The meeting was called to order by Chair Lori Loughlin at 6:16 p.m.

MINUTES: Brad Hibbard made a motion to approve the minutes of December 22, 2015. Robert Blozie second. Vote: Four to approve the minutes of December 22, 2015 as presented and two abstain (Pam Griffing & Phil Landine).

WATER DEPARTMENT: Lori Loughlin asked if there was any new information on the Water Department. Agreed to have Secretary write a letter to Selectboard regarding Water Department issues as follows:
   1. Advisory Committee would like an update on the New Braintree Road Project. Jack Tivnan is the BOS liaison for this project.
   2. The gas company is currently replacing lines at the common. Is the Water Department on schedule to replace its water lines so as not to delay the beginning of the state reconstruction project?
   3. Has an audit been completed on the construction expenditures for the new water department building and well project? If not, the Advisory Committee recommends it be done to close out the project. What is the status of the project contingency fund? The Town will need an article on the warrant to have it returned to its original account.
   4. What is the status of the agreement between the Town and the Water Department regarding Group Insurance costs for Water Department employees?

AUDIT: Lori Loughlin asked if anyone had seen a copy of the audit and the answer was no. Secretary will write to Selectboard and ask for a copy of the audit even if it is in draft form.

 OVERRIDE: General discussion held. The Selectboard voted to initially support a $400,000 override and Jack Tivnan said if it passed that a portion would be used for Town Government. Brad Hibbard suggested the potential for two overrides, one for the school and one for town. How do we ensure that any portion of a successful override will remain with the Town to fund general government expenses? Discussion regarding the marketing of an override to the voters. There was great concern over what happens next year and in the future with respect to funding going
forward. If the school gets funding through an override this year how will they control costs going forward? We can’t be put into a position where we need to ask for an annual override. There was consensus that we need to keep an open line of communication with the school and School Committee to discuss issues in preparation for the override. The Committee agreed that the amount of an override is still up for discussion pending the receipt of actual funding numbers from the State and discussions over future budget needs for the school and local government. Lori Loughlin will send an e-mail to Cami Lamica, Director of Finance and Operations at QRMHS to set a date for a planning meeting. Pam Griffing stressed the need to educate the voters to the need for an override if it is to be successful.

GREEN COMMUNITY: Tom Long attended a Green Communities Meeting with Superintendent Jim Daly and Selectwoman Diane Vayda on January 7, 2016. Program consisted of an overview of Green Communities Division Programs and Resources, National Grid incentives and the assistance that Central Mass Regional Planning Commission can provide. Secretary will ask the Planning Board to attend our next meeting to discuss the Green Community Initiative for our Town.

ARTICLE FOR ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: Discussion held on possible article for the Annual Town Meeting relative to exploring the creation of a Town Manager position.

NEW BUSINESS: It was reported that the Rescue Squad has reorganized. The new Director is Dan McCall and he had a very positive meeting with the BOS. He is in favor of expanding services to the Town. The Advisory Committee will ask him provide an update on plans for the future at an upcoming meeting.

Assessor Kevin Dorman contacted the committee to report he has been working on the potential for establishing a local meals tax with the potential of raising $30-40,000 revenue annually. The Secretary will place him on the agenda for our next meeting.

BUDGETS: General discussion held on reviewing town department budgets. Lori will ask that budget requests be forwarded to committee members in both written and electronic form. Phil Landine asked if we should be looking at two budget proposals, one if an override passes and one if it doesn’t. The Advisory Committee agreed this was a good idea. It was also suggested that the school develop budgets to fit both scenarios.

Our next meeting will be February 9, 2016 at 6:15.
Pam Griffing made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Robert Blozie second. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine M. Long  
Secretary