

**Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
3/1/2016**

In attendance: Committee Members Anderson, Baltera, Belyea, Coughlin, Hancock, Haskell, Kelley, Kutsch, MacKay, Pyles, Sharkansky, Smallwood, and Taylor, and Town Accountant Nickerson.

Chairman Pyles called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

*Questions from the Public on Items Not on the Agenda:* None

**Warrant Articles**

*Article KK – Disposition of Property: Selectmen’s Parcel*

Dan Coughlin presented Article KK, and Tim White, Chairman of the Hingham Affordable Housing Trust, was present to answer questions. The Board of Selectmen has decided to work with developers and potentially sell this property (2 Beal Street) for the purpose of building an assisted living facility. This would encompass 60–80 units for elderly and disabled residents. If this plan does not work out, the BOS will revert to the original plan to build 20-40 units for low and moderate-income family housing.

The HAHT recognizes the need for assisted living housing in Hingham and supports the new plan. The goal is to sell the property for a project that meets the Town’s parameters. Local preference for residents will be requested but is not definite. The next step is to propose an RFP for developer bids. This project is likely to be a 40B development, but it will be controlled by the Town and must go before all relevant Town boards. The HAHT has incurred about \$40K of expenditures so far on the Selectmen’s Parcel. The Town should not have to spend much more if the new plan goes forward. Proceeds from the sale of the property would go to the General Fund and be restricted for expenditure on real estate or affordable housing.

Tim explained that Hingham claims to have attained the goal of 10% affordable housing, but the State claims the Town to be at 6.3%. Using the State calculation, the Town needs 283 more affordable units to get to 10%. A number of the proposed assisted living units will count as affordable units, but the total is TBD.

AdCom members discussed the large concentration of affordable housing (current and proposed) in the Beal Street area and noted that traffic will only get worse. AdCom will vote on Article KK on 3/3/2016.

*Article H – Transfer from the Stabilization Fund*

Dave Anderson presented Article H and recommended a transfer of \$65,413 from the Stabilization Fund for the purpose of reducing the Fiscal Year 2017 tax rate. AdCom members approved this Article by a vote of 11-0. (Eryn Kelley was not present for this vote.)

*Article I – Transfer from the Meals Tax Stabilization Fund*

Dave Anderson presented Article I and explained that this is a perennial Article that will disappear in the near future. The current balance in the Fund is about \$900K, which will be fully expended in two years. Sue Nickerson explained that the plan is to spend \$450K per year for five years for tax relief, and this is the third year. Meals Tax proceeds now are treated as Local Receipts and are not deposited into the Meals Tax Stabilization Fund. Dave recommended a transfer of \$450K from the Meals Tax Stabilization Fund for the purpose of reducing the Fiscal Year 2017 tax rate. AdCom members approved this Article by a vote of 11-0. (Eryn Kelley was not present for this vote.)

*Article J – Disbursement of Electric Light Department Receipts*

Craig MacKay recommended that all but \$500K of funds received by the Municipal Lighting Plant be

appropriated to the Plant in order to pay expenses and that the \$500K be transferred to the General Fund to reduce the tax rate. This is a payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT). AdCom members approved this Article by a vote of 11-0. (Eryn Kelley was not present for this vote.) Tom Belyea will complete the Comment later.

#### *Article U – Acceptance of Easements*

Victor Baltera presented Article U and noted that it is a perennial Article. He recommended that the Town authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept grants of easements for specific purposes for a period through 4/30/2017. AdCom members approved this Article by a vote of 11-0. (Eryn Kelley was not present for this vote.)

#### *Budget - Vote*

Tom Pyles noted that the Board of Selectmen approved the Town Budget on 2/25/2016 based on the Town Administrator's recommendations but agreed to fund the additional requests for the Animal Control Officer and the Library. This reduced the surplus from \$18,388 to approximately \$2,000. AdCom members discussed the idea of reducing capital in order to fund operating expenses. Sue Nickerson handed out a memo from Ted Alexiades prioritizing the requests for additional funding for FY 2017.

AdCom members reviewed the Budget line-by-line and discussed possible changes. They agreed to restore the following additional requests for funding that were eliminated in the Town Administrator's most recent budget:

- Town Accountant / Information Technology
  - Part-Time IT Position - \$28,668
  - GIS Consultant - \$9,360
- Animal Control
  - Additional Part-Time ACO - \$4,064
  - Additional Overtime - \$4,387
  - Training and Uniform Allowance - \$1,000
- Health Department
  - R&M, Certifications, and Immunization Clinics - \$3,450
- Library
  - Five Additional Sundays - \$7,000

This resulted in increased expenses of \$57,929. AdCom members agreed to defer half of the Town Hall painting cost on the FY 2017 Capital Budget, and this resulted in a Town Budget expense reduction of \$53,482. The surplus on the TA's budget was \$18,388. With the changes listed above, the net surplus was \$13,941. AdCom members approved the amended amounts for specific line items by a vote of 12-0-0. They also voted separately on the School Department Payroll and all Employee Benefit line items, for which Victor Baltera recused himself, and approved them by a vote of 11-0-1. AdCom members approved the Town Budget as amended by a vote of 12-0-0.

#### *Miscellaneous Items*

Tom Pyles requested that liaisons forward "final" Articles to Lucy Hancock for review and editing (if necessary). Lucy noted that she will work with the liaisons regarding any changes and will forward the reviewed Articles to Tom for approval. Then she will submit them to the Assistant Town Administrator for inclusion in the Warrant. Lucy will add two columns to the WASS, one to record receipt of final Articles and one to record submission of Articles to the Assistant TA.

Tom Pyles spoke briefly about interaction with Aquarion Water Company. Per the advice of Town Counsel and the Board of Selectmen, AdCom members cannot communicate with Aquarion personnel about matters discussed in executive session, and it is preferable that AdCom members not communicate with Aquarion personnel at all. If AdCom members do communicate with Aquarion personnel about matters not

discussed in executive session, Aquarion's lawyers cannot participate in the conversation. Jim Sharkansky asked if he, as a private citizen, could talk with Aquarion about issues, excluding information discussed in executive sessions. Tom Belyea commented that private one-to-one conversations with Aquarion could be misconstrued or misquoted, so it would be wise to avoid any conversations with Aquarion. We don't know if Aquarion views us as citizens or AdCom members. Eric Haskell commented that executive session material must remain private for legal and practical reasons, but we need to hear from all sides of an issue in order to make informed decisions. Tom Pyles advised AdCom members to submit Aquarion related questions to Jim Taylor (Article P liaison) instead of contacting Aquarion.

Tom Pyles noted that the AdCom folders contained two letters regarding the Solar Panels at the Landfill, a letter From Edna English concerning the purchase of the Water Company, two documents from James Claypoole with proposed changes to the text for Article FF (Town Administrator Special Act), and several documents from Liza O'Reilly concerning Chapter 70 funding. Liza was present at the meeting and explained the documents. She is requesting that the Board of Selectmen and the Advisory Committee consider the School Committee resolution on Chapter 70 funding. Tom suggested that the Education Subcommittee confer with the BOS on the possibility of a united front on this issue.

Tom Pyles gave a preview of the agenda for the 3/3 AdCom meeting. He announced that the Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant will sponsor a forum at 7:30 PM on 3/2 regarding the Solar Panels at the Landfill.

*Matters Not Anticipated within 48 Hours:* None

*Adjournment*

The meeting was adjourned at 10:07 PM by a vote of 12-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lucy N. Hancock  
Secretary

List of Documents Distributed at this Meeting:

Agenda for AdCom Meeting of 3/1/2016

Warrant Article Status Summary dated 2/29/2016

Memo dated 2/29/2016 from Town Administrator regarding FY2017 Budget - New Funding Requests (handed out by Sue Nickerson)

Article KK – Disposition of Property: Selectmen's Parcel

Article H – Transfer from the Stabilization Fund

Article I – Transfer from the Meals Tax Stabilization Fund

Article U – Acceptance of Easements

Article FF – "Red lined" version from James Claypoole

Article FF – "Clean" version with changes from James Claypoole

Memo from Liza O'Reilly regarding Chapter 70 Resolution

Massachusetts School & District Profiles - 2014 Chapter 70 Foundation Budget and Net School Spending - (from Liza O'Reilly)

Spreadsheet showing Chapter 70 Aid and Charges (from Liza O'Reilly)

Chapter 70 Resolution Voted Unanimously by Hingham School Committee, February 22, 2016 (from Liza O'Reilly)

Letter from Edna English regarding the purchase of the Water Company

Letter from Marty DeMatteo regarding Article LL (Solar Panels at the Landfill)

Letter from Ridgewood Crossing Condominium Association Trustees regarding Article LL (Solar Panels at the Landfill)