

**Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
January 31, 2023
Hingham Town Hall, South Hearing Room**

In Attendance: Chair George Danis, Tina Sherwood, Davalene Cooper, Andrew McElaney, Caitlyn Kirk, Lyndsey Kruzer, Brenda Black, Alan Macdonald, Carol Tully, Brian Stack, Sarah Melia, Kathy Curley

Absent: Nancy MacDonald,

Participating Remotely: Jason Price, Joe Griffin,

Call Meeting to Order: Chair Danis called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and read the following statement:

“This meeting is being held remotely as an alternate means of public access pursuant to an Order issued by the Governor of Massachusetts dated March 12, 2020 Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. You are hereby advised that this meeting and all communications during this meeting may be recorded by the Town of Hingham in accordance with the Open Meeting Law. If any participant wishes to record this meeting, please notify the Chairman at the start of the meeting in accordance with M.G.L. c. 30A, § 20(f) so that the chair may inform all other participants of said recording.”

Comments from the public on Items not on the Agenda

There were no comments.

Warrant Articles: Hearing and possible vote on the following Articles:

N: CPC (Chair Julie Strehle and D. Cooper)

The Article begins with general information about the Community Preservation Act, where the money comes from and the grant process. The debt payments are not voted at TM because we voted them when we approved the project.

CPC Administrative Fund has historically been recommended at \$20,000 and is raised to \$50,000 this year. There is record keeping that requires staff assistance to keep track of the money and the projects. There are also legal expenses. Town Counsel was present at several meetings to review projects and whether they met CPC requirements. Any money from this fund that is not used would be returned to the CPC.

HAHT Opportunity Fund was recommended at \$735,000. The comment explains the Housing Trust, the Master Plan and the goals for affordable housing being developed. Many times, in the real estate market, it's important to be able to respond quickly to an opportunity when it arises.

Scotland Street House Exterior was recommended at \$15,592. The house was purchased with CPA funds so CPC funds can be used to renovate and restore it. The rent does not cover the maintenance or restoration for this facility. This money will be used for materials and the Quincy Housing Authority will contribute the labor.

Scotland Street Garage Exterior was recommended at \$12,964. A notice was received from the insurance company stating they will not insure the property until the garage roof and the trim on the house is replaced.

Scotland Street Boiler Replacement was recommended at \$7,727. The boiler is in danger of failing. It is an oil burner. One of the CPC members raised the question of whether or not the Town should invest in fossil fuel technology. The applicant is responsible for this request– it is not up to the CPC to decide what goes into the house. The CPC does not have anything in its application forms at this time that expect projects to have a net zero energy requirement.

Thaxter Street Fire Door Hold-Open System was recommended at \$40,535. This was a request last year also. The fire doors are very heavy and at times, the doors have been propped open. CPC's concern is to protect the building. Residents have been asked not to prop the doors open but there has not been 100% compliance. This new system is a magnetic system and a fire alarm activates it and will shut the doors. This project meets the statute because it is focused on preserving the building. The Fire Department supports this project.

Cronin Basketball Court Replacement was recommended at \$178,945. This was requested last year but was not funded. This is a grant to fully reconstruct the basketball court, which is now beyond its useful life.

Pickleball Feasibility Study & Design was recommended at \$55,500. Initially there was a thought to do the design and build at the same time, but the project was split because there is time required to bring in an expert to determine the number of courts and find the right location. This project will include feasibility and design. The current goal is a minimum of 6 or more courts.

HPL Newspaper Digitization was recommended at \$21,000. This is a grant that would digitize Hingham newspapers since 1827 and allow anyone, anywhere in the world to access Hingham's newspapers., subject to copyright limitations in certain cases.

Tree & Park Barn Painting & Restoration was recommended at \$93,000. This is a historic building and is important in Hingham's history. It is owned by the Town and leased to a tenant. The building is in great need of restoration.

Hingham Girl Scout House ADA was recommended at \$109,000. The Girl Scout house is a publicly accessed building with a long history as the first Girl Scout house built in New England. In 2015 there was an ADA complaint and a wheelchair ramp was created. The floor inside the house is uneven and the bathroom is up four stairs, and parts of the kitchen that are not accessible. This plan would create an accessible bathroom and update the floor and the kitchen.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article N and the 11 Community Preservation Recommendations for Town Meeting. This article was voted unanimously 13-0.

A: Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund (K. Curley)

The amount of money in the Hannah Lincoln Whiting Fund is \$16,292.75. \$15,000 is held in principal and is not available for disbursement. There was no disbursement in 2022. Laura Boyle has been re-elected to be in charge of the income distribution for this fund.

A motion was made a seconded to approve Article A which was voted unanimously 13-0.

G: Transfer from the Stabilization Fund (L. Kruzer)

The Stabilization Fund has a balance of approximately \$2.02 million as of 12/31/22 and contains premiums related to the issuance of excluded debt bonds for multiple school capital projects approved in prior fiscal years. These bond premiums were transferred into the Stabilization Fund at two previous Town Meetings, to be used to offset the bonds' future debt service costs. When these premiums were deposited into the fund, they were considered general revenue that could be used for any lawful purpose. However, that statute has changed and now the fund must be used to offset interest paid in future years on the original excluded debt.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article G, which was voted unanimously 13-0.

J: Department of Elder Services Revolving Fund (C. Tully)

This Article limits the amount that can be spent by the Elder Services Revolving Fund for FY24 to \$80,000. The Article is consistent with the budget that has been provided.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article J, which was voted unanimously 13-0.

S: Sale of 32 Rockwood Road (C. Kirk)

The town has owned the property since 1990 with the final judgment in 2003. Both the Affordable Housing Trust and the Conservation Commission looked at the property and determined it was not buildable, due to the inability to build a wastewater disposal system. The building department would like to deposit the proceeds from this sale into a new Capital Stabilization Fund, being proposed as Article Q. If Article Q does not pass, this money would go into the general fund.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article S, which was voted unanimously 13-0.

Warrant Articles: Vote

C: Reports of Various Town Committees (L. Kruzer)

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article C, which was voted unanimously 13-0.

I: Building Department Revolving Fund (J. Griffin)

A motion was made and seconded to approve Article I, which was voted unanimously 13-0.

Liaison Reports:

CAPC (B. Black)

CAPC completed the draft of the Climate Action Plan and should be posted by the end of the week. The committee members will be presenting the plan to the committees from which they were appointed, seeking their buy in for the parts of the plan that fall in each group's mandate and will be presenting the full plan to the Select Board for adoption.

ACES (G. Danis)

The School Budget hearings continue and there will be a meeting on 2/1/23. All of the presentations are on the School Committee's website. The AdCom will have the School Committee and School

Administration who will do a presentation at the AdCom meeting on 2/7/23. On 2/16 the School Committee will do a presentation to the Select Board. The SC will present two budgets; a balanced budget and a level services budget. We will listen to the presentations and ask questions, but will not take a vote as the Select Board will not have voted. AdCom is asked to review the online materials before next week's meeting.

The School Committee has asked Capital Outlay for \$2.2mm and there is currently a Capital Outlay budget of \$2.8mm. There will be Reserve Fund transfers at the AdCom 2/7/23 meeting to meet immediate School needs.

Discussion of Advisory Committee housekeeping items:

Approval of Minutes from the January 10, 17, 24 2023 AdCom meetings

The minutes from the January 10th and January 24th were deferred for vote at another meeting. A motion was made to approve the Meeting Minutes from January 17, 2023 and was unanimously approved 13-0.

Forecast meeting: February 2, 2023

Revenue is up by 3.6MM and expenses are up by 4.9MM and the deficit increased by approximately \$1.3mm. The expenses are the level services that have been submitted to this point and do not include any additional requests.

Advisory Committee's next meeting will be February 7, 2023. There is a school facilities tour scheduled for February 11, 2023 at 8am. The school budget presentation to SB/AdCom date changed to February 16--- with a possible meeting school break week.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36p.m. by roll-call vote (13-0).

Documents Distributed for this Meeting:

AdCom January 31, 2023 Meeting Agenda

**Respectfully Submitted,
Tina Sherwood
Secretary, Advisory Committee**