

TOWN OF SCITUATE
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Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, December 9, 2021
Zoom Video/Audio Conference – 7:00 pm

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, Scituate Advisory Committee Members held the December 9, 2021 meeting via Zoom Video and/or Audio (Dial-in for those with only phone access). All participants participated remotely.

Committee Members Present: Jamie Gilmore; Chair, Missy Seidel, Elise Russo, Lynda Ferguson, Michael Westort and Jerry Kelly

Committee Members Not in Attendance: Dan McGuiggin, Patrice Metro and Lincoln Heineman

Also in Attendance: James Boudreau, Town Administrator; Nancy Holt, Finance Director/Town Accountant

Mr. Gilmore called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Kelly made a motion to accept the agenda which was seconded by Ms. Russo and voted unanimously in favor (5-0) by roll call vote; Mr. Gilmore-yes, Ms. Seidel-yes, Ms. Russo-yes, Ms. Ferguson-yes and Mr. Kelly-yes.

Mr. Gilmore called for a motion to accept the minutes of the October 26, 2021 meeting which was made by Mr. Kelly seconded by Ms. Russo. The minutes were voted in favor (5-0) by roll call vote for October 26, 2021; Mr. Gilmore-yes, Ms. Seidel-yes, Ms. Russo-yes, Ms. Ferguson-yes, and Mr. Kelly-yes.

Presentation of FY 2023 Town Administrator Recommended Budget

Mr. Boudreau moved through his prepared presentation. He noted that FY21 ended well with Free Cash certified at \$5M due to budget turnbacks and revenues coming in higher than before. He stated that the Town received additional CARES Funds. He reviewed the Coronavirus impacts to date and increases to costs due to the pandemic including chemicals in FY23. He noted that FY22 new growth was higher which was coming from Toll Bros and now the Drew project and the 40B on Route 3A. He stated progress was ongoing on the FEMA projects with one having been completed and reimbursed.

He reviewed the revenue assumptions for FY23 including 2.5% property increase, level funded state aid but that could increase with the Governor's budget and meals tax is back to pre-COVID levels. He noted there were large increases in health insurance due to poor claims experience and property insurance. He highlighted that the local receipts estimate remained conservative to provide flexibility for unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Westort joined the meeting.

He commented on the scarcity of grant funds with the larger cities now going after grants we normally successfully pursued. He informed members that the Town was getting projects ready so they could move forward with any available infrastructure funds.

He stated that two more collective bargaining units had just settled. He noted there was one new position for the Information Technology Department due to all the new security and technology. Additional hours were also added to various personnel at the senior center. There was also \$400,000 provided for roads and foreshore again this year. He also reviewed the fixed cost changes with members highlighting areas of concern including property insurance noting the addition of the new facilities.

He mentioned a few key items on the capital plan that will come before the Advisory Committee after the Capital Planning Committee review. In summary, he noted the new water treatment plant was still being designed including pilot testing to see the best way to treat the town's water and would like be cited on the property recently purchased on Chief Justice Cushing Highway.

Mr. Kelly asked for an update on the Third Cliff revetment project. Mr. Boudreau responded that the project was currently delayed for modeling requests from Coastal Zone Management. Ms. Russo asked Mr. Boudreau about inflation and its impact on the budget. Mr. Boudreau stated that budget was level service and those costs should already be factored.

Review of FY 2023 Departmental Budgets

Dept. 123 – Town Administration/Select Board

Mr. Boudreau noted the increases were driven by payroll costs and additional funds in contract bargaining due to the open contracts. Mr. Kelly asked why the tower rental was declining and Ms. Holt responded.

Dept. 131 – Advisory Committee

Mr. Boudreau noted an increase for the recording secretary.

Dept. 132 – Reserve Fund

Mr. Boudreau noted there was no change.

Dept. 192 – General Liability & Property Insurance

Mr. Boudreau noted it had increased significantly and that the Town had met with its insurer, MIIA. Some of the issue was that some insurance lines were no longer carried and additional

carriers had to be engaged. He also noted there were more facilities to insure. Mr. Westort asked if the increases were all new buildings and Mr. Boudreau noted that the claims had been higher. Ms. Holt mentioned some of the new policies for cyber risk, drones and notarial services.

Dept. 424 – Street Lights

Mr. Boudreau noted there was no change.

Dept. 912 – Workers Compensation

Mr. Boudreau noted there was no change.

Dept. 913 – Unemployment

Mr. Boudreau noted there were very few filings and the budget was reduced back down to \$65,000. Mr. Kelly asked if the fraudulent claims had abated and Mr. Boudreau responded yes.

Mr. Gilmore asked the members if there were any additional questions.

Review of Agenda for 12/16/21 meeting

No changes were made.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Westort at 7:29 p.m.; the Committee voted unanimously in favor (6-0) by roll call vote; Mr. Gilmore-yes, Ms. Seidel-yes, Ms. Russo-yes, Ms. Ferguson-yes, Mr. Westort-yes and Mr. Kelly-yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Holt
Recorder