

Foxborough Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 4th 2015

In attendance: Tracey V, John C, Kristen P, Heidi K, Thom F, Cal C, Monica F, Susan D, Patrick M, Larry S, Larry T

Minutes

7:05PM - Meeting called to order by Tracey V

7:07PM - Larry Thomas informs the board that he needs to turn in his nomination papers to run for School Board, and thus, needs to take a sabbatical or resign from the Advisory Committee.

John Chlebek is nominated to fill the role of Vice Chair for the remainder of the session. Kristen P 1st; Heidi K 2nd. Vote is 8-0-2 to approve.

7:10PM - Votes on Notes (to accept minutes from previous meetings)

January 21st - Kristen P 1st, Larry T 2nd 8-0-2 to accept

February 11th - Larry T 1st, John C 2nd 8-0-2 to accept

February 18th - Cal C 1st, Larry T 2nd 6-0-4 to accept

7:15PM - Fire Contract

Bill K: This is the most productive negotiation process I've experienced in my 30 years. All parties were able to listen and there was an elevated sense of organization.

Major points to address regarded the day-to-day challenges due to escalation and organization

Tracey: Can you explain Shift Officers vs Shift Fire Fighters?

Chief: Foxborough's strength is that its medical staff are fire fighters. But reduction of staffing from 7 to 6 is stressful when supporting 2 ALS ambulances. There is @ 90 minute minimum where the team is away from the community on any one call. If there are 2 calls, only 2 personnel are left to fight a fire. What we want is for there to be 7 on a shift all the time. We want a Captain on that shift as well. As it is now, everyone wears multiple hats. We still have to do inspections, training and assorted special projects with this minimum staffing level.

Capt. Treannie: 7 to 6 is the absolute minimum staffing.

Larry S.: What is Day Staff?

Chief: They do administrative duties. Deputy Chief of Ops does more of operations than he should.

He should be doing more budgeting, should be more in pre-planning in the community.

Larry S.: Do Shift Officers still go?

Capt. Treannie: Yes and No. The 7th person can do admin work.

Bill K: Every officer is a working officer. Running so thin can lead to slippage in training, administration and technology. They still have to be responsive to the rest of the town on Game Days.

Heidi K: How do these #s match with other towns?

Chief: Studies say that Foxborough should go to 8 personnel based on growth + Stadium. We're only looking for 1 new person, given all that has been described here. The fire Dept hasn't grown organizationally.

Capt. Treannie: Mitigations during the financial downturn didn't allow us to reach the 8 that was recommended when the stadium was built.

John C: How are your metrics for comparison?

Chief: The Stadium has only 8 weeks w/out weekend events (right now). This is a start in addressing these needs.

Bill K: At the end of the day: "How do we pay for it?"

Chief: We're proud of the work we do, and we can see the direction clearly for a stronger force; but we are still using non-electronic codebooks; there's not enough staff or time for inspections.

Larry T: Randy, when do the mitigation funds run out?

Randy S: Fiscal 2017

Thom F: To what extent is there crossover w/Building Inspections?

Chief: That does occur, but the info is not updated timely, there is no centralized database.

Bill K: The outline for how the new staffing would look is thus:

The new Admin Captain and Deputy Chief would have their own duties – the Admin Capt would focus more on technology, training and budgets. There would also be the creation of a Lt position.

Heidi K: Could it be a non-Fire Fighter?

Chief: In an emergency, certain roles need to be met – such as a safety officer on site.

Heidi K: What is the ratio of hours?

Bill K: It's a 2-for-1 value. In an emergency call, all-hands-on-deck, now you have additional staff.

Chief: It's also a great way to groom talent in-house.

Larry S: Do promotions happen internally?

Capt Treannie: This has been the history.

Chief: We are looking to add to administration, not primarily suppression.

Capt Treannie: Everyone has some administrative duties; we are multidimensional. But routine calls can eat into that administrative time and some things get delayed..

Randy S: The cost for the re-org is \$199K. \$345K over 2 years. The funding comes from Ambulance receipts.

Bill K: Failsafes were built into the contract, should ambulance receipts decline.

Randy S: If there is a material change, legal, financial: there is cooperation with the department to still manage within the budgeted revenue. If ambulance receipts decline by 20%, we will revisit funding.

Tracey V: Is this typical?

Randy: NOOOO! This is a great negotiation...for both parties.

Heidi K: Where were ambulance receipts going before?

Randy S: To the Discretionary Fund. Nothing can happen to them until they are appropriated ay Town Meeting. (Fire Operations budget). The fund was set up to replace capital items: i.e. trucks and equipment.

Bill K: Ambulance Tech Perfect payment. This service provides a quality control evaluation after every call. Now a 3rd party is rating our responding personnel. Our EMTs wanted recognition for 97% or better rating on responses. Now there is a bonus attached to this.

Randy S: It is in all of our interest to incentivize this.

Bill K: An added benefit may result in a lowered overall insurance rate.

Larry S: Can we vote on this Warrant Article tonight? I make a motion that we accept Article 7.

Larry T: I second.

VOTE: 10 – 0 – 1 Article passes.

8:12PM - Safety Dispatchers Contract

Bill K: This was dormant for a year. The town used Labor Counsel.

Mary Beth: The 1st agreement had been under the Bylaw. This contract is set for a 1 year trial.

We were able to keep most of the Management's rights. It is an amiable contract and mirrors the Bylaws.

Tracey V: 8 Full Time + 1 Part time, under supervision?

Mary Beth: We introduced perfect metrics:

We waived agency fee dues / if not in contract.

Union and Chief worked together to schedule coverage.

Compensation increased 2% as equal to other town employees. Step increases to take effect on last day of fiscal 2015 so as to be valid for fiscal 2016.

A side letter was attached to clarify the new hire/Steps.

Tracey V: Where did the money come from?

Randy S: "Free Cash"

Kristen P: Which 'management rights' were retained?

Mary Beth: Those that are usually assumed have now been made explicit due to arbitration threats.

Bill K: They used to be general items; now they have been specified.

Mary Beth: In a first contract, if you give them up now, you have to pay to get them back later.

8:40PM - Planning Board (Sharon Wason)

OSD - 1st general bylaw: A subdivision can subdivide to shorten road or frontage.

It allows for a plan of overlay districts to promote efficient design.

REDUCE lot sizes required for subdivision from 7.5 acres to no minimum

This offers a different alternative to 40B.

Approval by the Planning Board; now goes to Town Meeting.

Tracey V: How big can they be now?

Sharon W: No minimum. This can free up some smaller lots, yet still preserve the percentage of set-aside area.

Heidi K: Why would there be opposition to this?

Sharon W: It takes land off the tax rolls. The Conservation Commission is stretched thin and is not as good a steward of these public lands. We would rather they stay on the tax rolls and remain privately cared for.

Sue D: Does this mean you can put more houses on a parcel?

Sharon W: No, a developer submits a number of lots for a parcel. Planning Board sends back a request to create more open space, by changing the frontage or the lot sizes. The number of lots doesn't change, thus it is concentration neutral. Surveys have shown that house values increase in subdivisions where there is a dedication to open space.

Patrick M: Who is the Homeowners Association accountable to?

Sharon W: The town can seek remediation for lapses.

Larry T: How small/concentrated can these subdivisions be?

Sharon W: They should still appear as belonging to the surrounding developments.

FLOOD PLAIN

Larry T: Does this change the designation for any properties?

Sharon W: No changes. Bill Gasparra looked into this very carefully and he has given his approval.

ROAD ACCEPTANCES

Sue D: What does it mean to 'accept' a road?

Sharon W: It means the town takes control of its care in perpetuity. It gains title upon all construction has been completed and it has passed all inspections.

9:05PM

Tracey explained that she had met with Bill K about the receipts issue with Michael Johns. (Warrant Article #13 – Unpaid Bills). Bill K will meet with Mr. Johns and has assured us that it shall not happen again.

Further discussion regarding potential Water & Sewer articles.

9:30pm

Kristin motioned for adjournment. Seconded by Heidi. All in favor.

Minutes approved by Vote of the Advisory Committee.

Date of Meeting: March 11, 2015

Tracey Vasile

Signature of Chairperson