

TOWN OF SCITUATE
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Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 11, 2021
Zoom Video/Audio Conference -- 7:00 pm

This meeting was conducted in compliance with Governor Baker's declaration of a public health emergency and the related Emergency Executive Orders; the Advisory Committee held the meeting via Zoom Video and Audio (Dial-for those with only phone access). All participants participated remotely.

Committee Members Present: Jerry Kelly; Chair, Elise Russo, Jamie Gilmore, Dan McGuiggin, Lynda Ferguson, Missy Seidel, Lincoln Heineman, Michael Westort and Patrice Metro

Also in Attendance: Finance Director; Nancy Holt, Town Administrator; Jim Boudreau, SCTV ZOOM Facilitator; Andrew Connelly, Council on Aging Director; Linda Hayes, Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer; Robert Vogel and Economic Development Commission Chair; Susan DiPesa

Committee Members Not In Attendance:

Mr. Kelly called the meeting to order and approved the amended agenda at 7:00 p.m. which was seconded by Mr. Gilmore and voted unanimously in favor (6-0) by roll call vote; Mr. Kelly-yes, Ms. Metro-yes, Mr. Gilmore-yes, Ms. Seidel-yes, Ms. Russo-yes and Mr. McGuiggin-yes.

Mr. Heineman and Ms. Ferguson joined the meeting.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 28, 2021 meeting, that was seconded by Ms. Metro and voted unanimously in favor (7-0-1) by roll call vote; Mr. Kelly-yes, Ms. Russo-yes, Ms. Metro-yes, Mr. Gilmore-yes, Ms. Seidel-yes, Ms. Ferguson-yes, Mr. McGuiggin-yes and Mr. Heineman abstained.

Mr. Kelly noted that all minutes not previously approved will be voted at the February 25, 2021 meeting. Mr. Kelly reviewed the agenda for the February 25, 2021 meeting for members.

FY22 Budget Presentations:

Council on Aging – Department 541; Linda Hayes, Council on Aging Director

Ms. Hayes noted her goal was to open the new facility with programs including the meal program. She noted that she removed the meals on wheels portion of the program until it is more established. She informed the members that food service is one of the most important things they do and even though they did offer some food service previously it was just for special occasions. She is proposing four days a week for congregant lunch seating and café offerings including soup and sandwich and take out. The multi-purpose room is able to be divided for meals and still have activities. Mr. Kelly asked if there would be a charge for the meals. Ms. Hayes responded yes that the seed money would get the program started and was not looking for a full cost recovery but an offset such as \$4-5/meal. Mr. Kelly asked if there was any program funding from the Commonwealth or federal government. Ms. Hayes responded that she receives a Formula grant from the Commonwealth but she utilizes that to support a position and a half and subsidize some activities.

Mr. Westort joined the meeting.

Ms. Hayes went onto note that senior centers that offer meals see that program grow in popularity. She would utilize volunteers as a kitchen assistant and servers including the Launch program for persons with special abilities for table set-up and other roles. Ms. Ferguson asked how many seniors are in Scituate. Ms. Hayes responded that it is about 5,500. Ms. Ferguson asked how many would come to lunch daily. Ms. Hayes responded that the Congregational Church's weekly lunch could have 50 people at their luncheon. Ms. Seidel asked about how the Formula grant is calculated and Ms. Hayes stated it was a dollar amount per person over the age of 60 as identified in the 2010 census which amounts to about \$52,000.

Mr. Westort stated that he thought that the existing budget and staff would be sufficient to run the new senior center and now there is a \$50,000 addition. Ms. Hayes responded that the lunch program could become fully self-supporting in the future. Mr. Westort asked about the addition of programs and how that was going to work. Ms. Hayes saying they can add programs now that they have additional space and can use volunteers, grants and fees for instructors. Ms. Hayes also noted that donations help to offset costs. Mr. Kelly noted that he and Ms. Russo looked at other programs and he recalled that Duxbury and Marshfield both offered popular congregant meals and cafes and that there would some start-up costs. Mr. Gilmore commented that food and food insecurity for seniors is a very important component of the senior center. Ms. Ferguson asked about the number of hours for the chef position and the need for ServSafe certification to make sure the hours are sufficient for the program. Ms. Hayes explained that she is ServSafe certified as is one of her volunteers.

Ms. Hayes listed some of their current programs and some potential new ones including foreign language, ancestry and to provide better support to caregivers and/or a social day program. Ms. Hayes reviewed the changes to her budget from the December 15, 2020 meeting including the addition of an 18/hour week chef position and \$25,000 for food and food service supplies. The original request included increases in repair and maintenance for maintenance contracts and technology. Mr. Heineman asked about the fees for the food and if those fees would be going into the new revolving fund and revenue had not yet been projected yet until actual experience.

Ms. Metro asked when the new senior center would open. Ms. Hayes perhaps a soft opening in

April with some small groups but it depends on the restrictions (COVID-19).

Zoning Board of Appeals – Department 176; Robert Vogel, Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer

Mr. Vogel noted that the pandemic caused some ZBA meetings to be cancelled which worked out well as there was a vacancy in the recording secretary which now has been filled. He commented that Zoning Board workload is steady and potentially trending upward but no current 40Bs. There were no further questions on the budget from committee members.

Inspections Department – Department 241; Robert Vogel, Building Commissioner & Zoning Enforcement Officer

Mr. Vogel explained that the Building Department is busier than it has ever been and that they raised the fees about 10% a couple of years ago and increased inspectors compensation to be more competitive. He highlighted that their revenues were up due to the increased number of inspections to well cover the increased rates for inspectors. He stated the department is transitioning to a new software which will hopefully be more user friendly. All permits except building permits are able to be done online currently and the new system will be able to connect with other departments for approvals. Mr. Vogel identified a capital project he worked on with the IT Director and was looking forward to digitize the old files that are permanent record. He also provided a summary of the current development ongoing in the town.

Ms. Russo asked about the increase in the part-time salaries is due to the outside inspectors increase in inspections. Mr. Vogel confirmed it was due to the number of inspections and the inspectors were paid per inspection. Mr. Kelly asked Mr. Vogel about the abandoned properties in the town. Mr. Vogel stated he is still trying to develop an acceptable bylaw change to address the issue and have a mechanism by which they could be resolved.

Economic Development Commission – Department 182

Ms. DiPesa provided detail about the EDC's initiatives in the pandemic including Scituate Loves Local. The EDC is currently working with the Planning Board about the zoning for North Scituate and provided funding for banners for the North Scituate Train Canopy area. The EDC is currently working with the Chamber and the Harbor Merchants for the spring and summer/fall opening including plantings and lighting to get the harbor area ready for spring. They are also working with a group on a visitors' center. The EDC is working with the Board of Selectmen on the re-use of the Scituate Harbor Community Building (old Pier 44). She noted that the EDC is keeping in contact with the businesses and that ZOOM is helping with that communication.

Mr. Gilmore asked whether the visitors center would be in a physical location such as the Scituate Harbor Community Building rather than a virtual entity. Ms. DiPesa responded that they originally looked at that building but they realized that it is a pilot program and they wanted to focus on getting the center up and running before focusing on a brick and mortar building.

Mr. Westort asked if there would be outdoor dining again and what EDC's opinion was on that issue. Ms. DiPesa said they were looking at it and meeting with the Board of Health Director Drew Scheele and they might need to modify the program. Ms. Ferguson asked that all businesses be contacted about road closures. Ms. Ferguson asked about the level of support from

meals tax was the basis of the EDC budget. Ms. Holt responded that it is 20% of the meals tax and recommended by Financial Forecast Committee. Mr. Heineman asked about the resiliency on the harbor business district and Ms. DiPesa noted that they had assisted in funding for studies of that issue. Ms. Ferguson commented that she participated on a committee with Coastal Resource Officer Kyle Boyd specifically about that issue.

Town Administrator recommended changes to the FY22 budget based on the revised forecast adopted by Financial Forecast Committee on 1/28/21

Mr. Boudreau noted that the original forecast included the FY21 reduced estimates for state aid but the Governor's FY22 budget amount has been released and it has been supported as a good number by the local legislators so the forecast has been adjusted resulting in an additional \$348,842 to distribute to budgets. Mr. Boudreau noted the funding for the Council on Aging increases and 10 hours for custodial support. The large portions are an additional \$200,000 for roads and seawalls and \$20,000 for repair and maintenance. Mr. Kelly asked about the Town Administrator's contractual bargaining. Mr. Boudreau noted that it was the use of labor counsel for collective bargaining issues but not bargaining itself and resolving the lack of a required personnel classification plan. The implementation of that plan will result in some adjustments as the ranges will not exactly correspond to everyone's current salary. Mr. Gilmore asked about the \$20,000 and its use at old Gates and Mr. Boudreau responded.

Mr. Boudreau further noted that the unknown is the current pending stimulus package and how it will impact the community. Ms. Metro asked about cost implications for vaccinations and Mr. Boudreau noted that the Town had started the paperwork with FEMA which would provide 100% reimbursement but there might need to be a short-term adjustment at town meeting. General discussion ensued between Mr. Boudreau and others about the current vaccination clinics and options for vaccines. Mr. Boudreau noted that all first responders that wanted a vaccination have received both vaccines. Ms. Metro asked how many did not want the vaccine and Mr. Boudreau responded about four or five.

Ms. Ferguson commented that she thought in a future budget that the Town should consider increasing the meals tax support of the EDC to assist in creating more foot traffic in Scituate to visit our businesses which will provide increased receipts. Mr. Boudreau noted that the Irish Heritage Trail is working on getting something up online and he had conversations with the South Shore Chamber of Commerce on a grant application to promote local communities for people to understand the amenities that are closer to home.

Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ms. Russo at 8:26 p.m.; the Committee voted unanimously in favor (9-0) to adjourn by roll call vote; Mr. Kelly-yes, Ms. Russo-yes, Ms. Ferguson-yes, Ms. Metro-yes, Mr. Gilmore-yes, Mr. McGuiggin-yes, Mr. Westort-yes, Mr. Heineman and Ms. Seidel-yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Holt
Recorder