

WESTMINSTER ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

March 22, 2021

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TOWN OF WESTMINSTER

PRESENT

Erin Casali, Lisa Rocheleau, John Fairbanks, Pete Normandin and Missy Banks

GUESTS

ML Altobelli

Chief Ralph LeBlanc

OBSERVERS

Jodi Snyder

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting of Advisory Board called to order at 7:08pm in the Selectmen's Chambers.

MINUTES APPROVAL

March 8, 2021 minutes were reviewed by the Advisory Board. John made a motion to approve the minutes and Lisa seconded; all were in favor.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE BOARD

None to discuss

AGENDA ITEMS

- Open Space, represented by ML Altobelli, joined the meeting to bring to the AB that they would like a stabilization account to put money aside, in a Stabilization account for purchase of open space. The Advisory Board asked ML what she would propose calling it, how she would propose funding the account, etc. There was an active discussion of how it would be possible to fund the account, the town's history of approving the purchase of open space, the process of setting up stabilization accounts, etc. There are no articles on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting for this topic; the discussion was only informational.
- Community Preservation Act ("CPA"), represented by ML Altobelli; she noted that the CPA would give the Town access grant funds from the state. She noted that there will not be any articles at the Annual Town Meeting, but that she planned to give a presentation at Town Meeting to give information on the CPA.
- Chief LeBlanc, representing the Police Department, joined to discuss the proposed change to the School Resource Officer. He noted that the role was initially created as a part time position (and historically, the officers would do it on overtime, and would be paid overtime for the role and paid from the overtime budget). Right now, there are Westminster days and Ashburnham days; they also support the CAPs. He noted that for the amount of funds that are spent on a part time SRO (funded through overtime), the Chief noted that he could hire another full-time officer. When there is an Ashburnham day, there would be opportunities for the SRO to supplement at Westminster schools and other activities. Chief LeBlanc also noted that there has also been an issue in getting staffing for over time after 3 of the officers in town are already doing over time on the SRO role. There is also anticipated changes related to part time officers and there is the potential that there might be issues in the near future with keeping part time officers which will further exacerbate the issue. John noted that the Chief should ensure that he makes sure that the new position is approved by the Personnel Board; the Chief noted he would speak to Mark Hawke on 3/23/21.
- Ralph LeBlanc, representing the Parks and Rec Dept, came to speak about funding some of the projects that they are working on this year, such as the Basketball Court, and the other programs they plan to run this year. All plan to be funded through transfers from personnel. Ralph also talked about plans for Sargent Road space.

NEXT MEETING

Next meetings scheduled for April 5, 12 & 26.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:44pm.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Erin K. Casali, Secretary

