

Hanover Advisory Committee
550 Hanover Street
Hanover, MA 02339
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Opening:

The meeting was opened at 7:00 p.m. by Chris Martin, Chairman.

Committee Attendees:

Chris Martin	Wayne Moores
Emmanuel Dockter	Brandon Freeman
Jerry O’Hearn	Sandra Hayes
Joan Port-Farwell	Angela Blanchard
Edward Hickey	

Other Attendees:

Mr. Tony Marino, Building Commissioner/Assistant Town Manager

New Member

The Advisory Committee welcomed new member Brandon Freeman.

Approval of Minutes

Sandra Hayes made a motion to accept the minutes from *December 9, 2015*. This was seconded by Jerry O’Hearn. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Discussion with Tony Marino – Forge Pond Park Maintenance etc.

Tony informed the Committee that the maintenance cost for Forge Pond Park has been added to his department’s budget for FY17 as well as Park and Recreation salaries. The Parks and Recreation Committee have been unable to cover the cost even with marketing efforts to hold various events at the park. These marketing efforts will continue; however, Tony does not expect events held to cover the total cost of maintenance for such are large parcel of land. HYAA does reserve some of its program revenue for field maintenance, and that is expected to continue. Chris Martin expressed concern that HYAA be monitored as to prevent them from over booking Forge Pond Park thus preventing fund raising events being held there. Joan Port-Farwell inquired whether or not Park and Recreation programs make a profit. Tony stated that they break even but he is looking into ways to make the programs more efficient such as decreasing the amount of busing of children required. Wayne Moores suggested changing the snack bar to a volunteer program for the Hanover High School students that are required to volunteer 10 hours per school year.

Brief discussion regarding a proposed playground at Forge Pond Park that is being put forward by a resident.

Tony informed the Committee that the town owned building on Circuit Street that previously housed Parks and Recreation (former Senior Center) will be appraised and sold. The old Salmond School and Sylvester School will also be appraised in preparation for their repurposing once the Center School addition/renovations are complete. The Committee thanked Tony for his time, and he departed at 7:41 pm.

General Discussion

Edward Hickey would like to come up with better incentives for town departments and committees to raise funds and cut costs. The Committee discussed the idea of bringing the Parks and Recreation Committee under the Town Manager structure to promote more accountability. Chris Martin stated that it is very important to go through the FY17 proposed budget very carefully to see where costs can be eliminated.

Edward Hickey explained briefly for new member Brandon Freeman the role of the Advisory Committee to make financial recommendations for the best interest of the town. Chris Martin reiterated how important it is to review each budget expenditure. A discussion was had about the proposed concept of the "Watchman of the Warrant" in order to update the residents regarding the status of approved articles from the previous year.

The Committee would like to review the stipends that some town employees receive in addition to their salaries. A list will be requested from Finance Director Janine Smith.

As discussion was had regarding having just the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee on stage at this year's Town meeting. This will free up space for other department heads to have visibility and speak with the residents. All Committee members agreed to this idea.

The following liaison assignments were given to Committee members:

Jerry O'Hearn – DPW

Brandon Freeman – Finance Dept.

Sandra Hayes & Angela Blanchard – Municipal Dept. & CPC

Edward Hickey – Fire Dept.

Joan Port-Farwell – School Dept.

Wayne Moores – Police Dept.

Emmanuel Dockter – Open Space

Update of School Dept. Budget – Joan Port-Farwell

Joan gave the Committee a brief report on the School Dept. FY17 proposed budget. Joan stated it is a well thought out, excellent budget. A breakdown of the various figures within the budget was given including student tuitions, special education, salaries, technology etc. Joan stated that 18% of Hanover's students are special needs. The school department budget makes up 65% to 70% of the town wide budget.

Next Meetings

The next scheduled meeting is on Monday, February 1st and is a joint meeting with the Board of Selectman. Further meetings on Wednesday, February 10th – Wednesday, February 24th – Wednesday, March 9th were agreed upon. Invitations will be extended to Robert Murray, Fire Chief Blanchard, Police Chief Sweeney, Victor Diniak – DPW, Thomas Raab – School Dept. and CPC to attend one of the above meeting dates.

Adjournment

Edward Hickey made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Joan Port-Farwell. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 8:49 pm.