

TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
Town Hall Council Chambers
Zoom # 873 8801 5172
February 21, 2022, Tuesday

Present: Arthur Mathews, President
Michael Molisse, Vice President
Pascale Burga, Councilor
Kenneth DiFazio, Councilor
Fred Happel, Councilor
Christopher Heffernan, Councilor
Maureen Kiely, Councilor
Gary MacDougall, Councilor
Greg Shanahan, Councilor

Absent: John Abbott, Councilor
Lisa Belmarsh, Councilor

Also Present: Kathleen Deree, Town Clerk
Richard McLeod, Town Solicitor
Brian Connolly, Town Auditor
James Malary, Director of Municipal Finance
David Tower, DPW Business Manager

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

President Mathews called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. After the Pledge of Allegiance, Town Clerk Kathleen Deree called the roll, with two absent. President Mathews reported that Councilors Abbott had a prior family commitment, and Councilor Belmarsh a work commitment.

Vice President Molisse motioned to take Motions, Orders and Resolutions out of order and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

MOTIONS, ORDERS AND RESOLUTIONS

President Mathews reported that it was called to his attention that measure 23 001 was not voted by Budget/Management, but a vote was taken later by the full Town Council, requiring a reconsideration.

Vice President Molisse motioned to reconsider measure 22 001 and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

23 001- FY21 Financial Statements

Vice President Molisse reported that the measure was referred to the committee on January 17, 2023. The committee met on February 6, 2023 and on February 21, 2023, voted to forward to the

full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action. Vice President Molisse motioned to forward the measure to the full Town Council with a recommendation for favorable action, and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

The meeting reverted back to the agenda order.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

23 007-Water Retained Earnings-Meter Replacement & Water Audit

Vice President Molisse motioned to open the public hearing on measure 23 007 and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. published 2/2/23. Unanimously voted.

David Tower, DPW Business Manager, presented the measure. DPW seeks \$250,000 for the water meter replacement program and water audit. This is the first of a couple of measures on large meter program. There are 500 meters in town. There is a backlog getting inventory, but the orders were placed. In the 1990's, the town changed out most of the large ones. He estimates this is a contributing factor for unaccounted water.

Councilor Happel asked what is the life expectancy of the meters? Mr. Tower responded 15-20 yrs. There is a 6" meter in South Shore Hospital that they hope to change out when it will be shut down in 6 weeks. He explained the changeout process.

Councilor Burga pointed out that Mr. Tower explained the meter sizes in the earlier Budget/Management meeting and he reviewed it again. DPW routinely changes out residential meters. The larger ones are done at more strategic times.

Councilor DiFazio pointed out that the measure mentions funding for a water audit. Mr. Tower responded that they are starting to do it. It will compare current vs. past usages and will target the discrepancies. Councilor DiFazio asked if there a previous one on the books? Mr. Tower responded no; this will be the first.

Councilor MacDougall asked what is the process to change out a meter; residential or commercial? Mr. Tower responded there is a backlog with inventory- they just received an order and are queuing up to get going. The new meters are read with a decoder. He reviewed what they do in the case a meter needs to be changed to encourage compliance by the resident. Their ultimate goal is to get everyone to pay what they owe.

President Mathews asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, to which there was the following:

Kathy Swain, 134 Mill Street- is there a visual plan for this proposal? Mr. Tower responded that it is a bid process, and the bid pricing is from last June. They have a rough count. Ms. Swain asked what buildings; when? Is there any written proposal or where and how to get there? Mr. Tower responded the information will be part of the water audit. Ms. Swain asked is this short or long term? Mr. Tower responded the goal is to replace all problematic ones in next 12 months. The rest will be done over a period of 2-3 years. Ms. Swain asked if there a long-term plan to

avoid being in this same spot 20 years later. Is it proactive versus reactive? Mr. Tower responded they are isolating larger meters which are at their expectancy, first. The water audit should get to a plan. Ms. Swain asked if there are consequence for resident noncompliance? Mr. Tower explained the escalation process, that would encourage residents to seek a remedy. The DPW can send out an estimate of 30 units- is the amount usually billed to get attention. Ms. Swain asked about conservation programs developed by the EPA. Mr. Tower responded that is not the purview of this measure.

Alison Dossett, 56 Belmont Street supported the program. She asked how are residents notified? Mr. Tower responded that the meter reader will leave a card on the resident's door. They also send out letters, estimated bills. Ms. Dossett noted entry to MWRA requires 5 years of audits. Will this be a 5-year plan? Mr. Tower responded that this is going above and beyond usual metrics. Ms. Dossett asked how will the Town Council monitor the unaccounted water? There are milestones to monitor before considering increasing the draw. President Mathews responded that first, the council would want to see the audit and it will be shared with the public.

Tricia Pries, 15 Woodbine Road -stated the point is to understand the difference between faulty meters and unaccounted water. Mr. Tower responded that this, first, is to address faulty meters. Ms. Pries asked if there is an unaccounted water, will the audit include way to identify it? Mr. Tower responded that water meter replacement is one piece of the puzzle. They would like to deal with the immediate issues. Ms. Pries asked how does this come into play on the water permit? She urged they carefully consider the herring in deliberations.

President Mathews- pointed out he is hopeful there are other measures, if this is the start of a program. They need to be aggressive with unaccounted water and other issues.

Councilor DiFazio noted it was his recollection that DEP recommended a water audit? Mr. Tower responded that he didn't think it has been ordered. The town is trying to get ahead of the game. Councilor DiFazio asked if guidelines will happen. Mr. Tower responded that is the goal.

Councilor MacDougall asked if the town is at 100% metering? Mr. Tower responded yes.

Tricia Pries, 15 Woodbine Road- She pointed out that one of the reasons for the moratorium was that the town didn't know how much water is has for development. They are already 200,000 gallons over allowable yield now.

Alison Dossett, 56 Belmont Street asked if the town is paying for the change out at South Shore Hospital. Mr. Tower responded that the town pays for all meters in the system. It is part of the service in the quarterly bill. Ms. Dossett asked if there is an opportunity for a commercial fund to defray these costs in the future? Mr. Tower responded that these particular fees come from mitigation.

Vice President Molisse motioned to close the public hearing on measure 23 007 and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM THE MAYOR, TOWN OFFICERS AND TOWN BOARDS

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

On behalf of Mayor Hedlund, James Malary requested 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 measure requires a legal notice and public hearing.

Vice President Molisse motioned to refer the measure to the Budget/Management Committee and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

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

On behalf of Mayor Hedlund, James Malary requested 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 measure requires a legal notice and public hearing.

Vice President Molisse motioned to refer the measure to the Budget/Management Committee and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

23 010-Reappointment to WETC Board of Directors-Christopher Potter

On behalf of Mayor Hedlund, James Malary requested that the Town of Weymouth, in accordance with 2-10 of the Town Charter, reappoint Christopher Potter of 3 Moreland Road to the WETC Board of Directors for a 3-year term to expire on June 30, 2026.

Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the reappointment list and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

23 011-Appointment to Board of Registrars- Joseph Fleming

On behalf of Mayor Hedlund, James Malary requested 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, 2026.

Vice President Molisse motioned to refer the measure to the Budget/Management Committee and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Budget/Management Committee-Chair Michael Molisse

Vice President Molisse reported that the Budget/Management Committee met on February 21, 2023 to deliberate the following:

23 005-Reserve Fund Transfer- Unpaid Bill

This was referred to the committee on February 6, 2023. The committee deliberated on February 21, 2023 and voted to forward it to the full town Council with a recommendation for favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the measure; that the Town of Weymouth transfer the sum of \$82.24 from the Reserve Fund for the purpose of paying the following unpaid bill:

Commission on Disabilities- Recording Secretary
Patricia Fitzgerald
Invoice #April 12, 2022

Furthermore, that the Town Accountant is hereby authorized to pay such bills.

Councilor Kiely seconded the motion and it was unanimously voted.

23 006-Police Line Item Transfer for Overtime Expenses

This was referred to the committee on February 6, 2023. The committee deliberated on February 21, 2023 and voted to forward it to the full town Council with a recommendation for favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the measure; that the Town of Weymouth transfer a total of \$330,000 as delineated below for the purpose of covering the projected overtime expenses in the Weymouth Police Department:

\$250,000 from Police Department Uniform Salary

\$80,000 from Police Department Tech Support

To the following line items:

\$150,000 to Uniform Overtime

\$80,000 to Tech Support Overtime

\$100,000 to Uniform Program Overtime Training

Councilor Kiely seconded the motion and it was unanimously voted.

23 007-Water Retained Earnings-Meter Replacement & Water Audit

This was referred to the committee on February 6, 2023. The committee deliberated on February 21, 2023 and voted to forward it to the full town Council with a recommendation for favorable action.

On behalf of the Budget/Management Committee, Vice President Molisse motioned to approve the measure; that the Town of Weymouth raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 from the Water Enterprise Fund's Retained Earnings for the purpose of funding the costs associated with water meter replacement program & water audit.

Measure requires a legal notice and public hearing.

Councilor Kiely seconded the motion and it was unanimously voted.

ADJOURNMENT

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Town Council is March 6, 2022. At 8:08 PM; there being no further business, Vice President Molisse motioned to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Kiely. Unanimously voted.

Attachments:

Respectfully Submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Arthur Mathews as President of the Town Council
Voted unanimously on March 2023