



**OFFICE OF THE
Advisory Board
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April 10, 2017

Present: Amie Stevens, Harold Simmons, Christine Muir, Dana Metzler
Absence: Ron Mikol, Pam Crocker
Also present: Tracey Hutton

Christine opened the meeting at 7:05.

- The agenda for tonight is to finish reviewing the warrant articles and approve a few transfers.
- The first warrant article is article 29: write-in candidate eligibility. The candidate must be verified as a registered voter to qualify. The Town Clerk was in attendance, and noted that in 2013 we had an issue which is when this came up. She noted that MA General Law 41-1 notes that the candidates must be a registered voter.
 - In 2013 we had a write-in candidate for one of the trustee positions and they weren't registered to vote. She noted that you have to be restored to vote to pull papers which means they need to be registered to be a write-in candidate. The best solution would be to add it to our town bylaws via a warrant article.
 - Christine asked what positions you don't need to be registered? The town clerk noted that appointed positions are exempt.
 - The purpose of the warrant is to speed up the affirming of elections.
 - Christine asked what the drawback is to approving this. The town clerk noted that she doesn't see a drawback, it will make elections cleaner and hopefully alleviate any litigation down the road.
 - Dana asked if someone takes out nomination papers that the town clerk does certify that any candidates are registered.
 - Harold asked if the town clerk has comments on article 30 and 31
 - She noted that she has advocated for a change in election date for year. She is in support of article 31. Harold noted both articles were supported by all board members.
 - She is in support of both articles.
 - Dana noted that this year's election would still be on the Monday if approved. It would take effect during next year's election.
 - Dana moved to support article 29, Harold seconded, all approved.
- Discussion moved to article 6.
 - Charlie Lippman was in attendance to discuss the Swallow Union elementary school field renewal project.

- He is on the playground committee that has moved this forward. They would rip up the basketball court and put the playground where the court currently is.
- The old equipment from the playground will hopefully be moved to Larter.
- They have been in contact with the principal and teachers and have their support of where to place the new playground. Goal would be to have this done by next school year.
- Christine confirmed that this playground will be bigger than current playground. She also asked that the total includes all necessary landscaping etc? This was confirmed.
- Dana asked if the committee has met with Parks and Recreations.
 - Tracey confirmed this has happened.
- Dana also asked who would maintain the playground. Charlie confirmed it would be parks and recreation as it is today.
 - Tracey confirmed that she is working with Parks and Rec to have one contractor do multiple sites which should help.
- There was a question from the audience to ask if there was a bid process
 - Mr. Lippman confirmed that the bids are out and that the amount seems reasonable for the scope of work.
- A member of the audience expressed concern of the tennis courts. There is fencing that needs to be fixed that could cost \$30K.
 - She would like to see the tennis court fence included in this project if feasible.
 - Tracey confirmed that the CPC voted unanimously that they would not include the tennis courts.
 - These funds would come from the CPC open space line item.
- Harold asked if we can confirm the funds will be there by the time the project starts. That is not a given, but we are confident the funds will be there once the project is complete.
- Board confirmed that the CPC articles will be different articles.
- Christine asked how the board feels about supporting these in one motion. Dana motioned we support all CPC articles in one motion, Amie seconded. Harold was not sure how he would vote. Dana withdraws his motion, will vote next week.
- Alan Cheney confirmed that \$397,800 from the state, \$18,600 from timber, \$246,500 from CPC was what was spent last year on open space.
- Christine noted that the warrant articles did not include storm water and unpaid bills were not included in the town meeting draft. We have gone to town counsel and he suggested we to a “special town meeting warrant”. We will speak to these special warrant articles after article 3. we will suspend town meeting to do this.
 - Christine asked for a motion for special warrant article 1 to pay unpaid bills of \$4336. Dana motioned to accept, Amie seconded, all approved?
 - Article 2 is to transfer \$58K for stormwater management, Dana motioned to accept, Amie seconded, all approved.
- Next Article to vote on is Article 19.
 - Dana asked why we are doing this. Tracey confirmed this is due to the passage of the Municipal modernization act.
 - This will have minimal impact. Dana moved we support, Harold seconded, all approved.

- Article 25
 - Discussed the new regionalization agreement. This agreement is now on the town's website.
 - Dana wanted confirmation that most of the committee was to clean up the language of the original agreement, minor changes.
 - Capital expenditures are assessed based on building population, not district population. i.e. Florence Roche expenditures will be paid by Groton.
 - We have also changed the way that the town is assessed, it is not a rolling average of 5 years instead of spikes each year.
 - Dana motioned to approved, Amie seconded, all approved
- Article 26
 - Special act to appoint the park commissioners.
 - Dana had a concern of appointing v. elected. If they create policy, they should be elected?
 - Dana believe employees of these boards should report to a central group. Tracey countered that they are already creating policy.
 - Christine asked how many boards we have appointed, Tracey confirmed that the zoning board and personnel board are both appointed.
 - Harold countered that there are multiple appointed committees in the annual town report.
 - Christine asked who brought this article forward
 - Tracey confirmed it was from a discussion between herself and the chair of parks commissioners.
 - If this becomes active the recreation committee would be dissolved as they are the same members as the recreation and parks committee.
 - Christine asked why we would just dissolve recreation and keep the park committee.
 - Tracey stated that to get all the budgets etc under one authority we need to support the motion, this is the cleanest way to merge the two groups.
 - Harold and Dana expressed concern and does not see a need to merge the two committee and allow for appointing at this time.
 - Tracey confirmed that the only thing that recreation has power to control are the portable toilets at Larter field.
 - There doesn't seem to be a need for both committees.
 - Christine asked who brought this to the warrant articles.
 - Tracey confirmed that she brought this forward after a discussion with the chair of parks and recreations as a means to make the committees more efficient.
 - This article was tabled until next week.
- Article 28
 - Dana asked if most of the items in this article are covered under the planning boards purview.
 - Tracey confirms that this delegates to the roads commissioners, ensures enforcement and combines current bylaws.
 - The discussion came up would existing town resident have to pull permits to repave their existing driveway. There are exemptions in the warrant.
 - Dana moves that we support the warrant article, Harold seconded, all approved.

- Article 32
 - Closing loopholes on solar systems. Establish 3 different sizes. Adding language that specifically dictates how each one is handled. Roof systems are exempt from this.
 - Dana asked how many are coming into town. None could answer this at this point?
 - Dana asked who residents go through to get these small systems approved.
 - The small roof mounted are by right and do not need approval.
 - Anything ground mounted under the new bylaw will need a review and medium to large would require a special permit from the planning board.
 - Large systems require 2 acres etc.
 - Joan Simmons was in attendance confirmed that the bylaws address specific dimensions etc for installing solar panels etc.
 - Harold asked about the wording, i.e. they all say similar things. Shouldn't there be a differentiating factor between the sections?
 - Tracey clarified that the warrant articles are only pieces of the full bylaws. There are different zoning requirements for different systems. This will need to be explained at town meeting.
 - Christine confirmed that it is the planning boards job to ensure that the wording is correct, this is not for FINCOM to decide.
 - Dana moves that we support the changes to improve the current bylaw assuming all is correct. Christine seconded as long as the planning board vetted this. All approved.
- Article 33
 - This moves community housing bylaw from general to zoning.
 - This needs to be a zoning bylaw to be enforceable by the Commonwealth.
 - Amie makes a motion to accept this article, Harold seconded, all approved.
- Article 34
 - Temporary moratorium on commercial marijuana growing, selling , tasting etc.
 - The Town picked December of 2018 to allow time for the State regulations to catch up.
 - Amie makes a motion to approved as is, Harold seconded, all approved.
- Article 35
 - Stormwater discharge. This is an EPA requirement. Eliminated definitions that weren't in the bylaws.
 - Dana asked who enforces this. Tracey confirmed it is the planning board who enforces.
 - Dana makes a motion to support article 35, Amie seconded, all approved.
- There are 4 ballot questions, all debt exclusions.
 - Christine noted that these were voted as warrant articles and do not need additional votes.

To recap: Article 4 will probably be take no action, Article 9 will probably be take no action, Article 26 no decision.

The April 6th minutes were not ready to approve. Dana moved to approve 3/29/17 minutes, Amie seconded, all approved.

Christine noted that there was a transfer request for \$595 from reserve to electrical inspector. This is from the solar farm. This is an anomaly that probably will not be repeated. This is for the 3rd quarter of 2016. Harold moves we approve the transfer, Dana seconded, all approved.

Next meeting is Tuesday April 18th. Amie will not be in attendance.

Adjourned at 9:10.