

Minutes
Sherborn Advisory Committee
January 11, 2023

Present: Dan Sichel (Chair), Steven Tsai (Vice Chair), Wassim Bassalee, Peter Gallitano, Jane Materazzo, Nora Lynch Smith, Natalie Weare, and Mike Winters

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

Reading of meeting agenda

- FY24 Budget Review
 - Historical Commission
 - Veterans
 - Town Forest (Revolving Fund and Sale of Firewood)
 - Cemetery
 - Elder Housing (Summary and detail sheet)
 - COA (Budget and Explanation Document)
 - Recreation
 - Library
- Addition of topics not reasonably anticipated by chairperson 48 hours in advance of meeting - N/A (No addition of topics to meeting agenda)

Liaison Reports

Designation as Rural Community – Wassim Bassalee noted that the Census Bureau increased the threshold for a community to be designated as “rural” to 5,000. Accordingly, Sherborn will not be considered a rural community and that could affect grants for which the Town can qualify.

School Committee – Jane Materazzo, Steve Tsai, Mike Winters, and Dan Sichel met with Dawn Fattore to discuss school budgets and had a wide-ranging discussion. The educator contract that is being negotiated this year is the biggest unknown in the budget.

FY24 Budget Review

Dan Sichel provided a brief framing of budget issues for FY24 and looking ahead to FY25. In the current challenging environment, FY25 may possibly need a Prop 2.5 override.

Historical Commission

Budget down from last year.

Town Forest

Not requesting funds from the Town’s operating budget. The revolving fund from the sale of firewood covers expenses for anticipated projects.

Cemetery (8 cemeteries in Town)

The maintenance contract goes out to bid every 3 years. There is an increase for FY24 but will stay steady for the next 3 years. The contractor does mowing, removing branches, leaves, etc. Most of the cemetery's income comes from lot sales. \$3000 of earnings from the Perpetual Care Fund will be turned over to the Town to off-set this year's budget.

Elder Housing (Summary and detail sheet)

Biggest increases in the budget are in electrical expenses (public areas), repair/replacement and lift/elevator cost. (There have been some difficulties with lifts.) Window replacement project has been completed. Funding all comes from revolving fund.

COA (Budget and Explanation Document)

There are 1147 residents over 60 years old. The presented budget requests additional hours for the Assistant Director (27 to 35 hours) and the Elder Advocate (19 to 24 hours). The latter change would shift a position currently without benefits to a benefitted position. An extended discussion ensued about the need for and best way to manage additional hours of work.

Veterans

Are holding public events again. There is a \$3000 budget item in order to support a veteran in town, if needed, as required by state law. The state will reimburse 75% of the cost if used. If not used, the \$3000 reverts to the General Fund.

Recreation

Budget is level funded. Have made progress on improving quality of turf on fields using funds budgeted for FY23.

Library

Biggest budget increase is COLA for staff. To keep state funding, 16% of the budget has to be spent on books, on-line services and materials and this requirement led to some shifts across categories and increases in the Computer Online Services item.

Town's Free Cash has been certified at \$2.71M.

Following up on a question from the prior Advisory Meeting, Town Counsel has no concerns about the Town's COLA calculations.

Approval of the minutes from January 3, 2023. 8 yes; 0 no

Next meeting Wednesday, January 18, 2023.

Motion to adjourn at 9:38pm. Approved 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalie Weare