

TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Budget/Management Committee
May 23, 2016, Monday

Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman
Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairman
Jane Hackett, Councilor
Rebecca Haugh, Councilor
Brian McDonald, Councilor

Also Present: Ted Langill, Chief of Staff
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor
Nick Bulens, Planning Department
Robert Luongo Planning Director
Rob McLean, Library Director
Daniel McCormack, Health Director
Jeff Richards, Director, Licensing & Inspections
Christopher Hannan, CPA
Robert Conlon Jr. Accounting

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chairman Molisse called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Review and Discuss General Government Budgets with Administration and applicable Department Heads:

Deliberate the following measures:

16 066D-Municipal Finance

Capital Improvement Plan

16 066H-Planning and Development

16 066N-Licensing and Inspections

Mr. Langill and Nick Bulens reviewed the following budgets with the various department heads and Auditor Swanson. Auditor Swanson provided written questions in advance and they were included with the responses in the reviews.

Municipal Finance

Ted Langill provided an overview of the Municipal Finance budget with Nick Bulens.

Organizational Chart

- Under the former administration, the CFO position also performed the functions of treasurer/collector. These duties will be separated.

Councilor Hackett noted this is not a charter change; merely an organizational change.

- Includes all CBA except non-settled, and 1% for non-union
- Vacated financial analyst position – unfilled in two years; will be used elsewhere

Accounting

- Medicaid reimbursement- \$67,000 paid to obtain the Medicaid revenue- gets 5% of what is collected.

Assessment

- Assessor – previous assessor and assistant replaced with lower step.
- Training- training for Assessor and Assistant required for DOR certification. Additional training for clerical staff.
- \$7500 Appellate case – used to pay attorneys used for cases heard before Appellate Tax Board; mostly for commercial, industrial properties and Apartment complexes.
- \$19,000 CPT/SOFT/M – funds to pay PK Valuation Group- town's revaluation company for annual software maintenance and support.
- \$265,000 – revaluation of all residential properties.
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Councilor Hackett asked about SouthField's tax valuations. There were no residential abatement requests; one for an apartment complex that is currently under review. Councilor Hackett noted that the change in enabling legislation wiped out the abatements; those were requests from LNR, not LStar. There was a brief discussion of the assessment process with Auditor Swanson. The towns strives to enter 60% of all residential properties every nine years.

Treasury & Collection-with Bob Conlon Jr.

- \$21,500 bond preparation fees- paid to financial advisor First Southwest, and paying Agent US Bank for bonding fees and annual report
- FY17 Debt Schedule- \$9.9 million

Councilor Hackett confirmed that the debt schedule includes the Enterprise funds.

- \$35,000 Lock Box Services- payments
 - Century Bank –banking services lockbox
 - Invoice Cloud – portal access fees
 - Real Estate/Personal Property taxes
 - School Department does not have a lockbox
 - Water/Sewer pays town indirectly \$7500 ea.
- \$36,000 Other Professionals- Abrahams Group and Lisa Keefe, temporary work for training new employees
 - \$14,000 budgeted for FY17 for use as needed
- \$100,000 postage- Assessing/Tax collection mailings and miscellaneous use by other departments. DPW has own machine.

- \$10,000 computer expense- to pay parking ticket database company
- status filling positions
 - CFO – selected; will start in few weeks
 - Treasurer/Collector and Assistant Treasurer/Collector- screening process to begin shortly

Planning & Development -with Director Robert Luongo

Bob Luongo read the department's mission statement, goals and objectives.

- Organizational Chart
- \$17.3% decrease – move of one position to Mayor's budget
 - includes step, COLA and CBA increases
- CDBG
 - Community Development Coordinator
 - Housing Coordinator
 - Economic Development Planning
- Economic Development
 - Goals reviewed-housing, transportation, conservation
- Community Preservation
 - \$600,000 projected surcharge receipts from real estate tax billings
 - \$170,000 state match
 - funded from document recordings with Registry of Deeds
 - supplemental funding from state legislature contingent on state revenues
 - \$147,313 debt service is Emery Estate bond

Councilor Haugh asked about the process for someone to request consideration for a project. Mr. Hannon responded that the information is posted on the town website. The application is a rolling process.

Capital Improvement Plan

Councilor Hackett suggested the current bonding; just under 4% is well under what is allowed. The town is allowed to bond up to 5% of its budget. She is concerned that the proposed budget includes only one bond for sidewalks but nothing else. She urged the administration to be more proactive and to prioritize some of the projects now while the rates are cheaper. She noted this is more a comment on the former administration and not the current. She noted the committee needs to be more aggressive with the administration to move forward with bonding. The current rates are low, the town's rating is good and it is currently under-bonded, so it creates an imbalance of needs. She suggested next year's discussion include what is on the capital request when they come to discuss budget.

Licensing & Inspections – with Jeff Richards, Director

- Organizational Chart
- Includes all step, COLA and CBA increases
- Longevities and increased hours – part time
- \$22,258 mileage reimbursement

- monthly submittal for approval
- \$21,237 decrease Plumbing/Gas inspection – line item transfer to part time
- \$44,570 part time – increase a result of transfer in
- 10,440 part time Plumbing Gas Inspection- generating permits and insuring compliance
- Goals and objectives

Town Clerk and Registrar – with Kathy Deree, Town Clerk

- Includes all step, COLA and CBA increases
- Part-time clerk position eliminated and full time principal clerk position created
- \$40,600 budgeted for election workers, Board of Registrars and school custodians
 - two elections budgeted for FY17
 - State Primary in September
 - Presidential in November
- \$7,970,000 reimbursed to the general fund from the state; does not include April and May special elections
- \$10,000 miscellaneous expense pays for election preparation, posting notices, election crew and voting machine maintenance
- \$15,000 supplies - print ballots and coding election machines
- \$4,000 overtime – office staff for work over 35 hours/week or others after hours for elections
- 100% increase unclassified expenses-vital records binding/online changes to Code of Ordinances
- Goals and Objectives
- Organizational Chart

Health – with Daniel McCormack, Director

- Organizational Chart
- Includes all step, COLA and CBA increases
- 7.5% decrease – removed salary for Mass n Motion Coordinator to grant funding
- \$16,500 – food service health inspections by consultant
- \$5,000 – quarterly tobacco compliance checks
- \$8,300 - mileage reimbursement – number and controls
- \$24,000 – clinics
 - flu (supplementing state supply of free vaccines)
 - nursing and other staff to conduct clinics

During this presentation, Vice Chairman O'Connor arrived, at 7:00 PM. Councilor Haugh asked if they will rehire the Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator. Mr. McCormack responded that the DFC grant (expires in September) and they can't request any additional this year. The position would have to be transferred to the operation budget.

Library – with Rob McLean, Director

- Organizational Chart
- Includes all step, COLA, CBA increases

- \$44,436 computer –member assessment for Web-based library catalogue through OCLN
- \$4,400 Other Professionals- educational Children’s programming
- \$175,000 Books/Materials- chosen with assistance by various parties
- Per capita material spending comparison chart
- Pricing/Purchasing policies
- \$17,000 – circulation and office supplies
- 9.5% decrease in reference services salary a result of a resignation and replacement
- A/C costs and adequacy for summer needs
 - Rented services last year
 - Awaiting replacement estimate for two compressors

Councilor McDonald asked when the air conditioning repair will be complete at Tufts. Mr. McLean responded that it should be finished by the end of the fiscal year.

Town Council – with Richard Swanson, Town Auditor

- Copier repairs – increase to cover maintenance (previously in contract)
- Includes step, COLA and CBA increases
- No increase Auditor
- Increase in hours- clerk’s position
- Annual audit – quotes in process
- New line- council registration/conference
- Miscellaneous – covers equipment/supplies

Councilor McDonald noted that on a couple of occasions recently the position of legal counsel differed from the administration and Town Solicitor and at times there has been conflict. He suggested the council should consider pursuing its own counsel, perhaps on a contingency basis. He noted that other municipalities follow suit.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:18 PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chairman O’Connor to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Haugh.
UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Council President Patrick O’Connor
Voted unanimously on 15 August 2016