

Town of Brookline
Advisory Committee Minutes

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: March 29, 2016

Present: Carla Benka, Clifford M. Brown, Carol Caro, Lea Cohen, Dennis Doughty, John Doggett, Harry K. Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Kelly Hardebeck, Amy F. Hummel, Sytske Humphrey, Angela Hyatt, Alisa Jonas, Janice S. Kahn, Steve Kanes, Bobbie Knable, Fred Levitan, Robert Liao, Pamela Lodish, Sean M. Lynn-Jones, Shaari S. Mittel, Mariah Nobrega, Michael Sandman, Lee Selwyn, Christine Westphal.

Absent: * Charles Swartz, Stanley Spiegel, Lee Selwyn, Jennifer Goldsmith

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM.

Also in attendance: Melissa Goff, Deputy Town Administrator; Patrick Ward, Town Clerk; Kevin Stokes, Director of Information Technology; Department of Public Works Commissioner, Andy Pappastergion; Director of Water and Sewers, Fred Russell; Director of Engineering, Peter Ditto; Director of Highways and Sanitation, Kevin Johnson; and Director of Parks and Open Space, Erin Gallentine; Transportation Administrator, Todd Kirrane.

Announcements: Thank you to Carla Benka for her efforts to organize the AC meeting schedule to review the Warrant Articles.

The Advisory Committee discussed deferring a vote on DPW CIP Item 23, Bicycle Access Improvements. Consider a September to March trial period for implementation, implement in two stages. Do it in a way that would give us greater comfort knowing the implications before finalizing.

What is a sharrow? Signs that are painted on roadways that give cyclists a right of way in the road. Vehicular traffic needs to be separated very clearly from cyclists. OK at Longwood but this stretch is particularly narrow and hilly.

Fixing it for bicyclists but creating a worse situation namely traffic backups in that area.

Need a longer trial to see what happens. Other organizations – Transportation Board, Bicycle Advisory Committee, etc. have done a lot of work and research on this already. Safety of someone on a bike is more important than the inconvenience of someone in a car.

What will we gain by deferring? Meeting with head of Transportation Board and Bicycle Advisory Committee, chance to read the report, more feedback about safety. We will get more information overall.

This will be deferred until later in April.

1. REVIEW OF FY 2017 OPERATING BUDGET – TOWN CLERK

John Doggett gave a summary of the subcommittee’s report. Town Clerk Patrick Ward added a bit of additional detail regarding the increase in the budget. Need for more staff to cover the polls during the presidential election. Draft regulations/best practices coming from the Attorney General’s office for early voting. If more than one voting location, need to make a decision about whether there will be central tabulation facility.

Q: What are you predicting for turnout on May 3?

A: Not as much as November, best 8-9%. A few Town Meeting races may draw people out.

Q: When will you lose access to Devotion School?

A: Devotion School goes off line in June (will be using it in May) so need to find another polling location. Babcock Fire Station is best option now. Want to find as big a place as possible.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the Town Clerk FY17 budget of \$686,119.

Vote: With a vote of 25 in favor, 0 opposed with 0 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY2017 Town Clerk budget of \$686,119.

2. REVIEW OF REVIEW OF FY 2017 OPERATING BUDGET– INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

John Doggett gave a summary of the subcommittee’s report. We have the largest and most robust network of any municipality in the area. More things moving into “the cloud” creating some cost savings. Philosophy is “focus on what we care about the most” - Finance Department and Police and Fire. The department recently conducted an offsite disaster recovery trial. Some discussion of cyber insurance but products need to mature in the marketplace, guidelines and responsibilities become clearer, before we opt in.

Mr. Stokes – not buying as much equipment but buying more services which gets us to where we are.

Did a network upgrade over the summer \$220,000 down to \$200,000. Offset by other initiatives and applications, upgrading permitting system, payroll, HR, cartography system. Systems pieces are largely in place. Mobile enabling our workforce. How do you change the business process so this equates to efficiencies, people, process and technology. Significant gains for field folks. Transactions on line find information on line, communicate with the Town. Leverage capabilities and quantify those gains and tell a better story.

Q: Are we still running our own Wi-Fi and telephone system since company we contracted with went out of business?

A: Wi-Fi___33 was decommissioned when the company went out of business. About a third has come down. Regarding voice system (VOIP), have it and driving the cost down.

Q: Can the map application (GIS) be more robust, especially around land use issues in the town – open space and how it is used. Many opportunities that we are not taking advantage

A: Great visualization for buffer zones for schools.

Q: MUNIS – difficulty getting information out of the application. Mary Ellen Dunn can get more reports using Crystal. Is that something that IT can fix?

A: Reports are a function of data; internally we have a MUNIS Committee – that has all key stakeholders involved. ACA is driving a lot of conversations with the vendor. Working through many issues for HR and Payroll.

Q: Performance and workload indicators. Objectives from 2016 and 2017 seem to be the same.

A: 2016 objectives this year's objectives become next year's accomplishments if done correctly.

Q: Like App about reporting things in the Town, like streets that haven't been shoveled, etc. Is there a timeline for rollout to other schools? Who is driving that? Digital signage? Training?

A: Mary Ellen Dunn and Kevin Stokes. We built the site but need editors on the other end to update message and content. Who is the owner and what is the support structure like?

Q: For archival stuff, digitized...data is set up in different areas. How often is it updated? Is there a policy of how often?

A: No electronic approval standard. Assume if it is backed up, it is there forever, but – have real time redundant copies of everything.

Q: School payment process?

A: A product not compliant with credit card use, upgraded the technology and side benefit was we have a better portal for parents.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the Information Technology Department FY17 budget of \$1,888,165.

Vote: With a vote of 25 in favor, 0 opposed with 0 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY2017 IT budget of \$1,888,165.

3. REVIEW OF FY 2017 CIP REQUESTS: TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS

Explanation of single sign on appliance – on the school side they have lots of small applications that require separate support and log in. This would allow them to have one log in for many applications. Should we buy a service or should we buy an appliance. Looking at features and benefits of cloud-based vs software.

Q: Could we do single sign in for Town Residents for all of the things that the public uses?

A: Lots of liability and challenging.

Q: Department websites – specifically Recreation. When you try to book something it doesn't work. Who is responsible?

A: Shared responsibility between the department and IT.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the IT Department FY17 CIP budget of \$275,000.

Vote: With a vote of 25 in favor, 0 opposed with 0 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the IT Department FY2017 CIP of \$275,000.

4. REVIEW OF FY 2017 OPERATING BUDGET – DPW

Fred Levitan gave a summary of the subcommittee's report.

Personnel

Complete Street impact

Andy introduced Division Heads – 4 divisions Peter Ditto, Fred Russell, Erin Gallentine, Kevin Johnson, Todd Kirrane

163 Full time employees, temporary and intermittent employees, one engineering coop student.

Review of the Org Chart.

Review of the Budget without MWRA.

Summary of changes to DPW

\$66,000 decrease in Capital Equipment – last year increased for forestry truck for a year and ordered a new truck and made a first year lease payment.

\$160K reallocation of banking fees to Treasurer's departmental budget.

Elimination of Sanitation laborers due to automated trash collection.

"Pay as You Throw" piece. No conclusions. Will be brought to Selectmen probably before Town Meeting. A lot of moving pieces.

Increase in solid waste disposal costs.

Q: Mechanization – elimination of 3 laborers – does that assume 100% mechanization?

A: Semi-automated. Geography doesn't allow for full automation.

Q: Meeting with Commissioner Year ago in May, we asked about automated trash collection – told there would be public hearings, but have they happened?

A: Automated collection was decided by the Board of Selectmen. Brought up in public session and they voted.

\$700,000 is historical figure for capital outlay purchases.

Increased outlay but with new trucks cost, buyingpower decreases.

Q: Objectives – construction of highly visible crosswalks?

A: Pilot with different types of materials in different parts of town. Need to have high visibility look at ways to have them pop out better.

Q: Tree lawns? Extends the sidewalk...experiment?

A: We reached out to three different vendors where we could put in a surface was permeable but provide safe accessible walking surface. We will be evaluating over a period of year...cost, longevity, safety, etc.

Q: LED street light replacements – where are we in that process and how is it going?

A: About 2/3 through it. Have about 2500 done. Gotten one \$90K rebate from NSTAR. Program is progressing nicely. Hope to finish within the next year.

Comment: Hazardous material drop off... great that you do this. Good to have a weekend day. Would like to see us do more that would be of use to the community –

Shift to Tuesday was due to manpower. Message boards, on the website and in the Tab to promote it more.

Q: Town Hall Parking Study: What are we studying?

A: School Superintendent and Town Administrator – studying needs of School and Town employees. Parking and Transportation demand study. Encourage alternative modes of arrival at work. May or may not include charging, T-pass, etc.

Q: Any conversations with Korean Church about their parking?

A: Demand in this area for public parking is strained.

Q: With regards to street lights, as summer approaches and trees fill out, if you go through the streets lights are dim. Trees get trimmed but some branches are on private property. Is there any conversation you can have with property owners and is there liability?

A: We can and do trim trees and make inquiries of private property owners, as requests come in to us. Trim around lights and signs, and make the public ways safe.

Q: Street repairs and gas leaks. What is the relationship between working with National Grid and street repairs?

A: We coordinate our street repair schedule with National Grid so they can make service replacements and other replacements before we get out there. They will get in if we are planning repairs/repaving.

Q: A layer of asphalt over the existing street. That was expected to last five years. Only one firm that was offering that service, has this been a successful program. Less disruptive to neighborhood and cost effective.

A: Micro surface. Higher version of what you buy at Home Depot – pour it, squeegee it. Didn't last one year, wore off. Problem with technology and with the vendor.

Q: Based on water crisis in Flint, MI has there been more requests for water testing here in town or in homes?

A: We are required to test for lead. Since 2010 we have not even come close to the thresholds. We test weekly for chloroform bacteria at different places throughout the town. We test once a year for lead and copper. We removed lead services in the street that were owned by the town and replaced with copper. If we determined a piece of lead was on a customer's line we made them aware that they would be well served to remove it.

Q: Lincoln School lead problem?

A: Working with School and Building department. Water at the source coming in was not a problem. Tested bubblers in the building and the levels elevated. They were removed. Currently have bottled water. Will be replacing service line in the building at the source and replacing all the fountains, etc. Lead exists in water systems not just in pipes. Fixtures can have lead. Everything installed today is lead free.

Q: Wireless system vs public call boxes?

A: Poor maintenance record – corroding wires. Lots of time spent just trying to keep system running. Had a survey done on conditions, reviewed maintenance records to determine what could be fixed, what should be removed, etc. Then plan forward – move to wireless? Conducting a study and we will have a better idea what to do with our system.

Q: Cherry trees at Reservoir?

A: Requirement that dams remain free of vegetation other than grass. Commonwealth overlooked it for years. Working with a consulting engineering team and made a proposal. Anything on the embankment below the water line, in decline removed within the first year; identified select trees that we propose

remain. Some amount of trees that will be removed. Also, phasing it and have a design review and public meetings.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the FY17 DPW Operating budget of \$14,110,546.

Vote: With a vote of 21 in favor, 0 opposed with 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY17 DPW Operating budget of \$14,110,546.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend approval of the FY17 Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund of \$28,985,259.

Vote: With a vote of 22 in favor, 0 opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the FY17 Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund of \$28,985,259

Review of FY 2017 CIP Requests: DPW

Street Rehab – \$1,630,000, Provided that there is prior notification to the Board of Selectmen of any changes to pedestrians, bicycle, or motor vehicle traffic patterns or pavement markings

Sidewalk Rehab - \$304,000

Parking Meters – \$161,040

Dean Rd/Chestnut Hill Ave traffic signal – \$260,000

Winthrop Path Rehab – \$65,000

Reservoir Park – design - \$140,000

Harry Downes Field and Playground – design - \$80,000

Playground equipment, fields, fencing - \$300,000

School and Town Grounds Rehab – \$90,000

Comfort Stations in parks rehab – \$40,000

Tree Removal and Replacement - \$225,000

Singletree Hill Tank Improvements – \$340,000 (Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund)

Stormwater Improvements – \$300,000 (Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund)

44 Netherlands Road - \$190,000 (Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund)

Singletree Storage Tank Gatehouse - \$320,000 (Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund)

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action on the recommended amounts for CIP Requests 24-26, 28, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 44, 56, 57, 59, and 60.

Vote: With a vote of 21 in favor, 0 opposed with no abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action on CIP Requests 24-26, 28, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 39, 44, 56, 57, 59, 60.

No Subcommittee Recommendation on these two Requests:

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action of \$700,000 bonded for Corey Hill Park with the condition that no construction funds be expended before December 1, 2016.

Vote: With a vote of 20 in favor, 0 opposed with 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action of \$700,000 bonded for Corey Hill Park with the condition that no construction funds be expended before December 1, 2016.

A MOTION was made and seconded to recommend favorable action of \$770,000 bonded for Emerson Garden Playground with the condition that no construction funds be expended before December 1, 2016.

Vote: With a vote of 20 in favor, 0 opposed with 1 abstention, the Advisory Committee recommends favorable action of \$770,000 bonded for Emerson Garden Playground with the condition that no construction funds be expended before December 1, 2016.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be on March 31st.

Upon a MOTION made and seconded and voted unanimously, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Documents Presented at Advisory Committee Meeting:

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON FY17 IT OPERATING BUDGET

CAPITAL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON FY17 DPW OPERATING BUDGET

CAPITAL SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON FY17 IT AND DPW CIP PROPOSALS

EMAILS REGARDING PROPOSED BEACON STREET BIKE LANE & CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT ON FY17 TOWN CLERK OPERATING BUDGET

NOTICE OF THE ROBERT I. SPERBER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT CELEBRATION

[HTTPS://BROOKLINETEENCENTER.ORG/BOB-SPERBER/](https://brooklineteencenter.org/BOB-SPERBER/)