



**Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 16, 2020
Community Room, Scituate Public Library
7:00 pm**

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

Committee Members not present: Dan McGuiggin

Also in Attendance: Nancy Holt, Finance Director; Jim Boudreau, Town Administrator; Kevin Kelly, Facilities; Amy Walkey; Kyle Boyd; Robert Vogel; Karen Joseph

Jerry Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Lincoln Heineman; Unanimous Vote (6-0)

Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 9, 2020 meeting, with non-substantive changes, seconded by Lincoln Heineman; Unanimous Vote (6-0)

Opening Remarks:

Jerry Kelly welcomed everyone to the meeting and announced that the Committee would take the Petition Articles first.

Jerry said that there were two upcoming Planning Board Meetings:

February 13: First Public Hearing regarding Section 810.0 and Section 830

February 27: Second Public Hearing regarding Sign Bylaw Section 710

Jerry said that Penny Scott Pipes, CPC wanted to buy property on Mordecai Lincoln (2 homes and a barn) he further said that they were offering a tour Sunday Morning to the Advisory Committee. Lincoln asked if they could chose a different day for the tour.

Jerry introduced Lynda Ferguson as the newest member of the Advisory Committee, Lynda said she was sworn in that morning.

Patricia Metro and Lincoln Heineman recused themselves for the discussion regarding the transfer of funds to South Shore Community Action Council.

Review Petition Articles:

Transfer of funds (\$5,000) to South Shore Community Action Council - Susan Heller and Lisa Spencer

To see if the Town of Scituate will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer \$5,000 to South Shore Community Action Council for services for low income families and elderly residents.

Susan Heller said that she had benefited greatly from the council and wanted to see the council continue

Jamie Gilmore entered the meeting.

Lisa explained that their mission as a private agency was to fight poverty and improve life for low income families. She said that they were Federal, State and Town funded.

Highlights:

- 105 household heated; \$73,000 paid to fuel vendors
- 16 energy conservation recipients; \$21,000 in improvements
- 113 residents driven to appointments
- 125 parents and children participated in "Raising a Reader"
- 14 children in early education were supported; meals, health screening, child care
- 381 households helped in total; \$103,000 given in expenditures

Lisa said that we continue to have funding gaps, but will still serve Scituate residents. We are asking for a recommendation for approval for Town Meeting.

Jerry Kelly asked how many towns they service, Lisa said Hull, South Wareham and the Cape; 44% of 10,000 are elders on fixed income

Jerry confirmed that 3% - 4% were in Scituate.

Andrew asked for a copy of the most recent 990, Lisa said she would get it because Andrew said he could not find it online (2017 was the most recent).

Andrew felt that the staff was highly compensated and asked for the breakdown of how much they pay their 207 employees and their overhead costs and how they spend their \$17M that they take in.

Mike added that they receive \$21M from State and Federal funding and wanted to clarify that they were asking for money above and beyond what taxpayers were already providing. Mike wanted to see a budget to see where all the money goes, Lisa said the most recent 990 would show that.

Mike asked if they were going to other towns, Lisa said yes and that they already went to Carver.

Lynda asked if the Town paid for any of these services, Lisa said the reimbursements go through the town for transit. They do not get any other money.

Lynda was concerned that if we give \$5,000 to this organization that it could open up a flood gate for all nonprofits to come and ask for money. Mike Westort agreed.

Andrew thought it would be responsible for the Committee to look at a budget first, he was concerned that they spend \$170,000 on one employee salary. Lisa said she is not in charge of compensation, but there are long term employees working there. Their Board is responsible for the compensation for the CEO and she explained that they use compensation software that measures against similar size non-profits.

Jerry said an updated form 990 would answer many questions.

Jerry thought their compensation was in line with United Way.

Jamie said this petition was endorsed 2 years ago by Advisory. He feels the \$5,000 is conservative and feels that supporting this long existing program is a gesture of good faith.

Andrew asked about Mass Save, Lisa said it was for non-low income.

Nancy followed up to Lynda's earlier question and said that the Town contributed the following:

FY17	\$30,031
FY18	\$35,672
FY19	\$44,238
FY20 YTD	\$22,675

Amend Local Room Occupancy tax to 4% - Lynda Ferguson

To see if the town of Scituate will vote to amend the local room occupancy tax from 6% to 4% on the rental of rooms in hotel, motels, lodging houses and bed and breakfast establishments in the Town effective July 1, 2020.

Jerry explained that the Board of Selectmen is now sponsoring this article so it was not going to be considered at this meeting.

Resolution supporting Medicare for All - Heather Clark

To see if the Town of Scituate will endorse the House and senate Bill, Improved Medicare for all which would allow access to affordable, quality health care

Heather announced that there would be an information session a week from today for citizens.

She explained that she had cited the incorrect bill numbers in the provision.

SD2062 should be S683
HD2974 should be H1194

Heather said she has lived in Scituate for 25 years and believes that healthcare is a right. She feels that our current system is expensive and does not cover everyone. It is costly to get care and insurance has high deductibles and prescription costs. People file bankruptcy due to medical debt.

Scituate spends 8% of their annual budget on health insurance, this new plan would be about 7.5% for employers with more than 100 employees.

- Would improve Medicare and stops the need for a supplemental policy
- No difference in rates depending on age or health
- Better coverage
- Money saved should pay for additional costs for coverage for all.

Heather said that this is a non-binding article, but would send a message to our representatives.

She said she is asking that the Advisory Committee carefully considers the article and recommends approval.

Jamie asked if this resolution was due to a cultural change, Heather said healthcare costs are out of line because they are profit driven. It is more than just culture, this is a serious grass roots driven movement.

Heather said we currently spend \$21 billion in Massachusetts this would cost 15.75% less.

Mike asked if they had looked at how much the program would take in, she said she would get back with the exact amount for revenue and expenses. She said there would be savings starting in the first year.

Mike said that if we lower profits than people make less money and that starts a cycle. Heather thinks the healthcare costs are restrictive and the insurance is costing employers a lot of money and they would be more productive if they did not have to worry about it.

Mike asked if she spoke to the unions, Heather said the big unions have endorsed it on the federal level, but she has not spoken to local unions yet.

Jerry said that the people that do not attend town meeting will be most impacted.

Jerry thanked her for bring the issue to the table.

Heather said that this single payer program would save money for the system compared to the structure now. Mike said some people will pay more, especially people who saved and worked hard.

Heather asked the Committee to consider what the fiscally responsible thing to do for the Town would be and how we as a small community can add our voice to the growing movement.

Mike asked if this was an appropriate article for Town Meeting, Lincoln and Jerry said it had a direct impact on the finances of the town. They said we are not taking direct action, but just taking a position which is nothing new, we have been doing it for 200 years.

The Right to Farm - Jerald Kamman

To see if the Town of Scituate will add a section to the by-laws regarding Environmental Protection, to encourage the pursuit of agriculture, promote agriculture-based economic opportunities and protects farmlands within the Town of Scituate by allowing agriculture uses and relocated activities to function with minimal conflict with abutter and town agencies.

Jerald said that he operates an Asian pear farm in Scituate and sells them to farmers markets in the South Shore. He wants to establish the right to farm like in neighboring towns even though we do not have as much available land/farm businesses.

This petition defines who farmers are, we are surrounded by residents that may not like certain noises or smells, so this would give us a little more protection.

Elise asked what the article will do, Jerald said that it give us the identity and strength to stand against lawsuits due to complaints like noise.

Mike asked if you currently need a permit to farm, Jerry said no. The existing Town procedures just consider zoning. Lincoln said it will not change zoning. There is zoning in Scituate where farming is and is not allowed and that will not change with this article.

Lynda asked how people could sue if someone is farming in an area that is zoned for farming, Andrew said it is more philosophical. We want to keep the character of the Town and keep open space and some farms.

Patrice Metro asked what exactly the petition will do, Jerald said it would impact the small commercial endeavors that are still left in the town, it would give legal identity so they have rights as a farming business.

Lincoln said that it was a policy statement for the Town and that the Conservation Committee will take it into consideration when it is looking a regulations.

Andrew said that he wanted to apologize to Jerald that he had to come to this Committee to request this freedom or right to farm.

Departmental Budget Reviews:

Facilities (410) – Kevin Kelly

- Finished police demo
- Managed Public Safety Complex and Library
- 3 Community Grants
- Lighting improvement

Goals

- Improve safety in buildings
- Better service contracting

Budget

- Overall increase of 3.39% which is approximately \$34,000 for support of the Senior Center, gas and electric for 4th quarter.
- We moved money around to help support repairs and maintenance due to new buildings
- New annual cost for new buildings will continue

Senior Center carries their own gas and electricity now, but will move to Kevin's budget. Currently, it is budgeted in two places. The plan is to have all utilities go under Kevin's budget.

Jerry asked if Kevin could fix everything, Kevin said with larger issues you need to bring in certified technicians and that outside companies are now more expensive. We also need more service contracts with the new buildings.

Community Planning and Development

Conservation/Coastal Resources (171) Amy Walkey and Kyle Boyd

Amy said that they administer and enforce the state wetlands

- Downtown Harbor sustainability plan
- 50 Year Coastal vision
 - meetings
- Management study for Peggotty Beach
- Managed 6 home elevations

Budget: We are looking for salaries and office supplies and one administrative assistant.

Amy explained that her Committee would not be the one to consider the "right to farm" regulations as mentioned earlier in the meeting, if the article passed.

Lincoln thanked Amy for looking into the flooding issues of the harbor and explained that when Kevin Cafferty presented and spoke about the flood impacts he felt that some of the elevation projects were not going to be viable in a certain amount of time. Lincoln added that there is also the esthetic look of it. Lincoln asked if this is the long term solution, Amy said yes. FEMA has building codes that require us to meet or exceed flood zone regulations. Amy said there is money out there and some residents are awarded money to raise their house.

Amy said that they are getting many applications for subdivisions; people are dividing their land and selling it.

Amy said they had to provide mosquito control in the Gilson area, backside of Peggotty, the marshes were filled in and the water was not draining and there were a lot of mosquitoes so the Army Corps of Engineers dug trenches to drain the stagnate water.

Patrice asked about the department missing a part-time staffer Patrice, Amy said it is not in the budget to hire someone at this time.

Amy said we do the best we can and there is a lot of juggling. We get a lot of walk-ins too. We will work with Jim Boudreau to see if there are any resources we can use.

Planning (175) Karen Joseph

Karen said that they were postponing the first Public Hearing for North Scituate until the Fall Town Meeting because they have not received the information back from the Attorney General.

Budget: Salaries, technical services and printing

Karen said they are very busy with projects which are in all phases.

Mike asked if most of them were controlled construction, Karen said yes.

Elise asked how close we were to 10% mark for low income housing, Karen said that we are at approximately 4% without Herring Brook (3A). Jim Boudreau said that Herring Brook will bring us close and explained that all new condos/apartments must have a 25% portion that is affordable housing.

Lincoln asked about the fee schedule he thought it looked low, Karen said they are low but you cannot charge more than the effort put into it. We have not had that many lot releases which brings in money. Karen said they will think about raising fees, and said they would have to do a public hearing to do so.

Nancy added that there was another revenue source. *[The Planning Board has a revolving fund and under the general bylaws the balance over \$10,000 closes out annually to the general fund which is usually \$5-6K].*

Zoning Board of Appeals (176) Robert Vogel

- Hired a ZBA secretary, very happy with performance
- Board is skilled and knowledgeable
 - Look at each application on its merits and how it pertains to zoning laws

Challenges

- Keep up with work load

Revenue

- Filing fees

FY20 and 21 will exceed projections

Budget: Supplies

Inspections (241) Robert Vogel

Goals:

- The filing system in the archives does not match the current filing system. We need to digitize all the files.
- Seek to modify Section 830 which only gives 4 years to complete a project of non-conforming structures, would like to add the ability for the ZBA to extend the time period if deemed necessary. Currently, there are areas in Scituate where the homes are deteriorating due to the existing by-law.

Accomplishments:

- Keeping up with inspections
- Hired a new plumbing inspector
- Raised the inspector rates (salary)
- Raised our inspections fees

Lincoln asked if the fees were set by the Board of Selectmen, Robert said the fees are set by both the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administrator.

Robert said that the Booth Hill Road project has been slowed down because they are having trouble perking the land, it may go on sewer depending on the North Scituate sewer project.

Budget: Basically unchanged. Salary increases due to contract issues, longevity and inspector salaries.

Jerry asked if the raise was enough to keep the inspectors, Robert thinks it is.

Economic Development Commission (182) Jim Boudreau

- Down 20% due to meals tax
- Looking for a replacement for Brad, got a job at Mass Port.

Lincoln asked the cost of Heritage days, Nancy said it is approximately \$10,000

New Business:

Jerry told the Committee that Lianne Cataldo accepted a new position and is leaving her position as the Recording Secretary.

Jim Boudreau announced that Bob Sanderson is retiring May 1st.

Jamie sent the Report of the Scituate/West Cork Sister City Committee for Lianne to distribute to the Committee

Next Meeting on February 6th in the Community Room.

Jerry Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM; seconded by Jamie Gilmore. Unanimous Vote (7-0)

Respectfully Submitted,
Lianne Cataldo (Recording Secretary)

Referenced Materials:

- Agenda
- Minutes
- Budget Book
- Capital Plan

Follow-up:

- Lincoln said he would like to know what the town pays per year on overwash cleanup
- Patrice said she would like a tour of the water treatment facility. Kevin said during the day is better and she could contact him to set it up.

On-going Items:

- Jerry would like to have Plymouth Country Retirement come in and justify their fees and their investment plans.
- Jamie asked Sytske Humphrey, Vice President of the Beautification Commission if she could make a list of the areas in Scituate that needed improvement.
- Security Upgrades to Town Facilities, Jim said he would get the break down.