



**Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 12, 2019
Community Room, Scituate Public Library
7:00 pm**

Committee Members Present: Jerry Kelly, Chair, Mike Westort, Vice Chair; Jamie Gilmore; Patrice Metro; Elise Russo; Andrew Goodrich; Dan McGuiggin

Committee Members not present: Lincoln Heineman

Also in Attendance: Jim Boudreau, Town Administrator; Nancy Holt, Finance Director; Don Knapp; Leslie Dienel; Sytske Humphrey; Steve Litchfield; Mike Minchello; Chief Michael Stewart; Chief John Murphy; Barbara DeWolfe, Communications Manager

Jerry Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM

**Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Patrice Metro;
Unanimous vote (7-0)**

**Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 5, 2019 meeting,
seconded by Mike Westort, Unanimous vote (7-0)**

New Business: A letter from the Waterways Department to the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Committee requesting that the portion of the Marine Unit Police salary coming from the Waterways Enterprise Fund be removed; and that the Police Budget be increased to cover the cost was read by Jerry Kelly. Jerry said it will be discussed when the Committee reviewed the police budget.

Brian Kelly, 61 Collier Road and Chair of the Waterways Commission said that he met with Chief Stewart, Deputy Thompson, Jim Boudreau and Howie Kreutzberg and they learned that the Waterways Enterprise budget was set for this year. He further explained that Waterways received a commitment from Jim that they will review the issue again in March, prior to the budgets being approved. Brian Kelly withdrew the letter.

Jerry welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained to the presenters that we wanted to be respectful of everyone's time and that the Committee had reviewed the budget, so there was no need to read their section, he said that the Committee just wants to understand what everyone does and their challenges and accomplishments.

Departmental Budget Reviews:

Veterans: Don Knapp

Level funded over past 4 years due to good forecasting. Don said there was a slight rise with the budget due to step increases in salaries.

Elise Russo asked if the new senior center would increase their foot traffic, Don said yes. The move will provide a location and office that will make people feel more comfortable.

Jamie Gilmore asked if the 20 hour administrative assistant that was listed under Risks and Challenges was included in the budget, Don said no, and that the current person is split between Veterans and the Recreation department. It would be an addition of 7.5 hours to make the position 20 hours for his department.

Patrice Metro asked:

How many veterans there were in town, Don said we do not have an exact number. The current list is approximately 1,700 but it does not include widows of veterans and that is the group we want to reach, as they may not know they have benefits. We can use the upcoming census if they include their military background.

How many applications for assistance did you receive: Currently 25 down to 12 (Chapter 115). Don applies for Gants to keep the number low. He explained that they have to get re-certified every 6 months to receive Chapter 115 benefits

How many wellness checks: About 12 -25, Don explained that they make calls during the storms.

Andrew Goodrich asked about providing more outreach, Don said that the Veterans Advisory Council is back up and running and that there is a new member who really wants to do outreach. The State does a lot of outreach as well through commercials. He also explained that the CBO [Congressional Budget Office] was starting to ramp up.

Mike Westort asked if the 75% reimbursement went in the General Fund, Nancy said yes.

Beautification: Leslie Dienel and Sytske Humphrey

Maintain:

- 12 railroad crossings
- 7 traffic islands
- 25 adopt a lots

Leslie highlighted the following items:

- They asked for an increase of approximately \$1000, which was approved.
 - The merchants program has grown up to 73
 - If all the merchants took the \$50 the commission would not have enough to pay them
- Launched a successful Plant for Scituate pilot which they would like to enhance going

- forward. They felt in created a feeling of cohesiveness for the Town.
- Greenbush is a challenging area because it is very hot. Would like to make it greener and combat the heat of the blacktop.
- Phase I of planting at the Town Hall was completed
- Received the planting material at cost for the railroad crossings (one at a time).

Patrice asked why she thinks only 73 merchants are using the voucher program, Sytske Humphrey, Vice President said some of the merchants pay themselves.

Patrice asked if they were happy with how the Town looked, Sytske Humphrey thought that Front Street could look better.

Jamie asked if she could make a list of the areas that she felt needed improvement, she said she could.

Patrice asked if they had enough volunteers, Leslie said she didn't think so.

Andrew asked how many active volunteers they currently have, Leslie said approximately 25. She added that they need to be more visible and only have 6 committee members at the present time.

Mike Westort asked if they could use kids for volunteers, Leslie said they said they use them for ship shape day. We have had girl scouts volunteer to maintain the flower bed, but if they go on vacation the plants die.

Jerry said that the Committee appreciates all their efforts.

Historical: Steve Litchfield, Vice Chair Historical Commission (filled in for David Ball)

Steve explained that they asked to increase the budget and that they had some damage at Lawson tower from storms and needed to replace some of the windows.

- We use CPA [Community Preservation Act] funding when we can or a rental account
- We use mainly volunteers

Information Technology; Mike Minchello

Mike said he started in early May and that his main goal is to try to replace the core infrastructure

- Six major projects are lined up
 - Each of them rely on each other and
 - They all have an impact on security
- Windows 10 migration is the first step, should be done by end of December except special cases (12)
 - Need to build computers in parallel before we switch over for the special cases

Patrice asked about the \$40,000 for equipment that was denied, Mike explained that the cost was part of an overall plan to replace 20% of the Town's 200 computers each year. He said he was hoping that it can be readdressed next year.

Jerry asked how long computers last, Mike said about 5 years as the technology upgrades have slowed down.

Mike said he applied for a \$300,000 grant for fiber optics.

Mike Westort pointed out that the budget went up drastically and asked if it would eventually level off, Mike Minchello said probably not and that the proposed budget has security upgrades that were just scratching the surface.

Mike Westort asked how you determine a necessity [required] from a want, Mike said it is easy to determine and that we have to rebuild the infrastructure first.

Mike Minchello explained that we would like to add a fiber ring or a system that would be able to look for threats in advance by forming a single continuous pathway.

Mike Westort asked if we are doing enough, Mike Minchello said no. We are not meeting minimum standards, etc. He further explained that we are mandated by state law to protect Personal Identifiable Information (PII) and a breach could lead to us being fined by the AG's office. We also have an obligation to the public and it would be community embarrassment and expensive to remediate if our system was breached.

Mike said he changed the SPAM filter and implemented stricter guidelines for passwords.

Patrice asked what our current risks were, Mike said data breeches that are sent via links (fishing) to town employees.

Dan McGuiggin asked how much of the budget goes towards training, Mike said none, but he plans on completing awareness training.

Andrew said that he was very impressed and thought the budget was inline for a Town.

Jerry said the Advisory Committee will support him in his efforts.

Police Department: Chief Michael Stewart and Deputy Mark Thompson

Chief Stewart said he is retiring on July 1st

Budget is level funded.

Elise asked about the increase in Purchase of Services, equipment that was not approved, Chief Stewart said it was due to toner being moved into their budget.

Patrice Metro asked why the parking ticket fines line was blank, Nancy looked it up and said that the amount last year was \$18,520 this year was \$26,703.

Patrice asked about the legalization of marijuana under Risks and Challenges, Deputy Thompson said it is all narcotics and opioids. The impaired driving is the concern and the enforcement of it. There is no standardized breathalyzer test for narcotics.

The department has two experts that have gone for training in identifying people that may be impaired due to drugs. Chief Stewart said that they go to other towns to assist. The findings in Massachusetts are not acceptable yet, the judges are not trained well enough at this point.

Jerry asked if they were seeing an increase in impaired arrests, not related to driving under the influence of alcohol. Deputy Thompson said not yet, but they do see people who are impaired and do not register on the breathalyzer test.

Mike Westort asked about the Chief's vacation time hitting the budget, Chief Stewart said they will pay some in June and some in July.

Deputy Thompson said that they hired Craig to replace Kim, Craig has special police powers and is licensed in fire arms. He is also going to work in a natural liaison role as the amount of people hiking is going to increase over the next few years. He may also work with the shell fishing efforts in the future.

Mike Westort asked about overtime, Deputy Thompson said the department was fully funded with 35 officers, so it is easier to manage overtime.

Fire Department: Chief John Murphy

Personnel Services increased 3.7% due to 2 years of raises, education and OT.

Goals:

- New Humarock Station
- Flood Zone Mapping
- New Harbormaster/Fire Boat

Accomplishments:

- Pump Trailer was purchased with a Regional Grant shared among 5 towns
- Helping seniors with smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Promoting the fire department to increase new hire applications
- Improved Website
- FEMA data completed
- Second ambulance operating

Challenges:

- Large scale storm preparation (hurricane)
 - Shelter expansion
 - Mapping
 - EMS triage
- Personnel (95% of budget)
- OSHA and FEMA
- Need a Training Officer

Mike Westort asked about the Union being at odds with the Town, Chief Murphy said it is getting better than it has been in past years.

Jerry asked about seawall and damn repair Nancy said we still have not heard back from

FEMA regarding reimbursement.

Jerry thanked the Chief and his department for all they do.

Public Safety Communication: Barbara DeWolfe, Communications Manager

Need to get fully staffed, they are currently having police and firefighters cover the desk.

Mike Westort asked why they were up over 10% in salaries, Nancy said it was due to the dispatchers being reclassified. We could not compete and retain employees with our past rates.

Mike also asked if combining the dispatch saved the Town money, Nancy said with 8 full time employees (not including Barbara) that it will. Jim agreed and added that we are offering a better product as well.

Jamie asked how they plan on improving the retention rate so employees do not continue to train here and then go to other towns, Barbara said since we increased our hourly rates, that it should help.

Finance/Town Accountant (135) Nancy Holt

- No revenue sources
- Increase of \$4,324 overall
- Reduction in technical services

Jerry asked about Tetrattech and if they were helping, Nancy said yes and that they are now our FEMA consultants as well. She added that they are also very useful in helping with grants.

Jerry thanked Nancy for all her help and congratulated her on her certificate of excellence.

Andrew asked about hiring an in-house grant writer and if it was worth it. Nancy said it is a good idea, but that there were other positions that are needed that would take priority. Nancy and Jim said that we have great Grant writers who work for the Town.

Jerry asked Jim if he had an in-house grant writer in other towns, he said no, that usually bigger municipalities have them. Jim said that if we try to get a complicated grant, we would hire someone to write it. He added that the FEMA paperwork is very difficult and that using the drones to fly over the areas before and after storms has been very helpful.

- \$858,000 in FEMA reimbursements (5 storms)
- \$868,000 expected to get back
- \$3.9 M in claims for Riley

Next Meeting on December 19th in the Community Room.

Mike Westort and Jamie Gilmore will not be able to attend the next meeting. Patrice said she was a maybe.

Jamie Gilmore made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 PM; seconded by Jerry Kelly. Unanimous Vote (7-0)

Respectfully Submitted,
Lianne Cataldo (Recording Secretary)

Referenced Materials:

- Agenda
- Minutes
- Waterways Memorandum
- Scituate Fire Department Budget Summary FY21
- Budget Book
- Capital Plan

Follow-up:

- Jamie asked Sytske Humphrey, Vice President of the Beautification Commission if she could make a list of the areas in Scituate that needed improvement.
- Jim Boudreau to provide a breakdown of the security upgrades for the town buildings