January 23rd, 2017 Minutes

Sharon Community Center- 219 Masspoag Avenue

**Present:** Laura Nelson, Patricia-Lee Achorn, Alexander Korin, Edward Phillips, William Brack, Ira Miller, Gordon Gladstone, Hanna Switlezowski, Charles Goodman and Arnold Cohen.

1. **Review Conservation Commission Budget for FY 18 and receive input from Conservation Commission on any relevant Warrant Articles**

Gregory Meister, Conservation Commission Administrator, said that the Personnel Board voted to increase the secretary position by three steps. The salary adjustments will be retroactive as of July 1st of this fiscal year ($476). The salary increase FY 18 will be $989.71; the wetland protection fund could be used to offset costs if needed. The current budget increase is being managed within the budget or reserves. There is no change in the bottom line budget.

The Great Cedar Swamp Restoration project was presented to the biannual Atlantic White Cedar Symposium. At the Swamp they continue to raise the checked dam in the ditch and are monitoring ground water levels to assure the neighborhood is not jeopardized. Water is 2 ½ feet at the check dam now. Approximately $7,400.00 is left in the budget that will be used to continue monitoring water and vegetation. The next step would be to create a storm water culvert and fill the ditch. The initial request was to address the deterioration of the cedars; now the cedars are doing wonderful in many areas. Between the railroad and the Lake, there is healthy cedar swamp. They are working with a hydrogeologist monitoring wells and the ditch; the only safe, temporary thing would be increment. Final recommendations, two years out, would be a major capital project. The whole swamp has subsided. There are EPA requirements regarding storm water; there is mosquito control management in the plan for the swamp.

1. **Review Board of Health Budget for FY 18 and receive input from Board of Health on any relevant Warrant Articles**

Chuck Levine, Chairman of the Board of Health, and Beverly Anderson, Health Administrator, have three specific issues: The first is the graying of Sharon; the population is getting older and the Board of Health is thinking about spending increase dollars for this group to keep them in their homes longer. 23% of the head of households in Sharon are over sixty-five years old. They plan to serve an underserved group of empty nesters ages forty to sixty with drop in clinic, blood pressure checkups and influenza shots, saving them from co-payments every time they need to see a doctor. In the next two to three years the Board of Health will have some retirements and the center of attention is on how to reorganize within the current budget while serving the community effectively.

Other activities include Board of Health inspections; 75% of their activities are meeting regulatory requirements. There are two contract inspectors and Bev supplements; they could use one more just meeting current requirements for inspection and training. All. Activities where the expense is in fixed-and-uncontrollable include dumpsters, drug testing (Town truck drivers require drug testing), subsidized trash collection (per the Council on Aging). 37% of the budget is trash and dumpsters.

The budget that the Board of Health is left with is $10,700.00 for the year. The Health Revolving Fund has $40,000 in it at this time (for flu clinic nurses at $24/hr.) and they get money back from health insurance companies or Medicare for each flu shot administration. They also have a Donations Account with $8,000.000, Sharon Commons Fund and $428.00 in a Tobacco Compliance Grant that they will use shortly and Emergency Preparedness Fund.

The Health Department coordinates with Civil Defense, and Emergency Management Director, Chief Wright. The radio station, AM1630 has been upgraded. The antenna was moved to the roof of Town Hall and it was raised which significantly improved reception in the center of town as well as by Bay Road.

1. **Review Town Clerk Budget FY 18 Budget and receive input on any relevant Warrant Articles**

Marlene Chused, Town Clerk, is waiting to hear from General Code regarding the codification; a final draft should be available in February. Town Council will draft the Warrant Articles. A copy of the actual document (550 pages) will be available in the Town Clerk’s Office, online and various places in town. There are no Zoning or Bylaws; changes are in sequencing, spelling, grammatical corrections, etc. Communication of changes for Town Meeting will be in a summary format for the Warrant. Town Boards and Committees have reviewed an earlier draft. Input from the reviews assures all relevant rules and regulations are captured in the document.

Regarding elections, it has been a very busy year between elections, registrations, absentee voting, and early voting. There were twelve days of elections, with ten to twelve hour days each. The Clerk’s Office was able to utilize individuals qualified for tax work off to manage the extra load. A total of 4,200 of the 13,000 residents in Sharon voted. There will be extra costs associated with the election due to overtime hours, making the building ADA compliant and purchasing new office supplies for early voting (e.g. secure ballot boxes). Elections and registration may need a Reserve Fund transfer to cover these costs.

The Town Clerk’s office has a level funded budget except for salaries. One salary is contractual and the other is non elective. There was an increase of 2% overall and 3% on salaries. Fred Turkington, Town Manager, is the designated Information Officer for Sharon.

1. **Review Planning Board Budget and receive input on any relevant Warrant Articles**

Pat Pannone, Chairman of the Planning Board, discussed the article funding a Master Plan Consultant. The funding request includes the visioning and implementation elements of the Master Plan only. The specific dollar amount in the article is not yet available; the estimated cost will be around $125,000. The visioning element includes community outreach, implementation and establishing milestones. Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) services will be used for the discovery phase and updating currently existing plans/studies.

The estimate for a consultant is based on $200 per hour for 625 hours over a two year period. Competitive bids will be solicited through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process and a scope of work determination for a multi-disciplinary team of professionals. The language of the RFT will be discussed at the next meeting; Ted, as Finance Committee representative, can report back to this committee. A Request for Quote (RFQ) process might be a better option than an RFP.

A Master Plan permits long term planning rather than a “knee jerk” reaction to development. It is a vision for the Town over the next years.

The Finance Committee requested copies of other town’s Master Plan as an example (good, bad) and comparable town Master Plans (e.g. Canton or Foxborough).

**5. Review and approve the minutes from October 17th, 2016 and November 2nd, 2016**

**MOTION:** by Gordon Gladstone to approve the October 17th, 2016 minutes **SECONDED:** by Alexander Korin **VOTED:** 7-0-3. Laura Nelson, Charles Goodman and Patricia-Lee Achorn abstained.

**MOTION:** by Alexander Korin to approve the November 2nd, 2016 minutes **SECONDED:** by Patricia-Lee Achorn **VOTED:** 9-0-1. Arnold Cohen abstained.

**6. Other Business Not Reasonably Anticipated in 24 hours**

The Finance Committee put out an annual town report update and asked for new members to come forward if interested.

Ira Miller met with Vis Gov and everything is all set except how the schools will provide their materials.

The next Finance Committee meeting will be held on February 6th, 2017 and it will include the Selectman, Fire, Police, DPW, Water and Capital Outlay.

**7. Adjournment**

**MOTION:** by Alexander Korin to adjourn **SECONDED:** by Arnold Cohen **VOTED:** 10-0-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm.