

**Advisory Committee  
Meeting #25  
February 24, 2010**

Peter Cory, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Those present included Judi Donnelly, Virginia Ferko, Jack Haley, Rick Hill, Kathy Macdonald, Barbara McMahon, Maura Murphy, Rich Page, Caren Parker, Derek Redgate, Steve Simons, Steve Sykes, Marc Taylor and Jason Whittet.

**2010 ATM Warrant Public Hearing.** The public hearing opened at 7 p.m. Mr. Cory welcomed those present and reviewed the purpose of the hearing, and Advisory's role, as well as its duties and responsibilities. Comments on the Warrant were limited to Article 8, the omnibus budget, specifically the School Department budget. The majority of those who spoke encouraged the Advisory Committee to vote favorable action on the School Committee's recently voted budget. Issues presented by the speakers included:

- School budget is consistently a target for significant reductions each year in spite of enrollment increases
- Concern about the erosion of Wellesley's reputation as a top rate program; standard of excellence the schools have built over the years is eroding which will make it increasingly difficult to recruit quality teachers;
- Concern with the adverse impact of larger class sizes on student learning
- Continuously cutting programs will result in the degradation in the public school system
- Need/desire to continue to maintain the standard of excellence for which Wellesley is renowned, which results in maintenance of property values, and making Wellesley an attractive place to live.
- Wellesley public school system is an integral part of the fabric of Wellesley and contributes to the character of the Town
- Erosion of the Schools' budget results in a decline in extra curricular programs with an increasing school enrollment, which results in less student involvement in athletics, drama, and various clubs.
- Concern with the continually mounting fees assessed to families for participating in extra curricular activities – another ways to fund these types of activities must be found
- Concern that reductions in the creative arts are detrimental to students who make connections through these programs
- Town should consider using its reserves to fund any gap in the School budget
- Town must look at long term solution to the erosion of services, resulting from the continued enforcement of Proposition 2 ½

**CPC Article 21, Motion 1 Fuller Brook Park Project.** CPC Chair Jack Morgan and NRC Chair Neil Seaborn joined the meeting to discuss Article 21, Motion 1, the appropriation of \$250,000 for Phase I of the rehabilitation of the Fuller Brook Park Project. The \$250,000 will cover the cost of conceptual design and schematics, arborist treatment plan, maintenance guidelines, surveys, and the assistance of a part time project manager. The CPC will be allocating some funds for expenditure prior to July 1. Mr. Morgan explained that since the CPA fund has a \$3 million balance, funds can be made available to begin work in FY10. The project schedule was reviewed. It is planned that funding for Phase II, the permitting process, will be requested at the 2011 Annual Town Meeting. Due to the size and complexity of the project, the permitting process is expected to take approximately two years, and the request for the actual rehabilitation work will be made at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Seaborn explained that the Fuller Brook Park Coordinating Committee was formed to assist the Town with the development and implementation of the project. The Committee consists of representatives from the NRC, Selectmen, Public Works, Historical Commission, Trails Committee, School Committee and CPC and abutters. Representatives of this committee provide input on behalf of their board and contribute technical expertise and guidance in the development and implementation of the plan.

**Human Resources (HR) Board – Article 6.** HR Vice Chair Phil Laughlin and Director Susan Adler came before the Committee to discuss four motions under Article 6 that recommend changes to Town Bylaws 30 and 31.

Mr. Laughlin explained the first motion changes the requirement that the Town reviews position descriptions every five years. The Human Resources Board wants to change the standard so that position descriptions are reviewed on an as-needed basis. The second change excludes union groups in the language relating to the HR Board's role in setting pay levels, since pay levels for union positions are determined through the bargaining process and not solely by the HR Board. The third change involves setting the same salary decision process for external hires and internal promotions for Series 50 and above. Internal hires presently receive what has, over time, become an automatic 15 percent cap when being promoted into a position, rather as originally intended, based on the circumstances. The HR Board believes that when a qualified internal candidate is selected, the salary offer should reflect the market rate for the position, as it would for an external candidate. The HR Board considers the midpoint of the range as a more appropriate determinant. The fourth motion changes the accrual provision for vacation time so that part time, benefit-eligible employees who are hired as full time employees will receive the pro-rated full time equivalent for vacation benefits.

**Board of Selectmen and Human Resources Board – Articles 5 and 29.** The Committee was joined by Selectmen Vice Chair Gig Babson, Executive Director Hans Larsen, Police Chief Terrance Cunningham, and Deputy Police Chief William Brooks to discuss a number of changes to the patrolmen and superior officers' union contracts that has resulted in a proposed two year contract extension.

Article 29 requests Town Meeting approval to remove uniformed police department personnel from the provisions of the Civil Service laws. The Police Chief feels that removal from Civil Service provisions will provide the Town with more control over personnel choices by allowing the Town to set its own standards and requirements for hiring and promoting officers. It would provide for a broader candidate pool, and more flexibility in developing entrance and promotional exams reflecting the specific needs of the Town. The Police Officers and Superior officers unions have both concurred with Wellesley's removal from the Civil Service program. This is part of their negotiated contract extension.

Article 5, Motion 1 requests acceptance of an extension of the Police and Superior Officers union contracts which provides for agreement to remove Wellesley Police from the provisions of Civil Service; sets a fixed dollar reimbursement program for non-Quinn Bill eligible officers as incentive to pursue higher education – officers presently under Quinn Bill will remain under those provisions with the Town covering the State's portion of the reimbursement which has been discontinued; and pay adjustments for FY12 set at 0% and FY13 at 1%. Chief Cunningham reviewed the new fixed dollar program and incentives for that program, as well as the financial implications. He reviewed the overall goals of this contract extension including maintenance of an educated police force, competitive pay levels, additional flexibility with regard to hiring and promotions, and better cost control.

**494 Washington Street Acquisition.** Selectman Terry Tsagaris came before the Committee to discuss the proposed acquisition of the property at 494 Washington Street in the amount of \$1,270,000. She reviewed the rationale for purchasing the property noting that it is an ideal location due to its adjacency to other municipal buildings and the proposed site of the Senior Center. If the Town does not purchase the property, there is a potential for a multi-unit housing development. The Selectmen will seek approval and appropriation for the property at the Special Town Meeting within the Annual Town Meeting this spring. Funding will be through short term borrowing.

**Adjournment.** Upon a motion made by Ms. Macdonald and seconded by Mr. Sykes, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adeline G. Doherty  
Administrative Assistant