

REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

APRIL 6, 2022

Page 2 of 5

Community Development: Mark Barnhart explained this budget now reflects the full funding for the marketing coordinator's salary as the responsibilities for the downtown employee parking program, banners and film permits have been reassigned to a part timer.

Finance: CFO Jared Schmitt noted that the DPW Finance position has moved to this department and the job description is being reviewed and updated for posting as it was unfilled as it had been posted originally. There are increases in the education and meetings lines to take advantage of classes offered by GFOA. He noted he is also part of the Fairfield CFO Consortium. These resources have provided information on different funding approaches by other municipalities. Ms. Vergara complimented the lease of the space on Mill Plain for the Covid19 testing site.

Purchasing: Purchasing Director Gerald Foley explained the increase due to the creation of a new asst. director position promoting one of the junior buyers, deletion of a part-time clerk and more educational opportunities for staff in procurement procedures. He noted this will help "strengthen the bench of employees" in the department.

Assessor: Assessor Ross Murray addressed the increases in secretarial and appraisal fees for the BAA. Cindy Perham asked if any employees are eligible for longevity or step increases to which Mr. Murray said the employees are newer replacing those who had opted for the VERIP and the union contracts are in negotiations. He noted the number of superior court appeals is lower this year. Sharon Pistilli questioned headcount. Mr. Murray said one vacancy had been filled and he is working on the other.

Tax Collector: Tax Collector Dave Kluczwski explained the new position of sewer rent collector 80/20 bulk of the work is sewer use collection and research which is at opposite peak collection times to real estate and motor vehicle collections. Jay Wolk asked if the State is looking at reducing car taxes to which Mr. Kluczwski explained they are looking at capping the mill rate at 29 which would not impact Fairfield.

Alex Durrell asked if the M&T Bank takeover of People's will impact tax collections. Mr. Kluczwski said the full takeover is Labor Day, but you can still make payments at their branches.

Information Technology: IT Director Dave Kelley attributed the increases to the replacement with a more robust antivirus solution, software, metro area network contract and replacement of computers and infrastructure. Karen Wackerman asked what the hybrid meeting plan timing is. Mr. Kelley said the RFP was sent to Purchasing. After they send it out the vendor selection process begins; he is concerned about supply chain issues and does not have a good estimate on timing right now.

Tom Lambert asked if there are other platform options the Town has explored besides Webex or Zoom. Mr. Kelley said the Town chose Webex over Zoom because of the well-publicized security/hacking issues with Zoom. Mr. Kelley said staff had been reorganized and modernized and is comfortable with headcount for the size of the Town in response to Ms. Pistilli.

Unemployment Compensation: CFO Jared Schmitt said the requested amount had been reduced to \$250,000 based on best estimates.

Debt Service: Budget Director Frank Magneri said the budget has been reduced \$1.5 million based on the final payment of the loan for the Clean Water Fund.

Contingency: In response to Karen Wackerman, Mr. Magneri explained the budget had been reduced by \$350,000 by the BOF, leaving \$2,418,149. Pamela Iacono asked if there is a plan of action or if services would be frozen if funds are needed for an emergency. Ms. Kupchick said she could not answer, but the

REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

APRIL 6, 2022

Page 3 of 5

town would be taken care of. Ms. Zezima asked for an accounting from when the contingency was cut in its entirety (\$800,000) in 2017. Ms. Kupchick said Mr. Schmitt would get the information for her.

Health: Health Director Sands Cleary was thanked for his department's efforts with the pandemic. Salary increases are contractual. Ms. Spolyar questioned the fuel & lube line regarding the new vehicles. Mr. Cleary indicated the vehicles for his department are previously used police cards. Ms. Kupchick noted there are supply issues causing delays in the vehicles arrival. Tom Lambert asked if the vaccination clinics will continue to which Mr. Cleary said they will continue as long as there is a demand; vaccine supplies are provided for free and they bill insurance.

Human Services: Julie Demarco noted because of expanded services and demands two positions are requested to increase from part time to full time – the social services coordinator and the senior center director. She was commended for the tremendous services her department provides.

Public Works: DPW Director John Marsilio said through reorganization DPW administration has been reduced to 3.5 people. Dru Georgiadis questioned the increase in printing & binding which Mr. Marsilio explained was for ink cartridges, paper and printed media.

Public Works Operations: John Cottell, Asst. DPW Director explained the bifurcation of operations to Parks Maintenance. He noted the increase in communications systems. Ms. Spolyar asked if there is a process change if a constituent has a park concern. Mr. Cottell said DPW still maintains the Parks Department equipment, but if someone has a concern over a broken park bench they would contact Parks & Recreation.

Ms. Vergara said there had been a proliferation of trash in town particularly at the I-95 exit ramps; Mr. Cottell said the street sweepers will be out now that spring is here; the ramps are under the DOT but if a complaint is made in Q-Alert they can refer it to the State DOT.

Ms. Vergara asked for the cost of leaf collection and if people can bring leaves to the transfer station on their own. Mr. Cottell said leaf collection is done by an outside vendor at a cost of \$156,000. Residents can bring up to 500 pounds free of charge.

In response to Ms. Zezima, Mr. Cottell noted there was a \$200,000 reduction by the BOF for equipment; however, because of supply chain issues they will evaluate the list to determine what is available and necessary for acquisition.

Engineering: Engineering Manager Bill Hurley explained the contractual wage increases required engineering services for several state, federal and local projects. Ms. Vergara questioned the number of engineers to which Mr. Hurley said there are 2 members of the survey crew and more engineering expertise is required for projects; several of the engineers are civil engineers and one is going for their professional engineering license in July.

Solid Waste & Recycling: Mr. Cottell attributed the increases to the tipping fees and contractual fees. Ms. Vergara asked that the Town website be updated to reflect contact information for the acting director. Ms. Pistilli asked about electronics recycling to which Mr. Cottell explained there is a market for these items unlike single stream markets that tanked over the last several years. Ms. Vergara questioned the bottle bill revenue to which Mr. Schmitt explained the estimated amount is \$28,000 but it can only be used for certain purposes so it has not been appropriated in the budget.

WPCA: John Bodie explained the notable increase to pay back the Town for engineering services for the WPCF hardening project. The contingency increase is for the salary increases in collective bargaining.

REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

APRIL 6, 2022

Page 4 of 5

Penfield: Anthony Calabrese explained the seasonal payroll increase due to more events at the Jacky Durrell Pavilion and minimum wage increases. Penfield Pavilion will close as of October 31, 2022 and he does not have any further information at this time; the CAO has been speaking with DEEP & FEMA.

Recreation: Mr. Calabrese noted the Contracted Property Services increase for the Christmas tree lighting which came in higher than anticipated. Steve Berez asked about the allocation of time for the aquatics coordinator. Mr. Calabrese said the allocation is 40% Penfield, 40% waterfront and 20% program coordinator; the position is the former waterfront director.

Waterfront: Mr. Calabrese attributed the increase in seasonal payroll to minimum wage increases for the lifeguards and parking attendants. Revenue estimate is \$1,202,488 with approximately \$900,000 in beach stickers and \$275,000 daily parking and balance in concessions. Discussion ensued regarding the use of federal funds for improvements at Penfield and Jennings and the restriction on parking rates for non-residents. Beach access is open to everyone; it's the parking that's restricted.

Parks: This budget is the separation of the parks from the DPW budget as part of restructuring. Mr. Calabrese gave an update on the status of the master plan. 15 proposals are expected next year for review. Smaller projects can be included in the operating budget while large-scale would be part of the waterfall.

Marina: Mr. Calabrese noted the increase in seasonal payroll because of the minimum wage increase, but the budget decreased overall because of a reduction in capital outlay.

Carl J. Dickman Par 3: Budget decreased overall as there was no capital request, but seasonal payroll increased due to minimum wage increase.

H. Smith Richardson Golf Course: Budget decreased overall as there was no capital request, but seasonal payroll increased due to minimum wage increase. Over \$2.25 million in revenue projections from fees, driving range and restaurant concession. Mr. Steele & Ms. Georgiadis complimented the course and driving range and asked about improvements for both. The bunkers were included in the last 10-year plan. Driving range improvements will be investigated including possibility of a double-decker similar to Shelton or Stamford.

Registrars of Voters: Matthew Waggoner explained the increases for redistricting and anticipated primaries. The BOF cut \$60,000 from the budget request. Mr. Waggoner said there is a shortfall of 6 machines for 17 districts; however, if there are fewer districts it would alleviate budgetary pressure. Hannah Gale asked if monies for past primaries were in the department budget or contingency. Mr. Waggoner said the Flatto and Tetreau administrations put the primary funds in contingency, not the department budget. The department would spend the funds for the primary and go to the BOF for funds for the November election.

Karen McCormack asked if additional tabulators are necessary since they are programmable for more than one ballot style which Mr. Waggoner acknowledged they can but cited the statute does not provide for more than one district at a site.

Town Attorney Baldwin is awaiting a written opinion from SOTS regarding split districts and the use of tabulators in the split districts.

There being no further business this evening, the meeting recessed at 10:51 PM and will reconvene tomorrow night at 7 PM.

REPRESENTATIVE TOWN MEETING

APRIL 6, 2022

Page 5 of 5

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth P. Browne, MMC, MCTC

Town Clerk