

**Advisory Committee
Meeting #6
October 7, 2009**

Peter Cory, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. Those present included Judi Donnelly, Virginia Ferko, Rick Hill, Kathy Macdonald, Barbara McMahon, Maura Murphy, Rich Page, Caren Parker, Derek Redgate, Steve Simons, Steve Sykes, and Marc Taylor. Absent: Jason Whittet

Citizens Speak. No one was present.

Minutes. Upon a motion made by Ms. Parker and seconded by Mr. Simons, the minutes of the Committee's meeting on September 30, 2009 were unanimously approved as written. Upon a motion made by Ms. Macdonald and seconded by Ms. Donnelly, the minutes of the Committee's meeting on September 23, 2009 were unanimously approved as amended.

Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles. Mr. Cory distributed and reviewed the list of Warrant articles for the 2009 Special Town Meeting. He provided a brief summary of each article expected to be moved at Special Town Meeting. Assignments were made for article write-ups. Mr. Cory noted that the Selectmen have not yet voted to approve the Warrant. It is expected that action will be taken on Friday, October 9th.

Selectmen Article 4. Mr. Cory referred to Article 4 of the Warrant which would enable the amendment of Article 8 of the 2009 Annual Town Meeting, the omnibus budget. He explained that the Selectmen have included such an article in the event that there are significant reductions made in the Town's receipt of State aid for FY10. This would enable the Town to make emergency spending reductions or liberate free cash to meet any significant deficit in State funding.

The schedule for submitting write-ups was reviewed.

Planning Board Articles 5, 6, and 7. Mr. Sykes reported he and Ms. Ferko met with Planning Department staff to discuss all three Planning Board articles. With regard to the amendment for pre-existing nonconforming lots, Mr. Sykes relayed to the Planning staff that Advisory is concerned that the amendment does not include a definition of *small scale alterations or changes* to a property. Planning acknowledged that it does not have such a definition. Mr. Sykes also noted that Town Counsel has not as yet rendered an opinion on the Article as currently worded. Pending the Planning Board's decision on whether they plan to proceed with this motion, Mr. Sykes will discuss with Town Counsel the implications of non-action or delay of this bylaw amendment.

Ms. Ferko reported she spoke with Planning staff about the retaining wall bylaw amendment article. She distributed a revised version of the bylaw amendment, which has changed substantially since the Planning Board's presentation to Advisory. The amended version prohibits walls over 30 feet high, and there is a rigorous special permit process that will be required for wall requests over 30 feet high, or if the wall is within the 10 foot setback. Some concerns with this proposal include that there may be unintended consequences if the amendment passes, including allowing very steep gradients within property boundaries in lieu of going through the permit process for constructing a wall; and that the amendment does not address regulating a combination of wall and fence installations.

No additional information has been provided on Article 6 concerning the amendment of the definition of trailer and vehicles signs, although there was discussion of issues relating to enforcement of the proposed bylaw.

Meals Tax Option. The Committee reviewed a draft writeup concerning the local option meals excise. Members were asked to provide Ms. Macdonald with any additional comments.

Public Hearing on Warrant. Mr. Cory reminded the Committee that the Advisory Public Hearing on the Special Town Meeting Warrant is scheduled for Thursday, October 15, 2009 at 7 pm in Great Hall, and discussed logistics.

Advisory Report to STM. The Committee discussed printing costs and schedules for publication of the Advisory Report.

Liaison Reports

Schools. Ms. McMahan reported:

- The School Committee will not be proceeding with any articles at Special Town Meeting.
- Preliminary enrollment figures at the High School and elementary schools are lower than projected last year.
- The School Committee will not be requesting an appropriation for additional classroom conversion space at the High School.
- The School Committee plans to form a School Building Committee (SBC) for the Middle School renovations project. The structure of the SBC requires inclusion of an Advisory Committee member. Anyone interested in serving on this committee should contact Ms. McMahan or Mr. Cory.

Human Resources. Ms. Donnelly reported that the Human Resources Board discussed the status of Group 40, and Series 50 and 60 employees. The Board also discussed how the merit pay plan funds should be handled in future years: through a separate pool or inclusion with board budgets.

Selectmen. Mr. Cory noted that an earlier ban on automobile parking on Route 16 adjacent to the tennis courts and Hunnewell and Reidy fields during the morning commute had been lifted, and numerous cars that were parking in this area during the day appear to be those of WHS students. The Board of Selectmen discussed this issue at their meeting on October 6. The morning commute parking ban had originally been lifted during the summer months to provide early morning parking for users of the tennis courts, and the Board determined not to reinstate the ban at this time. Mr. Cory noted that costly alterations had been made to the tennis court parking lot to accommodate WHS teacher parking, and that additional buses had been made available to WHS students, in part based on the assumption that on-street parking in this area would not be available (because of the morning commute parking ban previously in effect).

MLP/DPW. Mr. Hill confirmed that the MLP/DPW capital spending plans will be presented to Advisory on October 28, and noted the potential for a large increase in capital spending requests given previous project deferrals.

Capital Projects. It was suggested by Ms. Parker that when boards present their capital budgets, all planned capital projects for the fiscal year should be presented,

regardless of their anticipated funding source, such as the CPC. Liaisons were asked to convey this request to their respective boards.

Adjournment. Upon a motion made by Ms. McMahon and seconded by Ms. Donnelly, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Adeline G. Doherty
Administrative Assistant