

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
May 21, 2013, Tuesday**

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairman
Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairman
Arthur Mathews, Councilor
Michael Molisse, Councilor
Michael Smart, Councilor

Also Present: Frank Burke, Councilor
Michael Gallagher, Admin. & Community Services
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor
Kathy Collins, Youth and Family Services
George Pontes, Veteran's Director
Sue Barnes, Director of Elder Services
Michael Doyle, Parks and Recreations Director

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chairman DiFazio called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

Review/discussion of Youth and Family Services, Veteran's Services, Commission on Disabilities, Elder Services, Parks and Recreation with applicable Senior Staff

Deliberate the following measures:

13 068 W-Youth and Family Services

Youth & Family Services:

- A. Kindly review with the Committee and Town Auditor this program which has two employees costing \$91,865. What are the duties and responsibilities of the employees? How are operating expenses paid for?

Kathy Collins and Michael Gallagher reviewed. Ms. Collins provided an overview of the department's staffing and the Teen Center's hours of operation. There are usually 30 kids who drop in on weeknights and 80 on Friday nights. The department also provides referral services and Christmas help for families in need at the holidays. 1,600 children were serviced last year; 40 families adopted, with all funding derived from donations. There is a tremendous need that's grown with the fiscal crisis. The department provides some oil subsidies before QCAP can get services in place, and utility intervention. Auditor Swanson reviewed the office supplies budget; the operating expenses are donations or are from proceeds of the teen center snack bar. The teen center is self-sustaining. Councilor Smart asked for an update on the building and roof repairs.

Councilor Smart reported that there is a limited amount available from mitigation. Michael Gallagher invited the committee to come in and tour the building now that it is reopened.

13 068 R-Veterans' Services

Councilor Frank Burke introduced George Pontes , the new Veterans Agent for the town, who provided a brief background of his 30 years of military service, and experience working with veterans and military families.

Veterans Services:

- A. Kindly review with the Committee and Town Auditor the Benefit program and discuss what the \$450,000 in funding provides.

The Veterans services department consists of two full-time employees, who manage a needs based program servicing 60-75 veterans per month, out of the McCulloch building. As the needs change, so do the medical and other expenses. The department is responsible for communication CMR 108 in order to receive reimbursement for every dollar spent. The unemployment rate is high and the department provides emergency services to improve Veteran's livelihood. The department is required to be proactive. They also work with VAT vouchers. The department also ensures there are flags on every veterans grave for Memorial and Veterans Days.

Councilor Smart asked if the agent is familiar with the apprenticeship program and encourages vets to take advantage of post 9/11 GI Bill.

13 068 V-Commission on Disabilities

Commission on Disabilities:

- A. The budget is \$392---Auditor Swanson noted he had no questions. Perhaps this minor expense should be folded into another department as this budget is so minor.

13 068 T-Elder Services

Elder Services:

- A. Kindly provide an updated Organizational Chart and review said chart with Committee members.

Director Sue Barnes provided an organizational chart, and background. This department has grown; it now services 3,500 seniors per year. There are 3 divisions; first is transportation, which provides rides to appointments and social events and contracted service to Boston hospitals (8,000 rides to date). Second is outreach workers who have basically become caseworkers. They assist with most needs- fuel assistance, housing and

advocacy. The third division is volunteer management. They use volunteers to assist with rides, shopping, working the reception desk. The volunteers receive a lot of training.

B. Are all Union/Non-Union step increases and other types of salary changes included in this budget?

Ms. Barnes responded yes; the only union position is a part -time clerk whose contract expires in June, so no step increase is included.

C. Kindly provide a schedule that shows gross salary of each employee and to what fund their compensation is charged to?

Ms. Barnes provided this to the committee and noted that there is a full time coordinator of volunteers whose salary is split with the town and CDBG; an outreach worker who is paid under a state grant; and a clerk position which is split between the state and town. The bus driver is fully funded by the town, and a part-time driver whose salary is split between the town and a state grant. The transportation administrator is split between state and CDBG, and only the longevity on that position is paid by the town. The department submits a level service budget and it isn't until late spring that the amount of CDBG funding is known. It makes it difficult to devise a budget without knowing what the amount will be.

Why is it that the "Programs" line item is increasing by 200%?

Ms. Barnes noted there was not enough in the line item, although many of the programs are self-sustaining, some require purchased supplies.

D. Why is Photocopy expense increasing by 90.6% ?

Ms. Barnes responded that it provides copying services for both Council on Aging and the transportation division.

E. Describe the types of transportation that \$7,313 will pay for?

Ms. Barnes responded that transportation costs are paid from several sources; budget, CDBG funding, MAP funding and through donations. Councilor Smart asked if the vehicles are fueled through DPW, and if cell phones are supplied. Michael Gallagher responded yes.

Chairman DiFazio asked if the council rents out the gymnasium at the McCulloch. Ms. Barnes responded that unless the user has been grandfathered in, the building is only used for town-sponsored programs.

Michael Gallagher noted the town has been fortunate over the years to have received donated vehicles. Most of the travel is within the town. Councilor Mathews noted he wanted to be sure they were putting seniors in vehicles that are safe. Ms. Barnes

responded that vehicle repairs are handled through the DPW, like other departments. Extreme Clean also provides occasional detailing services. Donations were received from Friends of the Council on Aging, Weymouth Bank and Electroswitch. Councilor Molisse congratulated her on running a quality program.

13 068 S-Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation:

Management & Administration

- A. Kindly provide an updated Organizational Chart and review said chart with the Committee.

Director Michael Doyle and Michael Gallagher reviewed the organizational chart. They are in the process of setting up staff for summer programs.

- B. Are all step increases and other types of salary changes included in this budget?

Mr. Doyle responded yes and noted that no management or administrative salaries are paid from revolving funds- as it is prohibited.

- C. What will \$1,000 in Advertising expense buy for the department?

This line is for advertising programs in the Weymouth News.

- D. If actual Telephone expense is \$2,222 through March 2013, why is only \$1,000 budgeted for Fy14?

This was a result of switching from landline based phones to pay-as-you-go cellphones. Funds were saved from decommissioning the landlines. Councilor Smart asked if performance reviews are utilized to determine hiring practice year to year. The process begins in January. There are only three full-time employees and the remainder are hourly wage. The summer season runs 11 weeks and the department provides training prior to the start of the programs.

Community/Recreation

- A. Why are the Salary line items of \$12,320 for Beach Lifeguards and \$11,698 for Exceptional charged to the Operating budget and not to the Revolver Fund?

The Exceptional program never left the general budget, but the recreational has gone from fully town-sponsored to dependent on fees. The town has always supported the Exceptional program. In order to keep fees low, the town was asked to take on responsibility for the lifeguards.

- B. Review with the Committee and Town Auditor each line item of \$1,000 or more discussing as to the nature of the goods or services received with these monies?

This includes community services, maintenance of Great Esker Park/Lane Beach, the rental lease on the copier/scanner at the Teen Center, rental of storage containers to support the program equipment, and the van used for the summer programs. It also includes promotional printing materials--just in community services.

- C. Kindly review with the Committee and Town Auditor the Programs paid totaling \$555,000 with Revolving Funds.

This goes back to the organizational chart, plus vendor programs, fee-based programs and the other season programs. Michael Gallagher noted that some are money makers, some are not, and programs are all self-sustaining. They are restricted to spend the \$550,000 and base programs on trending. The costs for FY14 are similar to FY13 and the revolving account has revenue coming in to support the programs.

Chairman DiFazio discussed the balances in the revolving account. He asked if they hold balances unnecessarily. Michael Gallagher responded that there is a balance overall, and its intended purpose is to purchase capital equipment- they are looking into purchasing a movable trailer.

Councilor Mathews asked if any changes were made since the thorough discussion regarding the rental of parks and fields last year. Michael Gallagher responded that it is status quo; the only change is that the Town Council approved a meals tax- the revenue stream garnered will be earmarked for field renovations. Councilor Mathews noted that the money from the meals tax is to be used to upkeep the fields, and feels it imperative to do this and then charge assessments to rent the facilities. They have been having the same discussion for the last few years. The fees are not in line with what they should be.

Councilor Mathews noted he is not looking for revenue but money to maintain the fields. He believes people would be willing to pay more in fees if the fields were in better shape. The reputation is poor, and it's validated by maintaining low fees. The Leagues are the only ones profiting.

Vice Chairman O'Connor agreed and feels that the town should begin now, with incremental increases. The current fees are drastically low. Michael Doyle noted the fees should also be appropriate to the sport and the impact on the fields- a youth baseball field is easier to maintain than one used for an adult football league.

Councilor Molisse asked what the status is on the hiring of a parks supervisor. Michael Gallagher responded that he was unsure; the Mayor is interviewing.

Councilor Smart noted his dismay hearing that nothing is still being done. He is not in favor of passing along an increase to families, but the league organizers can charge \$150 per player. The conditions are unchanged, and a result of overuse. They need to find ways to deal with it. Chairman DiFazio asked for a review of what is needed. Councilor Mathews noted it should include baseline revenue; including the cost to pick up trash, mow, maintain the equipment, the cost of the gas and all associated expenses to determine a baseline of fees. They are not looking for a revenue stream for the general fund, but a way to charge enough to keep the fields in usable condition. The basic problem is no money to fix them. The meals tax was passed, but it does not say it is strictly for the field maintenance. He suggested they look at a way to legally set up an O2 account earmarked to receive the funds to ensure they are used for field maintenance.

Councilor Smart asked if field rental includes the turf field. He's heard there is a men's semipro league interested in its use. Councilor Mathews noted that the design of Legion and Pingree must be in place before work can begin. Michael Gallagher suggested that outside groups should not be charged the same fees as town-sponsored groups. Councilor Smart noted there needs to be established guidelines for rentals, and it should include liability for any mistreatment. Councilor Mathews reported that after the Seach lot was repaved, cars were driving up the Lane Rd. pedestrian walkway and parking for games where the asphalt and drainage work are trying to settle. He wants to make sure that there is language in the permit process that provides consequences to misuse.

Adjournment

At 8:15PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chairman O'Connor and was seconded by Councilor Smart. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary
Approved by Kenneth DiFazio as Budget/Management Committee Chairman