; painting at Bates Lighthouse and Cudworth.

They would like to display some of the CPC projects and they created some ramps to get them in and out of Cudworth easily.

Nancy Holt let the Committee know that the lighthouse is on the town's insurance

School (300) – Ron Griffin, Superintendent

Ron said he had been in the community for several months now. He said the presentation he was going to go through was set up with the tax payers in mind

Ron Griffin reviewed the presentation: (Scituate Public Schools Draft Operating Budget FY19)

Priorities:

- 5 year strategic plan (2018 -2023)
- Enrollment is made up of two components
 - Historical: Gates now has 6, 7 and 8 grade.
 - Overall: 8th grade going into 9th grade is the largest class to date
- Projected Enrollment: Kindergarten will be higher than it has been and also higher than the system originally anticipated.
- Invest in People, 83% of budget is in staffing. We have done a great amount of investing to ensure small class sizes by hiring more teachers.
- There were increases in Personnel Services, Contractual Services and Material Supplies

Ron went through the operating budget for every school

- All schools will send tutors to children if they are sick and have to miss school for a long period of time
- Cushing: no major changes
- Hatherly houses the special education children who are not out of district
- Wampatuck houses the Early Childhood Center which is both special needs and typical children

Geoff asked what the breakdown percentage of special education costs were; Ron said about 20% of the budget and that it was included in the SWD line item

- Jenkins built a new special education program for next year
- Gates: Super team (teachers) for large 8th grade (graduating class 2022)
- Scituate High School: the large 2022 class will be absorbed in SHS, not a lot of other major changes.
 - Virtual classes are now offered

Jerry asked about instructional supplies going up, Ron said it was due to the 2022 large 8th grade class

Ron reviewed the budget for District Services:

Jerry asked about the bus line item going up, Paul Donlan explained that we received a great deal for the past 3 years and that the lease has expired.

Geoff asked about the 2 tiers for the buses, Ron said it is working well; it cuts down on traffic and it is safer.

Funding:

- Scituate is in the middle of “like” towns for per pupil per year spending
- Breakdown of Grants, one important thing to know is that they are all tied to State or Federal dollars.

Patrice asked, how many METCO students we have in Scituate, Ron said 70. The students are equally distributed throughout the district and grades.

- Ron reviewed the fees and where they went. All fees to go the specific program. None of the fees fully pay for the program they just offset some of the costs.

Patrice asked if you pay for full time kindergarten do you get the benefit of the free half day and Ron said yes.

Jerry asked about Nonresident tuition and if it was is for special education. Ron said yes and explained that this line item was very fluid.

Jamie asked where visual arts and performing arts were in the budget. Ron said it was built into the budget. Only athletics is separated because we get a lot of questions. **Jamie wanted to know what the number was for the High School. Jamie asked if Ron could get the breakdown. They would like to see the balance between athletics and arts. Mark always wondered the same thing, would like to see the budget for art because and they feel parents would like to see the difference between the arts and athletics as well.**

Jerry said do you make a revolving fund for after school performing art and visual arts activities, Ron said he did not know the answer.

Ron gave a high level overview of the budget

There is currently a \$750,000 gap for Operating Costs to fill. There will be a reduction in staff this year. **Jerry asked about the shortfall, and if it was the circuit breaker reduction, he wanted to know how much of it was for the new Middle School.** Ron said it was not asset or material based for Gates, but more for re-organizations of staff from last year to this year--accurate staffing and maintaining staff from one school to another, however, Ron said this cannot be sustained long term.

Jamie asked about the shooting in Florida and what it meant for Scituate, and Ron said school personnel have badges; everyone has to be “buzzed” to get. Ron explained that he thought the most proactive measure, is knowing your kids. The infrastructure is important, but staff to student relationship is most important.

Jamie asked about the Ellis Estate and Ron said there were no existing plans to build on the property and he since he has only been in the position for 6 months he has not had time to make a plan, **Jamie ask if he would consider it surplus land** and Ron said no that it will be used it in the future.

Lincoln asked about the move into the new building and if there was anything unexpected.

Ron said on the positive side that it was an awesome transition and that it is a top of the line building. People from around the country come to see how we are using the building.

As far as negatives:

- The technical infrastructure is very complicated and has not been up and running as quickly as they wanted
 - The handicap access door does not work in high winds.
 - There is also a concrete issue, the top layer is falling off and the sand is coming through, they have a specialist looking into it.
 - Some plantings still need to be done.
 - The lighthouse window on the A Wing has been leaking.
 - A couple other little things are missing like a backing on a thermostat and a piece on a door
- Nothing major just aggravating.

Daedalus was the OPM for the Middle School and we are still under warranty for the first year. Jamie thought they could be in default of their agreement because they have not come back to fix everything.

Lincoln asked about the status of the Hatherly school roof. Ron said it is a heavy roof on a flat wooden structure that was built in 1964, but that we did not need to repair as much as we thought. A person came in with an infrared tool and outlined with tape what area needed to be done. The; we cut out the area and fixed it. Since then, we had a problem over the gym (A roof) and the contractor came back but has not been able to resolve the problem. The water travels so it is hard to fix.

Geoff asked about the plan for the future of Hatherly and Cushing. Ron said the buildings are organized with a gym and classrooms around it which is not ideal. There are a lot of ideas floating

around, but he would like funds to bring in the experts. Ron spoke with Capital Planning about a viability study to see what the needs are -- is it practicable to renovate the buildings and reconfigure them.

Mike Hayes, School Committee Member, spoke about doing what is best for our kids before we decide what to do with our buildings. He said we need to two years to evaluate.

New Business

Committee Liaisons Update:

School Building Committee – Jerry Kelly

Jerry said he was a member of Middle School Construction Committee, who oversaw the construction project which was just under \$55M. They spent the money carefully. Everyone on the Committee was professional, we made a lot of demands, and the architect was great. There is currently \$175,000 in Change Orders left. We needed to digitally record everything we did. The only item that was not in the bid was the giant steps that used as benches in the cafeteria – that was a large change order. Tried to segregate what was the middle school and what was the high school.

Waterways – Jamie Gilmore

The meeting was held in the NOAA meeting room. They discussed the fact that they have not received their financial numbers. They cannot talk about fees because they do not know the status of the Enterprise Fund. Nancy said she had not received a request, but they should have seen their up to date financials. It was decided that Fran will contact Nancy Holt.

They also discussed the \$420,000 command and fire pumper boat that the Harbormaster wants to have built and whether or not it is affordable. There is a split on the Commission about the old GITMO boat [if it is worth revamping] because it will take 2 years to get the boat build and nobody is really talking about this boat that we currently own. They are going to talk to the Harbormaster when he returns from vacation.

South River Dredging Project: All the permitting is completed, but one from the DEP. The project will not take place this spring like originally planned.

There was a presentation from Jamie Davenport, a Scituate resident, who has an oyster farm in Dennis; he harvests about 500,000 oysters a year. He told the Commission there is an area in Cohasset that is zoned for aquaculture and that he had presented his plan (to start with 1 acre from the 6 acres that are viable) to the former town administrator who sent a letter that outlined all the reasons why Scituate was not interested; never contacted the selectmen or started a committee. The board thought it was a viable idea and would be great to have a “Scituate Oyster” and told him to pursue it. The money would go to the State for the lease of the land which would be \$25.00 per acre. Some Towns get around this rule by calling the fee a different name to collect higher fees.

Jim talked about the \$2,000 an hour cost for cleaning up Central Avenue, as well as the water line on Peggotty beach and on 4th cliff that was washed away

Lincoln said great job to the Chiefs and the Town Administrator for the communication during the storm. Jim said NGRID reset 42 new poles after the storm. **Lincoln asked if he knew the total cost of the damage from the storm**, but Jim said not yet.

Lincoln and Nancy said everything prior to Town Meeting needs to be done next week or the week after.

Both CPCs (Conservation and Capital) are scheduled for next week, and review of all the Warrant articles that are ready. Jim said most of them will be done, but not all of them. We will probably need two meetings.

Lincoln and Nancy asked Lianne to call Lorraine regarding the contact information for the 2 petition articles.

Jim will send the draft of the warrant to Lincoln when it is ready.

Lincoln had a request from a citizen to add our debt, when it drops off and how it affects the average home to the book

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the March 1st meeting minutes; Lincoln Heineman seconded the motion; (8-0).

Adjournment

Lincoln Heineman made a motion to adjourn, Jerry Kelly seconded the motion, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM; Unanimous Vote (8-0).

Respectfully submitted by,
Lianne Cataldo (Recording Secretary)

Follow-up Items:

- Itemized list of proposed Charter School changes – Tom Hickey
- Contact information for petition articles – Lianne Cataldo
- Contact Jim for draft of warrant – Lincoln Heineman
- Breakdown of Visual and Performing Arts Budget – Ron Griffin
- Add debt to Advisory Booklet

Referenced Materials

- *Agenda*
- *03/01/18 Meeting Minutes*
- *FY 2019 Town Budget*
- *Scituate School Budget*
- *South Shore Regional Budget*