Present: D. Sampson, M. Miller, B. George, S. Hoctor, C. Holden
G. Dunham, Town Manager; H. Harper, Assistant Town Manager
Others Present: Beth Wade and Maryann Lassiter, Habitat for Humanity; Leanne Drake,
Assistant Town Planner; Lisa Sullivan, Green Communities Program; Dr. Pam Gould, Sean
Rausch, School Committee Chair, Michelle Austin, Maureen Wiklund, and members of the
School Committee.

Mr. Sampson convened the meeting at 7 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Mr. Miller moved to approve minutes from 1/9/20 and 1/30/20. Seconded by Mr. George.
Approved unanimously.

PUBLIC FORUM

None.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT
1. Upcoming meetings: Capital Improvement Planning Committee 2/10; Finance Committee
   2/11; Military Civilian Community Council JBCC, 2/12 at 5:30; Board of Selectmen, 2/13
   3/10
3. H. Harper has attended meetings with staff about pre-season beach planning. The beaches
   will be open weekends May 22 to June 26, then regular schedule. July 4th is a Saturday, so
   there may be possible closures at night.
4. Sandwich Hollows Golf Club – the wall contract has been awarded. Work will begin next week
   and go for 4 to 6 weeks.
5. Wing School – CICP approved $2.65 million. There have been informal discussions with the
   Historical Commission and they are invited to the Historic District Committee meeting on
   March 4. Counsel is working with the developer on a purchase agreement and development
   agreement. There could be an option for the school department and the Collaborative to stay
   in the building until December, 2021; the Collaborative will need waivers to do so.
   Community forums with the Planning office are being considered for late February and March
   leading up to a Special Town Meeting.
6. Contracts for Library and Center for Active Living - with help from the owners’ project
   manager, kickoff for the library architects is this week. Design will be ready in early April and
available to the public. Center for Active Living Architect RFPs were issued, proposals received and finalists have been selected. The process had good participation from the staff and some members of the COA. There will be increased work for the staff managing the three projects.

7. 100 Rte. 6A – The legal ad for bids was in the paper Wednesday. Plans and specifications will be available to bidders on 2/7. Sub-bids are due on 2/28 and will be opened at 2 PM that day. General bids will be opened at 2 PM on March 6. There will be a community forum after the actual bid amounts are in.

8. H. Harper has been working with special counsel on the cable efforts and making progress behind the scenes. There have been a couple of meetings with the Cable Advisory Committee and they want one more. If things go well, they can make a presentation to the Board in Executive Session shortly.

Questions: Mr. Miller asked about how much revenue was raised through the beach parking meters; Mr. Dunham will find out. He also made a comment about the Library having to move; Mr. Dunham said the project manager will assist with that. They do not have to vacate until September and it will take 6 to 9 months for completion. Mr. Miller also asked about whether there was follow-up about the possibility for getting a historical waiver for the Boardwalk. Mr. Dunham reported that Sam Jensen has talked with the consultant to see if that has happened anywhere else. It will be necessary to follow codes related to height. Permitting agencies have been contacted with the goal of streamlining the permitting process and to get input on the design. Mr. Hoctor asked if there is a Plan B; Mr. Dunham said he is not sure.

Mr. Hoctor had a question about the potential plan to discharge wastewater at JBCC. There is a meeting in two weeks to see if it is possible to expand the discharge area. The Buzzards Bay Coalition is concerned about discharging into the Bay. He also asked about the Section 111 progress; Mr. Dunham said Mike Riccio will hold a meeting about the recommendations. They have talked to abutters about potential easements.

CORRESPONDENCE/STATEMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENT
Mr. Hoctor wanted to congratulate the Oakridge School for its recent concert. He said it was nice to see the level of student participation.

STAFF MEETING
Habitat for Humanity: Ms. Elizabeth Wade, Director, brought a Power Point presentation describing the proposed projects for Sandwich. She talked about the mission of Habitat for Humanity, which is to supply affordable homes for those who can sustain them. This is a partnership between the community, the volunteer builders, and the prospective homeowners, who are required to contribute 250 to 500 hours working on the project. Homeowners are carefully vetted before being chosen. Ms. Wade said she has applied to DHUD to request a local preference option for two of the three proposed houses (two 2-bedroom homes at 167 Cotuit Rd., and one 3-bedroom home at 1 Nauset St.). Site plans and drawings of the proposed homes, along with photographs of other projects were included in the presentation. She discussed a potential timeline – LIP application in February, ZBA meetings in April or May, property closing
and permit filings in August, then funding efforts. Proposed wall raising in August 2022 with completion and sales in September, 2023.

Questions: Mr. Miller reminded people that there is a rigorous selection process for homeowners and they have to prove they can sustain the payments. Habitat volunteers can work on a site for a day. Mr. Holden commented that the prospective owners must invest time – actual building and/or supporting those who are building. Ms. Wade said that if prospective owners have a disability, they can contribute in other ways. Mr. George asked whether this has been done in Sandwich before. Ms. Lassiter said that one had been built about 18 years ago. He questioned why it has taken so long to build another. Ms. Wade said potential sites had issues and availability of usable land is problematic.

They need a letter of support from the Board. Mr. Miller said he would like to take a week to think about it and requested it be put on next week’s agenda. Mr. Sampson stated he believes this is good for the Town and has been a long time coming.

Green Communities Request: Ms. Lisa Sullivan and Ms. Leanne Drake showed a Power Point presentation about Green Communities, which is a program that is focused on clean energy solutions for buildings. Becoming a Green Community would enable the Town to apply for State grants and would also enhance energy conservation in municipal buildings, thus saving money. Two hundred seventy-one communities in Massachusetts are part of this program. Sandwich’s estimated grant money would be $170,000. The Board would need to approve the application to get a Green Community designation. In order to do so, five criteria must be met: 1. Adopt as of right siting for renewable or alternative energy generation, R & D, and manufacturing (Sandwich has met this), 2. Expedited permitting process, 3. Create an energy reduction plan (assistance from Cape Light Compact) to reduce energy use by 20% over five years, 4. Adopt fuel efficient vehicle purchase program, and 5. Require energy saving technologies in new construction and industrial construction; adopt the stretch code. The stretch code is an addition to the normal building codes that requires use of a HERS (home energy rating system) process during construction. This will result in additional inspections during building and require compliance with the code, but will reduce energy use and save money in the long run. Ms. Sullivan is proposing submitting the application by November and be designated a Green Community by January.

Questions: Mr. Hctor expressed concerns about the additional cost related to the stretch code. As a builder, he has seen additional costs due to failure of passing the additional inspection. The house must be airtight, which can lead to mold. One of the problems is that each Town interprets the code differently and there are no strict guidelines. Mr. Miller asked whether solar would be required, or just making the structure solar ready – solar is not required. He also wants to know how this would work versus what the state already requires for code. Mr. George is concerned that houses would need to be too tight and wonders if to attain the designation, all five criteria must be met. Ms. Sullivan said the stretch code must be adopted. If the stretch code changes the Town can withdraw from the program. Ms. Drake would like to come back to the Board with the code inspector, who could explain in more detail and answer questions. The overall goal is to reduce energy use, but it will save money as well. There was concern expressed about how this would affect upcoming municipal projects. If
permits are pulled before the designation is approved, would the project be grandfathered? Mr. Sampson said it would be worthwhile to hear from the code inspector at a future meeting. Ms. Harper said they would need to talk with the Wing developer.

**School Department FY ’21 Budget:** Dr. Gould and Mr. Rausch presented a Power Point presentation. Dr. Gould began with some historical information followed by the budget request. Important points from the historical discussion are as follows:

- Like declines Cape-wide, district enrollments have fallen since 2010, but the pace of the decline has decreased. It is important to remember that the decline has been spread over 12 grades, so consolidating classes has had to be gradual. NESDEC enrollment projections show continued decline, with 1140 students by 2030.
- Staffing issues are affected by State requirements related to Special Needs services as well as other mandates. This has resulted in an increase in non-certified personnel to meet the requirements, making it difficult to eliminate non-certified personnel to save money.
- There has been an overall contracted salary increase of 2.5%, however with steps and teachers changing education status, the total salary increase is 4.13%. The contracted increase for this year is 2% and teachers on top step receive only this increase. Teachers are required to get professional development points for recertification, however these do not affect salary. Historically, replacing retiring high paid teachers with incoming lower paid teachers has saved money, but in the upcoming year the pace of retirements is lower, so cannot capture that money.
- Charter schools and school choice take money away from the district. For each student leaving or entering the district on school choice, $5,000 travels with them. Students attending charter schools are much more expensive (must pay the district per pupil expenditure); all tuitions are paid for through an assessment charged to the municipal budget. The State originally had a formula for reimbursement, but has not lived up to it, so Sandwich has fallen behind. Charter school assessments have increased 736%, with State aid barely increasing. Dr. Gould said that the school has been trying to reduce the numbers leaving the district, but in the end it is parent choice. This situation is not sustainable and larger conversations will be needed. Tuitions from incoming choice students go into a revolving fund, which is then used for some teacher salaries and technology.
- Capital projects are upcoming. The portable classrooms are not in good shape and are being fully used at Oakridge. The district has been able to use the $125,000 allocated in the capital budget for facilities maintenance, but does not have enough funds to do what really needs to be done.
- The School Committee and Dr. Gould looked at the effects of the Selectmen-recommended 3% top budget increase and this would require cutting 9-10 teacher positions. They are requesting 3.8%, which will still result in approximately 4.5 teachers. The true level services budget increase would be closer to 4.8%.
Questions: Mr. Holden asked whether class sizes are competitive. Dr. Gould said they are, but in the bottom tier on the Cape. Class sizes at the elementary level have increased; difficult to do at the secondary level with the type of scheduling. Mr. Hoctor said that the Charter schools in general do not take students who have special needs, but they receive funding from them because those costs are in the per pupil expenditure. Mr. Sampson said that the financial situation is not going to change and how to deal with it over time needs to be explored. The principals have been adjusting the class sizes, but the community will shortly need to have a discussion about what it actually wants to provide vs. increases in taxes. Mr. Sampson asked whether the School Committee looked at any alternatives; the reality is that between 3.5% and 3.8%, the average position loss is 5. Mr. Rausch stated that he had suggested 3.7%, but none of the Committee members wanted to discuss it. Mr. George asked whether the teachers’ union had been approached about a salary decrease to save jobs; Dr. Gould said they did take a 0% increase one year, but are concerned about the effect on their retirement.

Discussion followed about future approaches and concerns. With this continuing situation, teacher layoffs will continue. If the Town is not willing to pay the increases, it will need to deal with the results. The voters will need to decide what kind of school system they actually want. Programmatic changes have been made to improve student retention, but more marketing is needed. The school budget comprises 65% of the total Town budget. Mr. Dunham said that he has assumed level funded Chapter 70 reimbursements in his proposed budget. The Governor has suggested an increase, but the House recommendations have not been finalized. If the Chapter 70 numbers are higher, they might support an extra percentage for the school budget, as they can only be used for schools.

OLD BUSINESS

FY '21 Budget and Special Town Meeting Update: Mr. Dunham reported that the average tax bill would increase by $5, partly because of the WIIF. The Town will receive a check from the Cape Municipal Health group in about a month. He has contacted the State about how the money can be used. The Warrant list is the same. There is one petition for the Annual Town Meeting. There are 15 zoning articles upcoming.

Other Old Business: None

NEW BUSINESS

Appointments: Mr. Miller moved to appoint Michael Sullivan as an alternate to the Historic District Committee. Seconded by Mr. Hoctor. Approved unanimously.

Vendor Warrants: Mr. Miller signed the vendor warrants. All looked to be in order.

Other New Business: None

PUBLIC FORUM

Ms. Judith Holt, who said she had over 20 years’ experience in building design and is a stretch code specialist spoke about the fact that the difference between the current code and the
stretch code is minor. Energy improvements have paid for themselves, so the Board needs to consider the whole costs (increased costs plus increased savings) when considering the stretch code. Sandwich builds approximately 20 new homes a year, so the changes would not affect many. A good design process can model what would be projected savings for a municipal building, such as the new Center for Active Living.

CLOSING REMARKS

Mr. Hoctor reminded everyone that the presentations tonight are based on facts, not opinions.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Miller moved to adjourn. Mr. George seconded. Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan James

Supporting Documents:

- Habitat for Humanity information
- Commonwealth of Mass - Green Communities – February 2020
- Sandwich Public Schools FY’21 Budget Overview
- FY’21 Budget (projected draft 2/3/2020) Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY’21
- FY’21 Budget (100 Route 6A Balanced Draft 1/27/20) – Projected General Fund Revenues and Expenses – FY’21
- FY’21 General Fund Operating Budget Totals (2/3/2020)
- FY’21 Capital Budget – Final Recommendation (2/3/2020)
- Index of Potential Warrant Articles / March 23, 2020 Special Town Meeting (2/3/2020)
- Sandwich Historic District Committee Recommendation for new Alternate Member Appointment – Michael Sullivan