

Approved Aug. 18, 2021

**Advisory Committee Meeting  
Zoom Video Conference  
Wednesday, July 7, 2021, 6:30 p.m.**

Those present from Advisory Committee included Julie Bryan, Tom Cunningham, Jennifer Fallon, Neal Goins, John Lanza, Jeff Levitan, Bill Maynard, Corrine Monahan, Patti Quigley, and Doug Smith.

Julie Bryan called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**6:30 p.m. Citizen Speak**

There was no one present for Citizen Speak.

**6:30 p.m. FY21 Year-end Transfers**

Meghan Jop, Executive Director; Sheryl Strother, Finance Director; Tom Ulfelder, Chair, Select Board (SB); Rick DeLorie, Fire Chief, Fire Department; and Jeffrey Peterson, Assistant Fire Chief, Fire Department were present.

An explanation of the year-end transfer process and procedures were reviewed. The FY21 transfer request is for fire salaries and for legal costs. The deficit in fire salaries is \$158,700 and is due to COVID, other illness and job vacancies. The transfer is coming from the police budget as there were vacancies in the police department and training was limited due to COVID.

A question was asked if over-time was paid to cover vacancies and illnesses.

- Yes, time and a half is paid New hires are covered in this year's budget as well as one vacancy that is anticipated to be filled in August.

Julie Bryan made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to transfer \$158,700 from police salaries to fire salaries.

**Roll call vote:**

Bill Maynard – yes

Patti Quigley – absent

John Lanza – yes

Mary Scanlon – absent

Deed McCollum - absent

Jennifer Fallon – yes

Jeff Levitan – yes

Corinne Monahan - yes

Shawn Baker – absent

Doug Smith – yes

Jake Erhard – absent

Tom Cunningham – yes

Neal Goins – absent

Julie Bryan – yes

Motion was approved 8 to 0.

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An explanation of the increase in legal expenses was presented. There was an increase in the number of legal opinions related to COVID. Through October 2020, costs attributed to COVID were covered with CARES funds. Other legal expenses were costs associated with Williams Street, work with Algonquin Gas and the NRC; grievances and settlements at the schools and the municipal level. It is anticipated that these costs will be on-going and a special appropriation for on-going legal costs will be requested at Special Town Meeting in October.

The legal costs are inclusive of labor counsel, general counsel, special counsel, and bond counsel.

A question was asked as to the purpose of multiple counsel and when do we know we are engaging them.

- Extra expenses are for on-going litigation and COVID related issues and this is what really drove the expenses. Yes, CARES money covers COVID expenses but the funds do run out.

A question was asked as to why the town is not being reimbursed on Williams Street and by Algonquin Gas.

- There is a density bonus for Williams Street but funds expenses on capital projects and won't cover additional costs. Algonquin pays remediation and generally this goes to land disturbing and not to legal costs.

A question was asked if the ratio of counsel and litigation the same or is the litigation side growing.

- No, not really.

A suggestion was made about exploring an alternate fee structure to provide some certainty about legal costs going forward. And it was suggested that this be done before coming to STM with a request for a special appropriation for legal costs so that we are using resources efficiently.

- This has not been done yet. For the last 2 years costs have increased due to COVID.

A comment was made that the decisions on the use of CARES funds was made throughout the year. The schools will be turning back money to the town.

Julie Bryan made and Jeff Levitan seconded a motion for an interdepartmental transfer of \$150,000 to legal from FMD.

**Roll call vote:**

Bill Maynard – yes

Patti Quigley – absent

John Lanza – yes

Mary Scanlon – yes

Deed McCollum – absent

Jennifer Fallon – yes

Jeff Levitan – yes

Corinne Monahan - yes

Shawn Baker – absent

Doug Smith – yes

Jake Erhard – absent

Tom Cunningham – yes

Neal Goins – absent

Motion was approved 8 to 0.

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**Administrative Matters/Liaison Reports/Minutes**

**Minutes Approval**

Jenn Fallon made and Mary Scanlon seconded a motion to approve the June 9, 2021 minutes.

**Roll call vote:**

Bill Maynard – yes  
Patti Quigley – absent  
John Lanza – yes  
Mary Scanlon - yes  
Deed McCollum - absent  
Jennifer Fallon – yes  
Jeff Levitan – yes  
Corinne Monahan - yes  
Shawn Baker – absent  
Doug Smith – absent  
Jake Erhard – absent  
Tom Cunningham – yes  
Neal Goins - yes

June 9, 2021 minutes were approved 8 to 0.

**Liaison Reports**

Jenn Fallon to follow up with School Committee regarding a video that was to be sent out.

**Adjourn**

John Lanza made and Corinne Monahan seconded a motion to adjourn.

**Roll call vote**

Bill Maynard - yes  
Patti Quigley – absent  
John Lanza – no  
Mary Scanlon - yes  
Deed McCollum - absent  
Jennifer Fallon – yes  
Jeff Levitan - yes  
Corinne Monahan - yes  
Shawn Baker – absent  
Doug Smith – absent  
Jake Erhard – absent  
Tom Cunningham – yes  
Neal Goins – yes

Meeting was adjourned (7 to 1) at 7:05 p.m.