

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
March 6, 2023

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

Absent: Pascale Burga, Councilor

Also Present: Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor
Kathy Deree, Town Clerk
Brian Connolly, Town Auditor
Robert Luongo, Planning Director
Steve Reilly, Recreation Director
Ed Masterson, Retirement Board Director
Greg Hargadon, Retirement Board Chair

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

Chair Molisse called the meeting to order at 6:17 PM.

Retirement Board Discussion on FY21 Financial Statements

Greg Hargadon, Ed Masterson were invited to the table. Auditor Brian Connolly noted the lateness of the audit. A journal entry was noted in brought the outside auditor's report. Mr. Masterson explained the lateness was due to the COVID shutdowns. He also pointed out that the firm that completed the last audit is no longer providing the service. The journal entries noted in the audit were a result of corrections Mr. Masterson made to adjust entries he coded incorrectly. The board is currently meeting on a 6 to 8 week schedule to reconcile accounting in a timely manner.

Councilor Kiely asked about the bidding. Mr. Masterson noted that the board may consider rebidding, because the responses came in at quadruple the current contract. Auditor Connolly pointed out his concern will be the timing. Mr. Masterson recognized the board members in attendance.

23 008-CPA Funding Request- Construction and Restoration of Beals Park

This measure was referred to the Budget/Management Committee on February 21, 2023. Steve Reilly and Bob Luongo presented the request that the Town of Weymouth appropriate the sum of \$2.6M from the Unreserved Fund Balance Account for the construction and restoration of Beals Park in North Weymouth. The public hearing will be conducted during the Town Council meeting later in the evening. The committee

received a memo from Chief of Staff Langill explaining that the measure will need amending because the lowest bids came in higher than the appropriation requested. Mr. Luongo suggested the committee take no action until the Community Preservation Committee can meet Monday and vote to increase the request. The administration expects to bring it back to the Town Council at the next meeting. The work at Beals Park was separated into two requests to take advantage of bundling costs, and the committee may recommend the Town Council move measure 23 009 tonight.

Steve Reilly played a slideshow with the work that is planned for Beals Park. It features two playground areas targeting two age groups, a skate park, pickleball courts, gazebo, site improvements, and increased parking. He pointed out that the more active the location, the less likely it will have negative impacts. He reviewed the conceptual design, and pointed out the pole lighting that will tie in to the historic district where it's located, bike racks, pathways, ornamental steel fencing, pavers, signage and interpretive panels, and seasonal plantings. The lighting will be on a centralized system like other parks in the town, and blend with the neighborhood's needs.

Chair Molisse asked about the parking. Mr. Luongo explained there will be 12 spaces on the Sea Street side, which can accommodate parking on both sides, and 10 spots on Athens. Councilor Shanahan asked for confirmation the number of parking spaces increased. He noted he attended the community meetings and is looking forward to the project. Chair Molisse asked what contributed to the higher bid responses. Mr. Luongo explained the lowest bid was higher than expected, and the others were significantly higher. Activitas, the company that oversaw the bidding process, thoroughly vetted the company that submitted the lowest responsive bid, and confirmed they can do the work at the bid price. The skate park is the biggest part of the cost, and as a specialty, it is contracted out to a reputable company.

Mr. Luongo requested the committee continue measure 23 008. Chair Molisse responded it will remain in committee until the next meeting.

23 009-CPA Funding Request- Playground Equipment & Gazebo for Beals Park

This measure was referred to the Budget/Management Committee on February 21, 2023. presented the request that the Town of Weymouth appropriate the sum of \$400,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance Account for the supply of playground equipment and a gazebo for the upcoming construction of Beals Park in North Weymouth. The public hearing will be conducted during the Town Council meeting later in the evening.

Vice Chair Heffernan motioned to recommend forwarding the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

23 010- Appointment to Board of Registrars- Joseph Fleming

This measure was referred to the Budget/Management Committee on February 21, 2023. presented the request that the Town of Weymouth, in accordance with 2-10 of the Town Charter, appoint Joseph Fleming of 63 Alroy Road to the Board of Registrars for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2025 (Chair Molisse pointed out this is a correction of an error on the measure). Mr. Fleming was invited to present his interest and qualifications. Mr. Fleming provided his background and qualifications. It includes current service as vice chair of the Republican Town Committee.

Chair Molisse pointed out that his current service precludes serving on the board without stepping down. Solicitor McLeod pointed out the MGL Chapter 55 confirming he may not serve on both at the same time.

Chair Molisse pointed out a pamphlet was distributed to poll workers by Mr. Fleming without the permission of the town clerk. Mr. Fleming responded that the Hanover Town Clerk provided him with a document that he then used to create a manual for the Weymouth republican poll workers. He claimed to have shared it with the Weymouth Town Clerk, who informed him not all of the information pertained to Weymouth's equipment. The town clerk informed him she had a manual and training for the Weymouth workers. He used this for two years, until he received an email from the Town Seal objecting to his use of the manual and the use of the town seal. Mr. Fleming then removed the seal and resent it to the solicitor. He has been using it with the republican election officers since then. The Chair pointed out he used the town seal without authority and that the matter was elevated to the state level, which concurred with the town's position. Mr. Fleming responded that his actions were innocent. Councilor Shanahan asked the town clerk if there are two sets of instructional materials provided to the election workers. Ms. Deree pointed out that there should be one set, issued by the town and created by the state. She was unaware a second was distributed until a citizen brought it to her attention last year. Also, she noted that one of the names listed on the document was someone who had not been appointed to the Board of Registrars. Mr. Fleming responded that the Mayor had appointed that person, but Solicitor McLeod pointed out that she had not been confirmed by the Town Council. The solicitor sent Mr. Fleming a cease and desist letter and reported the incident to the state. The state is not planning any further action, and deferred to the town. The state agreed with the town solicitor that this was a fraudulent document, although since Mr. Fleming discontinued using it, Solicitor McLeod chose no further action against him.

Vice Chair Heffernan motioned to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for unfavorable action and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted. Mr. Fleming asked to put on the record why the board was denying the appointment. Chair Molisse responded that the board has voted its decision based on what was discussed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:07 PM, there being no further business, a motion was made by Vice Chair Heffernan seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary.

Approved by Michael Molisse as Budget/Management Committee Chairman
Approved by TC on 20 March 2023