

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
May 15, 2023

Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman
Christopher Heffernan, Vice Chairman
Pascale Burga, Councilor
Maureen Kiely, Councilor
Greg Shanahan, Councilor

Also Present: Ted Langill, Chief of Staff
Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor
Kenan Connell, DPW Director
David Tower, DPW Business Manager
Kathleen Deree, Town Clerk
Dan McCormack, Public Health Director
Rob McLean, Library Director
George Pontes, Veterans Services Director
Karen Johnston, Elder Services Director
John Mulveyhill, Emergency Services Director

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chair Molisse called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Deliberate the following:

The committee reviewed each department's budget with Chief of Staff Langill and the corresponding Director, using a Q&A that the Town Auditor submitted with the responses. Any additional discussions that took place followed each review.

23 045 O- Department of Public Works

Chair Molisse asked for confirmation that the trash/recycling contract was extended another 5 years. The response was yes.

Councilor Kiely asked what is the procedure when recycling guidelines aren't followed by residents. Mr. Connell responded that the overall response has been good. The DPW scouts the neighborhoods randomly checking for adherence.

23 048- Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Appropriation-Sewer Enterprise Fund

Mr. Tower reviewed the Q&A.

23 049- Sewer Department-MWRA I/I Phase 12 Allocation

Mr. Tower reviewed the Q&A. This is at Phase 12, with 75% grant funded, renewed yearly.

23 050- Sewer Retained Earnings-Sewer Infrastructure Improvements

Mr. Tower reviewed the request for \$1.5 million retained earnings to primarily cover the River Street collapse repairs and any overage to Wharf Street work. This is #50 in the Capital Improvement Plan.

23 051- Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Appropriation-Water Enterprise Fund

Mr. Tower reviewed the Q&A.

23 052- Water Retained Earnings-Water Treatment Plant Upgrades and Improvements

This request seeks funding to upgrade the radio equipment that's needed to interact with other systems. This is #52 in the Capital Improvement Plan.

23 053- Water Retained Earnings-Water Treatment Plant Sludge Mitigation

This request seeks funding so the department can take a proactive approach on sludge mitigation, following a sanitary survey on Randolph Street- the decanting chemicals create a gel substance. This is #53 in the Capital Improvement Plan.

23 060- Fiscal Year 2023 Snow/Ice Removal Deficit

This free cash request is to cover the deficit in the snow and ice removal account. Mr. Connell pointed out that this is the only line item allowed to deficit spend. \$330,000 is budgeted annually. Although it wasn't a bad year for storms, there were 5 instances that required crews to go out with sand/salt, etc.

Vote the following, pending favorable public hearing:

23 072- Fiscal Year 2023 Water Enterprise Fund Budget Transfer Request

Mr. Tower presented the request to cover increases in water treatment chemicals costs.

A motion was made by Councilor Kiely to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and Vice Chair Heffernan seconded. Unanimously voted.

23 073- Fiscal Year 2023 Sewer Enterprise Fund Budget Transfer Request

Mr. Tower requested funding to cover costs associated with overtime calls to fund repair work on sewer issue on East and on Bridge Streets, over-expending the account line.

Councilor Burga commended the efforts by the department in repairing 2 breaks on Bridge Street and asked what was the cause? Was it a failure of the inspection and is there a way to identify these before they happen? Director Connell explained it was a combination of deteriorating infrastructure- there is a steep slope in the line that creates air pockets where pipes deteriorate.

A motion was made by Councilor Kiely to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and Vice Chair Heffernan seconded. Unanimously voted.

23 074- Fiscal Year 2023 Fuel Depot Supplemental Funding

Mr. Tower presented the request for funding needed to cover increased vehicle fuel costs.

A motion was made by Councilor Kiely to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and Vice Chair Heffernan seconded. Unanimously voted.

23 082- Borrowing for Roads/Sidewalk Improvements

Director Connell reported there is ongoing work in the Landing, Pond, Summer, Blueberry, Barbara, Nelson, many parking lots, and new surface on Chapman, Emery, This money is to continue the work. Councilor Kiely commended the state of the town's roads. Mr. Connell responded that the administration has been super aggressive in taking care of them after state projects are completed. Councilor Burga added that Weymouth does have much nicer roads than many of the surrounding towns. Mr. Connell pointed out the town has 1000 public ways in inventory, and there is a long list for resurfacing work.

Vote the following non-budget measure:

23 071- Fiscal Year 2023 DPW Budget Transfer Request

Mr. Tower presented the request for overtime funds that are needed for crews to complete the fiscal year. It was a busy season.

A motion was made by Councilor Kiely to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and Vice Chair Heffernan seconded. Unanimously voted.

Deliberate the following measure:

23 045 G- Town Clerk

Town Clerk Deree reviewed the Q&A.

Vote the following non-budget measure:

23 081- Reserve Fund for Town Clerk Expenses

Ms. Deree reported that her department's accounts are short due to elections last fall and collective bargaining settlement increases that took effect with the contract in January

A motion was made by Councilor Kiely to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and Vice Chair Heffernan seconded. Unanimously voted.

Deliberate the following measures:

23 045 P-Health

Director McCormack reviewed the Q&A.

The chair pointed out the department has had a few rough years dealing with the pandemic.

23 045 Q- Library

Director McLeod reviewed the Q&A.

Councilor Burga offered her congratulations that the electric panels are coming on line. Councilor Shanahan commended the condition of the building; it looks as clean and new today as when it was opened. Aesthetically, it's beautiful.

23 045 R- Veterans Services

Director Pontes reviewed the Q&A.

Councilor Kiely noted she is delighted to see they are taking a coordinated, proactive approach to the substance abuse issues with local veterans, and working with recovery programs.

Councilor Burga asked why Weymouth has an officer and other locals do not. Mr. Pontes responded that it is determined by the size of the community. One agent can also be apportioned to several communities. Weymouth is fortunate to have an active veterans program.

23 045 T- Elder Services

Director Johnston reviewed the Q& A.

Councilor Burga commended the excellent work in this department, as she pointed out it draws people from the entire South Shore. She asked whether they could consider transporting folks to the Tufts Library. Ms. Johnston responded that they are working on a pilot program to transport to the senior center. Between that, and medical appointments, it takes up most of the staff's time.

Councilor Kiely noted the coordination of holiday and specialty programs and pointed out the success chasing grants (for example, Ipad devices and instruction offered to seniors). Chair Molisse agreed; it is the spotlight on the South Shore.

23 045 U- Emergency Management

Director Mulveyhill reviewed the Q&A.

PB- excited to hear about the grant for haz mat training, spec to the compressor station

23 045 V- Commission on Disabilities

There was no discussion.

23 045 W- Youth & Family Services

Director Collins reviewed the Q&A.

23 045 S- Parks & Recreation

Director Reilly reviewed the Q & A.

23 055- Fiscal Year 2024 Annual Appropriation- Facilities and Fields Enterprise Fund

Councilor Burga commended the department on the state of the parks and fields and she pointed out they are spectacular condition.

23 058- Free Cash Transfer for Pond Meadow Park

Mr. Langill reported that this request was for a significant increase. He met with Braintree's Mayor and a compromise was reached for funding supporting 2 capital items- a flood control maintenance and truck.

23 059- Free Cash for Park Maintenance

Mr. Langill reported these funds will be used to maintain the parks.

23 068- Free Cash for Nash School Field

Mr. Reilly reported this is a field behind the school, mostly used for the youth baseball program. Parent council raised funds to redo the playground.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:30 PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Councilor Kiely to adjourn and was seconded by Councilor Burga. Unanimously voted.

Attachments: Q & A

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary.

Approved by Michael Molisse as Budget/Management Committee Chairman
Voted unanimously on 26 June 2023