

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

*Meeting conducted pursuant to the March 12, 2020 modifications to the Open Meeting Law made by Governor Baker pursuant to the state of emergency due to COVID-19.*

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

**Also in Attendance:** Finance Director; Nancy Holt, Town Administrator; Jim Boudreau, SCTV Staff; Briana Trifiro, SCTV Director; Seth Pfeiffer, Recording Secretary; Alicia Anthony, Harbormaster; Stephen Mone, Treasurer; Pam Avitabile, Police Chief; Mark Thompson, Public Safety Communications Manager; Barbara DeWolfe, Fire Chief; John Murphy, Alison Steverman, Facilities Director; Kevin Kelly

**Committee Members Not In Attendance:**

**Jerry Kelly called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.**

**Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Jamie Gilmore and voted all in favor (8-0) to accept the agenda as submitted by roll call vote; UNANIMOUS.**

**Jerry Kelly made a motion to approve the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes which was seconded by Elise Russo and voted all in favor (8-0); UNANIMOUS.**

**FY22 Budget Presentation:**

- **Waterways Enterprise (66) Stephen Mone, Harbormaster**  
Stephen Mone shared with the board that the evening prior, The Waterways Committee met with Finance Director, Nancy Holt to discuss any questions on the revenue and expenses. The board discussed the fee schedule further and came up with a way to make up the deficit. It was unanimous to increase the fees on slips by 10% and raise the mooring fees by \$2/foot. This would increase the slip fees by \$67,500 and about \$30,000 in mooring fees. This is next to be voted on by The Selectmen (people?). Mr. Kelly said that the mooring fees seem to vary by \$20,000 a year. He then told the

board that Ms. Holt was going to look to resolve this so the Waterways may end up with a \$20,000 that would bring them up to a \$50,000 surplus.

Mr. Gilmore then questioned the seasonal budget as the Advisory Committee had expressed concern on this in years past. Mr. Kelly agreed with this and stated that he was still concerned.

Mr. Kelly brought up that COVID was referenced many times and asked what these meant. Mr. Mone said that the extra cleaning supplies or port o john's were being reimbursed through COVID funding.

Mr. Gilmore asked who took care of and maintained the gazebo to which Mr. Mone responded that this was The Recreation Department's responsibility. Mr. Boudreau said that there is CPC money to do the gazebo repairs and that facilities was working on it.

Elise Russo asked Mr. Mone if the repairs of deterioration of the docks at Cole Parkway that had mentioned was going to be included in the grant that he got. Mr. Mone responded by saying that as of right now, they're going to complete the Cole Parkway piling project and then he will submit the new grant to Seaport for funding. He went on to say that part of his capital plan both this year and last has been to get his funding in place so if the grant is given, plans can be executed as quickly as possible, as Seaport won't consider funding unless there is already a match in place. Mr. Kelly asked Mr. Mone if Seaport had money given the current budget. Mr. Mone stated that they seem to but he's not sure if it will get exhausted. He said that in July or August they approved some projects for other cities and towns.

Mr. Mone informed Mr. Kelly that he has kept his budget level spending and their only large increases were insurance and adding the ice policy. Missy Seidel asked Mr. Mone when the last time fees were increased. Mr. Mone said the Harbormaster before him did so in the marinas in 2004, give or take a year or two.

- **Shellfish (295) Michael Dimeo, Shellfish Constable**

Town Administrator, Jim Boudreau spoke on Mr. Dimeo's behalf. He stated that this is the same budget that it's been for years, it hasn't gone up and it hasn't gone down. Most of this is to cover a part time salary for Shellfish Constable, Mike Dimeo.

Mr. Kelly asked Mr. Boudreau if the town was given the OK to open the shellfish grounds. Mr. Boudreau said that this decision was made by the FDA. Testing is going to be done by The Department of Marine Fisheries soon. He stated that any recreational shellfishing ground in the vicinity of a waste water treatment plant, was unilaterally closed by the government. Cohasset's waste water treatment plant goes in to The River/Bay, which is tested pretty regularly.

- **Police (210) Mark Thompson, Police Chief**

Chief Thompson spoke on the highlights of his presentation for the Police Department.

He said that despite the challenging year, his department has met the challenge head on.

He then asked to touch upon the department's top four goals and objectives. These being;

The Community Collaboration and Engagement, The Department's Policies and

Procedures, Officer Wellness and Development, and Expanding on working better with

other First Responders in the community as well as their partners at National Grid,

Eversource, etc. Chief Thompson said that they have some big things that they're

looking to accomplish in the coming year and thinks they're in a good position to do so.

Mr. Kelly asked Chief Thompson if his second goal of obtaining certification from The Mass Police Accreditation Program is something regularly done or something new. Chief Thompson replied to this question stating that this is an initiative that they've had on for a couple of years, which is a lengthy, couple year process. He then said that to receive accreditation, officers need to receive certification, and then from there go to full accreditation. Chief Thompson said that statewide there are about 94 communities. Financially for the town, Officer Thompson said that a lot of this might come from their 40 hours of service that they do and have been doing historically. Going on to say that this wouldn't cause much of a financial impact but they don't know what will come. It will take a lot of work behind the scenes and could have a dramatic impact on Scituate. Online encryption and virtual currency is also having an evolution and a new learning horizon. In addition, Chief Thompson wants to make sure the community is kept safe. Mr. Kelly brought up the issue of mental health and Chief Thompson agreed that this was a delicate balance and wants to keep this awareness is kept up.

Do we have enough police or should we be looking to increase the staff with the rise in population. Mr. Boudreau said that maybe officers in specialized areas would be beneficial

One vacancy, new officer hired and the two at academy should fill the openings. Mr. Westort asked about

Overtime compared to full capacity, fully staffed less overtime, two officers went out injured, one retired, court happens, vacations, people out in the academy. If they over staff, they may hit their staffing needs, is that more beneficial than

Boudreau said that the seasonal staff is always asked if they want to pick up hours when needed to fill the holes. It was brought up how many changes have happened in their roles and staffing and all agreed and congratulated the department for such a great job.

- **Public Safety Communications (230) Barbara Dewolfe, Public Safety Communications Manager**

Mr. Kelly started out by saying how great it was that The Public Safety was fully staffed to which Ms. Dewolfe agreed and said that it had been awhile. She feels that she has a good crew and all are dependable despite all the challenges from the state and CDC's COVID restrictions. Mr. Gilmore remembered the merger or the two types of work and the shortages and asked how long since it has been fully staffed. Ms. Dewolfe said three or four years. Mr. Gilmore said this is commendable with the challenges going on.

- **Fire (220) John Murphy, Fire Chief**

Chief Murphy informed the board that the E3 Pumper dusting repair was completed but insurance stated that the damages were due to debris, most likely from a storm, so this is something that was not covered. The whole top of the engine had to be rebuilt. The total cost for this came to \$27,033, which is just under 50% of the department's repair and maintenance line for the year of \$58,624.

**Jamie Gilmore made a motion to approve a transfer request from the reserve fund to cover the expense which was seconded by Dan McGuiggin and voted all in favor (8-0) by roll call vote; UNANIMOUS.**

Chief Murphy informed the committee that his budget for FY22 had less than a one

percent increase overall. Ninety-six percent of that was just under \$47,000 for an estimated call around the salaries. The other \$1,700 was all contractual adjustments. Mr. Kelly then asked if the Fire Department's ambulance revenue went up drastically from the beginning of the year due to COVID. Chief Murphy stated that he actually thinks it went down as nobody was going to the hospital unless they were severely sick. Mr. Boudreau informed Mr. Kelly that as of December 31<sup>st</sup>, the numbers are pretty much right back on target. Mr. Boudreau then stated that the town picked up their first 1200 doses of the COVID vaccine this afternoon and tomorrow the public health and school nurses will receive the vaccine. He said that the police, fire and dispatch departments would receive theirs next. Mr. Westort asked if these employees were obligated to get vaccinated to which Mr. Boudreau said they were not.

- **Facilities (440) Kevin Kelly, Facilities Director**

Mr. Kevin Kelly started off by giving the committee an overview of facilities saying that there were many accomplishments around the pandemic and keeping the staff and community safe. He then spoke about his goals moving forward, some of them shared with last year's due to his absence and the pandemic. His biggest goal is to establish more service contracts and preventive maintenance work as they're still mostly dealing with things as they happen. He said that the town has a lot of new equipment that have regular service contracts and he'd now like to establish regular maintenance for the rest of the building systems. Mr. Jerry Kelly spoke up saying that it's a positive to have these new state of the art buildings but the negative is paying to maintain them, to which Kevin agreed. Jerry then asked if the gas at the new Senior Center was natural gas that he was budgeting for. Kevin responded to Jerry's question saying that it was. He said that a lot of his increase was due to the Senior Center's utilities. Just between the gas and the electricity in that building, it's \$32,000. Kevin informed the board that another increase on his line items is to get him some administrative help which Mr. Boudreau and Ms. Holt found a way to make a budget for 25 hours a week work. This amount is under \$30,000. Kevin said that his RNM line went up with maintenance agreements and other money that was put in to that to help support service contracts. He stated that he is anticipating having annual service contracts between \$40,000 and \$50,000 per year for generators, elevators, fire alarm systems, boilers, fire pumps and HVAC filters and such. He added that the systems are all being run harder for COVID precautions and this in turn has them requiring more maintenance. Ms. Russo asked what the increase in technical services was for. Kevin responded that this is to support the new card access and security systems as well as the existing ones that need attention and some of it was to supply Comcast signal to some areas.

- **Treasurer Collector (145) Pamela Avitabile, Treasurer**

Ms. Avitabile started off by saying that her department is phenomenal. They are considered essential and have stayed in their department since the beginning of the pandemic. They weren't able to rotate staff as this hit made them very busy. Taxes as well as Transfer and Beach Stickers sales are regular February things they stayed on top of when COVID was starting. She said her department never fell behind, all work has gotten done and their collection status is fabulous. She feels the unipay system is working out perfect for residents to make payments to most town departments and

services. Ms. Avitabile then said that the town's residents and properties have increased so the department's work has increased. She said loans, refinancing and leans have also increased with the pandemic and contributes to their work load. Ms. Avitabile stated that the only increase in her budget over last year is to personnel. Mr. Westort asked how does the third party collecting work to which Pamela responded that ComStar collects for the first 90 days and then she forwards to the deputy collector. She thinks the collection process has gotten much easier over the last year. Ms. Holt agreed. Mr. Westort asked if people liked the new sewer program and Ms. Avitabile said it was a big hit.

Ms. Avitabile next moved on to the tax foreclosure, which is a level funded line at \$39,000 every year. This is with the tax attorney to try to collect uncollected taxes. She said that she has backed off of people due to the trying times we're all in. Money is still coming in though as some people have been able to sell or refinance properties that had taxes due. She then said that it is time to advertise unpaid FY20 real estate taxes. She said this is really high with approximately 70 properties on the list, as it's normally in the 40's range. Ms. Avitabile said she feels really bad for people but doesn't know what she can do besides reaching out by phone and letters. She stated that she does have to protect the town as part of her job.

Ms. Avitabile will attend another meeting to discuss her other items.

- **SCTV (159) Seth Pfeiffer, SCTV Director**

Mr. Pfeiffer started off by saying that Scituate Television's budget is unlike any department the committee would see as they are not tax payer funded, but has a separate contract with Comcast. The department has its own bank account that they pull from and that's what they do. He then jumped in to the numbers starting off with saying salaries have remained pretty much consistent with years past. Mr. Pfeiffer said that the majority of their spending comes down to three categories; basic TV equipment, field equipment, and the cost of changes due to COVID and the new virtual ways. He said that his upcoming budget is mostly online equipment and this is something he can't say how much it will be as they'll have to try different things out. Having a lump sum ready will be helpful. Ms. Holt said that their account is at about a million dollars.

### **Other Business**

None to discuss.

### **Adjournment**

**Mr. Kelly made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:43 which was seconded by Jamie Gilmore and voted all in favor (8-0) by roll call vote; UNANIMOUS**