

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
May 7, 2009- Thursday

Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairperson
Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairperson
Ed Harrington
Arthur Mathews
Michael Molisse

Also Present: Bob Conlon
Michael Smart
James Wilson, Chief Financial Officer
Maureen Duffy, Town Auditor
Robert O'Connor, Director, DPW
David Tower, Business Manager DPW, Water & Sewer
Michael Chiasson, Interim Superintendent, Water & Sewer
Kevin Carnes, Connor & Drew
Walter Flynn, Chair, Community Preservation Commission
Bob Luongo, Economic Development Planner

Recording Secretary: Mary Briggs

Chairman Kenneth DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

09 072 – O'Connor and Drew 1 Year Contract

Kevin Carnes of O'Connor & Drew provided at the request of Council President Michael Smart a Letter of Engagement dated April 7, 2009 for a one year contract for the year ending June 30, 2009. It is for the town and A-133 audits. Fees have been reduced this year by \$2000 for a total of \$47,000. Preliminary statements will be available October 31st.

President Smart requested that the Committee consider extending the contract for this year as negotiated and noted that the Council will send out Request For Proposals in July for audit services required next year.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 072 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

09 042 – Reappointment to the Board of Assessors- Paul Haley

09 043 – Reappointment to the Cemetery Commission- Deborah Sullivan

- 09 044 – Reappointment to the Community Preservation Committee- Daniel Condon**
- 09 045 – Reappointment to the Conservation Commission- Adrienne Gowen**
- 09 046 – Reappointment to the Construction Steering Committee- Richard McKinnon**
- 09 047 – Reappointment to the Cultural Council- Judith Alukonis**
- 09 048 – Reappointment to the Commission on Disabilities- Susan Kelly-Luscomb**
- 09 049 – Reappointment to the Commission on Disabilities- Deb Deveau**
- 09 050 – Reappointment to the Board of Elder Services- Vincent O’Keefe**
- 09 051 – Reappointment to the Board of Health- Karen DeTellis**
- 09 052 – Reappointment to the Board of Health- Richard Wetterberg**
- 09 053 – Reappointment to the Historical Commission- Jodi Purdy-Quinlan**
- 09 054 – Reappointment to the Board of Library Trustees- Dorothy Coveney**
- 09 055 – Reappointment to the Planning Board- Walter Flynn**
- 09 056 – Reappointment to the Planning Board- David Chandler**
- 09 057 – Reappointment to the Recreation Commission- Rachel Bickford**
- 09 058 – Reappointment to the Scholarship Fund Committee- Linda Sforza-Berg**
- 09 059 – Reappointment to the Waterfront Committee- Paul Brooks**
- 09 060 – Reappointment to the Waterfront Committee- Jeffrey Kent**
- 09 061 – Reappointment to the Waterfront Committee- Nancy Blaszko**
- 09 062 – Reappointment to the Waterfront Committee- Raymond Nash**
- 09 063 – Reappointment to the Housing Authority- James Cunningham**
- 09 064 – Reappointment to the Weymouth Redevelopment Authority- Joseph Curran**
- 09 065 – Reappointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals- Mary McElroy**
- 09 066 – Reappointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals- Edward Foley**
- 09 067 – Reappointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals- Charles Golden**
- 09 068 – Reappointment to the Zoning Board of Appeals- Robert Galewski (Alternate)**
- 09 069 – Reappointment to the Fourth of July Committee- Ronald Rizzo**
- 09 070 – Reappointment to the Fourth of July Committee- Peter Webb, Jr.**
- 09 071 – Reappointment to WETC- Joann Stak Bergnard**

A MOTION was made by Councilor O’Connor to bundle items 09 042 through 09 071 inclusive, and forward to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

- 09 074 – Reappointment to the Board of Library Trustees- Donna Shea**
- 09 075 – Reappointment to the Community Events Committee- Anne Marie McCarthy**
- 09 076 – Reappointment to the Historical Commission- Theodore Clarke**
- 09 077 – Reappointment to the Recreation Commission- Steve Reilly**
- 09 078 – Reappointment to the Scholarship Fund Committee- Claire Cunningham**

A MOTION was made by Councilor O’Connor to bundle items 09 074 through 09 078, inclusive, and forward to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

09 0150 – Department of Public Works

Mr. Wilson provided an update on state funding followed by a general overview of the DPW budget. The Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Schools spent the morning at the State House with discouraging results. Mr. Wilson also pursued with the state Treasurer's office what would be considered a baseline for an expenditure at the state level for FY10. There are no revenue projections and regulations for the Stimulus Package will probably not be available until sometime after July 1st. There are two parts to the stimulus package and it hasn't been determined how they will be combined. There may be further 9C cuts this year, but supplanted by the federal Stimulus Package.

Mr. Wilson was also discouraged, and he is comfortable with the budget presented before this Committee. Using the House Ways and Means Budget as the current standard, there is an \$820,000 difference between what Weymouth projected for a cut in state aid, and what the HW&M has. Weymouth as a town is stable. Using personal property tax as an example, the town has collected 100% of the tax with no delinquencies. Motor vehicle excise will not be known until the end of the month, and real estate taxes are still being processed.

The Mayor, in her budget transmittal in April gave each department a budget figure and instructions to allocate their funds among and across the various departments. This includes DPW and Sewer Departments, which are both level funded, and the Water Department that is only increased by the debt service that will come into play next year. Bob O'Connor, DPW Director presented the overview of the budget using the MUNIS report as a guide. The only increase to the office staff line is the split of the business manager salary among DPW, Water and Sewer. There are no changes in Engineering, Personnel, Expenditures, Highway Department. One crew chief position has been cut and two positions (crew chief and heavy equipment operator) are funded but currently vacant due to retirements. The highway department has been devastated. Emergency response will not be affected by the budget cuts over the last few years, and the reduction in manpower, but daily housekeeping tasks are taking longer to accomplish.

There was a discussion on snow removal and disposal of sand used during winter storms. The overtime policy for personnel during snow events was also discussed. Councilor Harrington requested specific information regarding the governing policy for overtime for the Director of Maintenance for the town. Mr. Wilson and Mr. O'Connor noted this is by virtue of an intergovernmental binding contractual agreement between the previous administration and the former School Committee. The School Department has the authority to independently enter into an agreement and the only stipulation in the charter is that a copy of the agreement must be kept on file at town hall. The town has no authority to invalidate any contract executed by the School Committee unless it is clearly illegal. The contract can be terminated only when the parties agree it is no longer needed and the employee additionally agrees. Authorization of overtime for this employee was also discussed. Committee members requested a copy of the agreement letter on file. The Town Auditor completed an audit of the agreement last year and will provide for the committee a copy of the audit and a letter from the former HR Director, reclassifying the

individual's position and salary allocation. Part of the reason for charging the snow overtime to the DPW was due to the fact that the School Department is not allowed the same leeway to overspend budget for snow removal costs as the DPW is allowed. Councilor Harrington requested what means are available and the possibility to get out of the contract. Mr. Wilson responded that he would have to defer it to Labor Counsel. Mr. Wilson provided a brief review of the history of the consolidation of town department functions in a reorganization which occurred in FY04.

Mr. O'Connor reviewed the rubbish removal contract. After the Mayor came into office, she pursued a cooperative bid with Quincy and Braintree to regionalize rubbish collection in terms of disposal and recycling. The towns have entered into a 5-year contract with Capital Waste which has resulted in substantial savings. Mr. O'Connor also noted the company which has the contract has also proven very generous, and he noted they contributed to the "touch a truck" program and provided cash prizes to each school in a phone book collection contest.

Collection of recycling has changed to single stream, and residents no longer are required to purchase separate collection bins. Collection tonnage has increased 12% since the contract began ten months ago. Recyclable materials are separated at the plant in Avon. Transportation costs for hauling materials has also decreased, since it is now going to Semass in Braintree and not Rochester. Disposal is down, recycling is up, and the town receives revenue from the recycling. Quincy, Braintree and Weymouth are the only municipalities which receive revenue from recycling.

There was a discussion regarding the next aggressive steps available to increase recycling efforts. Mr. O'Connor noted that the DEP is recommending a "pay as you throw" program, in which rubbish bags are purchased but recycle materials picked up at no charge. Mr. O'Connor noted this would burden senior citizens and low-income households.

The town also has a good solid waste program. Yard waste is picked up on a regular schedule. The town takes televisions, CRT's, waste motor oil, surplus paint, propane tanks and disposes of them free of charge for residents. The town still offers a hazardous waste program to residents twice a year and if a resident cannot make either of these, the DPW picks up the cost for participation in another municipality.

DPW is the central funding source for all non-school public town buildings. At times it's a struggle to pay for sizable repairs.

DPW maintains and repairs all vehicles except school buses, and school vehicles, and pays all inspection costs including specialized inspections required.

DPW is also the central depot for fuel for town vehicles. It includes a 10,000 gallon underground gasoline tank and 4,000 gallon above ground diesel tank, and is responsible for the maintenance of these systems. Bids are not opened until August. When it was bid last year, local price was over \$4/gallon. As prices dropped, the contract was cancelled

and is now purchased at daily spot pricing, which has saved the town money.

ThePark and Tree Department has a total of 6 workers, and includes an allocation of tradesmen salaries. The town is committed to oversight of trees.

There was a brief discussion of summer help. Mr. O'Connor noted there is no funding available for summer help. It was \$30,000 in prior years, which allowed for the hiring of 8 workers.

Streetlighting covers 1800 existing lights. Most lights have been changed over to energy efficient; the only programs currently offered are for changing out traffic signals to led lighting.

The questions proposed by Ms. Duffy and not covered in the overview were addressed; the average price for a snow event is \$75,000, which includes the cost of employee overtime, salt and sand use, outside contractors, and incidentals such as damages. There were 28 days for snow or ice control, 8 plowable events requiring private contractors, and 22 total incidents. The largest expense is salt, which is purchased with a consortium bid of 17 towns and jumped from \$27 to \$70 per ton in the last five years. Sand is purchased at competitive pricing.

One worker is assigned to each of the 20 town vehicles. It isn't possible with this system to train plow drivers. There is also the concern that the town's contractor rates are lower than most other towns, and Weymouth may lose some of the vendors to surrounding communities offering more attractive rates. The current contractors have been with the town for many years and are familiar with the routes.

There was a brief discussion regarding funding of the snow removal budget instead of carrying a deficit into future years. Mr. Wilson noted that layoffs would have to happen in order to fund.

09 028 – Sewer Enterprise Fund Annual Appropriation

David Tower presented the overview on the Sewer budget, which is level funded using the MUNIS report.

The assistant superintendent position salary, which is allocated 50% each to the Water and Sewer departments, is unfunded, resulting in a decrease in the administrative line item. This position has been vacant for a few years. A crew chief position is also vacant due to a Facilities Manager position vacancy. The department has managed to maintain services with these vacancies. There are 6 current positions throughout the DPW that are vacant., and once the budgets are approved, it is the intent to fill these. The most critical need is 3 labor positions in the Sewer Department.

The Sewer Collection System is level funded. MWRA has not set rates as of yet. Substantial increase is expected due to the economic conditions and reduced rate relief.

Direct/indirect costs are slightly reduced due to the reduction in debt service and reserve fund to balance the budget. There was a brief discussion of the direct and indirect costs.

09 031 – Water Enterprise Fund Annual Appropriation

Mr. Tower provided an overview of the Water budget. The Administrative line is reduced as a result of the unfunded superintendent position and the elimination of the crew chief position.

The Water treatment line is increased and can be attributed to the cost of chemicals. Chemical and electricity costs have increased.

Water distribution is level funded and covers equipment, vehicles and materials replacement and maintenance of the system.

Directs and indirect budget costs reflect the increase due to the debt service for the new water treatment plant.

Mr. Wilson noted that this is the second largest department in town and the three presenters were commended. The Mayor recognizes that there is a breaking point. Selling water to Southfield at a premium can generate revenue to somewhat alleviate this. 123,000 gallons is currently authorized and Tri Town pays for the cost of the water, which is charged at a premium rate plus 5% under an intergovernmental contract between the town and Tri Town. They are current on payment to the town. The Naval Air Station is still operated by the Navy and is paying under the use agreement for 123,000 gallons. All water use is monitored daily by the town with a master meter in place at the point of entry. Revenue is generated by LNR by leased property on the base, and Coast Guard housing is still in use. There are issues with the Coast Guard and Navy with regard to the split of land. There was a discussion of septic system currently in use. Plans for construction include the building of a treatment plant. Councilor Harrington confirmed for the record that any additional duties resulting from new technology associated with the construction of a new plant does not constitute reorganization.

Chairman DiFazio asked what the receivables expected from Tri Town in FY10 will be for water use on the base. Mr. Tower responded that it is level funded. Tri Town uses very little water.

09 029 – Sewer Enterprise Fund

Mr. Chiasson reported that the Sewer Department is requesting \$150,000 for an I and I Project in the Union Street area. This is part of the yearly investigations looking to remove extraneous flow from entering the system. Last year it included a sewer model and metering program which flagged this area as having high I and I amounts.

It is also a request for \$25,000 for a Wharf Street Pump Station engineering review. This is the second largest in town. The last major rehab was done ten years ago, and as the system ages, there have been several small issues handled. The engineering study is looking at the building, the pumps, the electrical system and to make recommendations

for upgrading.

09 030 – Sewer Division – Capital Expenditures- Retained Earnings

Mr. Chiasson reported on the request for \$250,000 for the design of the Interceptor in the last area in town experiencing overflow problems on Commercial Street up to Newell Park. It will include the last property at 570 Commercial Street and the Chairman recommended updating the owner if funding is approved. It will probably require MWRA and DEP approval because of pipe size changes, and is not a part of the Consent Order.

During this discussion, Councilor Mathews arrived.

09 032 – Water Treatment Plant Chemicals- Reserve Fund Transfer

Mr. Tower requested \$200,000 transferred from the Reserve Fund to cover a shortfall in the FY09 operating budget for treatment plant chemicals.

09 033 – Water Treatment Plant Electricity- Reserve Fund Transfer

Mr. Tower requested \$50,000 from the Water Enterprise Reserve Fund to cover the shortfall in the FY09 operating budget for electricity costs.

09 034 – Water Division – Capital Expenditures- CP Residual

\$75,000 to purchase two service vehicles to replace two existing vehicles- The existing are in use five to seven days per week. They are 1999 models with high mileage and expect to be replaced with Ford F350 and F450 (with no plows).

This measure also requests \$25,000 for the rehab of the Circuit Ave. Well – this is a part of the normal annual rotational schedule for the five wells in town.

Additionally funds are requested for the Reed Ave Water Tank- This project was approved last year; however, bid pricing has exceeded the funding approved. The request is for the additional \$27,000 to meet the bid price.

There was a brief discussion concerning the balance in the CP Residual Account. Mr. Wilson noted that balances at close out of capital projects are collapsed into the Residual account and the town is required to expend these fund within three years or face financial penalties.

09 017 – Reappropriation for Fuel for Town Owned Vehicles

Mr. O'Connor reported that this is to cover the anticipated fuel costs for the balance of FY09.

09 015BB – Snow Removal Deficit

Deficit for FY09 is approaching \$820,000 going into FY10.

09 020 – Snow Removal – Reserve Fund Transfer

No discussion.

09 021 – Snow Removal – Free Cash Appropriation

\$150,000 from free cash to be applied to snow removal deficit.

09 035 – Capital Request – Bond Authorization – Route 18 Water Mains Project

Mr. Chiasson reported on the request for \$1.1M for the construction, repair and replacement of three separate water mains, all of which are on Mass Highway roads scheduled for design upgrades. It includes the area where Washington and Middle Streets intersect, the Route 18 area from Pond Street (Independence Square) to the railroad bridge, and the area on Route 18 from Eye Health- Hunter Terrace to just before Park Ave. The intent is to fix the water lines before the state does their widening work on the roadway. It involves increasing the lines and switching homes over to the larger mains. Piggybacking the prior work with Mass Highway did not result in cost savings or control.

There was a discussion on the longer amount of time the project will take without piggybacking with Mass Highway, and the detrimental effect diverting the traffic into surrounding neighborhoods would have. Design is 99% complete and it is hoped that the bidding can go out shortly.

Mr. Wilson reminded the committee that several steps must be taken before the work can begin. It is subject to Public Hearing and the minutes from both committee level and the council meetings in which the votes are taken must first be voted by Town Council before Bond Counsel opinion can be sought and bidding can begin.

Councilor O'Connor asked how confident the \$1.1M figure is and whether Mass Highway will choose this particular project as a part of the Stimulus Package, and the urgency to completing the project.

There was a discussion about doing the work not only because the road work is being done by the state, but also because the work to the water mains is required.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 035 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Councilor Molisse commended the DPW staff for their efforts and their presentation. He noted most of the calls to the Councilors are issues referred to DPW.

09 073 – Community Preservation Committee Appropriation for Whitman's Pond Herbicide Treatment

Walter Flynn, Chair of the Community Preservation Committee, and Bob Luongo, Economic Development Planner for the town presented the request for two portions of Whitmans Pond - \$24,000 for a 15 acre area of the main pond and \$15,4000 for the West Cove area. This is for the application of herbicide to control the growth of insidious weeds in the shallows. No weed harvesting will be done. Hydoraking which was done in the past did not consider the manpower cost from the DPW.

Treatment with the herbicide keeps the water cleaner and better oxygenated. Similar treatments have been done by other municipalities, and community preservation funds can be used under the preservation of open space for recreational use category. There is no adverse affect to human, animal or fish populations from the chemical, Sonar, which is DEP and EPA approved. There are two companies in the Commonwealth licensed to perform the application.

Councilor Mathews noted the Whitman's Pond Association prefers to approach treating the pond in areas with each request rather than trying to get it done as a whole.

There are two steps to the approval process; if the Council approves it will then need to be heard before the Conservation Commission.

A motion was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 073 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

09 041 – Reappropriation Request – Retirement

Mr. Wilson reported on this request. The Town of Weymouth is responsible for the retirement contribution for personnel who serve active military service time overseas. This is a request is to reappropriate \$1000 to the retirement account to combine with the funds already in the account to cover the expense of a Weymouth Firefighter who was deployed in Afghanistan for military duty.

A MOTION was made by Councilor O'Connor to forward item 09 041 to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action and was seconded by Councilor Molisse. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

At 9:15 PM, there being no further business, Councilor O'Connor made a MOTION to ADJOURN the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Mathews. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.