



Town of Wilmington

Finance Committee

121 Glen Road Wilmington, 01887

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TOWN OF WILMINGTON, MA

Finance Committee Meeting

Tuesday, February 6, 2024

Finance Committee Chairman, John F. Doherty III called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Members present were Theresa Manganeli, Vice-Chairman, Marianne Gallezzo, Secretary, Chris DiOrio, Brad Jackson, Andrew Levigne, Joseph Lavino, Scott Neville, and David Tamang.

Present in interest: Louis Cimaglia IV, Temporary Town Manager, Jamie Magaldi, DPW Director, Joseph Lobao, Deputy DPW Director, Jerry Lawrenson, operations Manager, Mike Hardimon, Garage Foreman, Dennis Kelley, Superintendent of Public Buildings.

Mr. Doherty informed the audience that public comments would be limited to three minutes per member of the public.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Magaldi and Mr. Lobao distributed packets to the Finance Committee Members which detailed the Proposed FY 25 Department of Public Works budget and the Proposed FY 25 Water and Sewer budget. Mr. Magaldi expressed his thankfulness for the Finance Committee's continued support.

Mr. Magaldi stated that the DPW is responsible for the horizontal public infrastructure. The department consists of six divisions including Highway, Parks and Grounds, Tree, Wildwood Cemetery, Water and Sewer, and Engineering. The DPW also oversees curbside trash and recycling collections, the maintenance of the town's vehicles and construction equipment, and the construction oversight of utility work. Mr. Magaldi also informed the group that the DPW has established a Twitter account that allows them to distribute helpful information to the public, he encouraged viewers to subscribe. The DPW participated in the First Responders event at the library, to which they donated a big wheel. The program also distributed gift cards to 7 local families, allowing them to purchase nearly \$2000.00 of groceries.

Mr. Magaldi noted that Personnel Services had decreased by 2.75%; Contractual Services had increased by 5.72%; and Materials and Supplies had increased 1%. The proposed Department of Public Works FY 24 budget totals \$8,096,262, which reflects a 3.9% increase from FY 24.

Mr. Magaldi detailed that Personnel Services has a proposed increase of \$91,514 or 2.57%, mainly attributed to the request of an additional full-time Parks and Grounds employee. The 99-year lease at 175 Lowell Street has begun, increasing the field maintenance responsibility from 40 acres to 45 acres. The department is requesting the additional parks and grounds employee to help offset the increased responsibility, as the division was last expanded by 1 person in the FY19 budget with the creation of Yentile Park. Mr. Magaldi explained the seasonal and day-to-day duties of the division, including turf management, integrated pest management, spring and fall cleanups, equipment maintenance, and snow and ice removal. Mr. Magaldi highlighted changes and additions to the division over the past 20 years, including turf management, expansion of youth groups and sports, playground expansions, and rain gardens. Mr. Magaldi noted that the new Senior Center would also add roughly another 5 acres to be cared for.

Mr. Doherty asked what it would take for the 175 Lowell Street fields to be brought up to shape. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the site is currently going through a grant-funded feasibility study. Once the study is completed, the town will determine what is wanted for the site.

Mr. Magaldi continued his presentation, highlighting that with the current Parks and Grounds staffing, one employee would be responsible for 8.7 Acres. With the addition of 11 acres for 175 Lowell Street and new building projects, one employee would be responsible for 10.3 Acres. By adding one full-time employee to the division, it would help keep the number of acres per employee close to 9 acres.

Mr. Manganelli asked if Mr. Magaldi had considered increasing summer help positions. Mr. Magaldi noted that there had been a decrease in applicants and the positions had been difficult to fill. Mr. Magaldi informed anyone listening to the presentation that summer help applications would be accepted in the spring and interested parties could contact the Town Manager's office.

Mr. Magaldi noted that the Wildwood Cemetery had been consolidated and absorbed 30 years ago and had not seen an increase in employees since. The Cemetery Division has grown, due to expansions and maintenance and they regularly rely on assistance from the Highway Division for help. This assistance puts a strain on other divisions and does not allow for consistent maintenance schedules for the cemetery. The DPW has requested an expansion of staff from 2 to 3 full-time employees; however, the request has been deferred to subsequent years. Mr. Magaldi clarified that at the time he is not looking for an additional employee at the moment, but likely will be in the future.

Mr. Magaldi detailed the recent additions to the Wildwood Cemetery. Mr. Doherty asked how many remains the two new Columbariums will be able to hold. Mr. Magaldi noted that each Columbarium can hold 32 sets of remains and are available for presale.

Ms. Manganelli asked if there were plans for the expansion of traditional burial sites. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the newer section at 64 Wildwood Street, should sustain the needs of the community for 10 years.

Mr. Magaldi informed the committee of recent changes to the Tree Division. The division reintroduced the G-5 Tree Climber position, which was downgraded to a G-4 last year as the town's long-time experienced Tree Climber had resigned. Bringing back the G-5 position would save the town from having to contract out these services.

Mr. Magaldi noted the retirement of Joseph Duffy, who has been with the town for 36 years, would contribute to the offset of increases in step raises, longevity, and the request for additional staff. Mr. Magaldi added that the COLA increase for AFSCME II employees had not been factored into this budget.

Mr. Magaldi stated that the Contractual Services budget increased 5.72% due to the town entering year 5 of a 5-year agreement with Wheelabrator North Andover and Casella Waste, experiencing a 6.14% or \$142,000 increase. The recent addition of the state's requirements for mattresses to be recycled has driven this increase. Mr. Magaldi noted that the Public Street Lights line item is expected to increase by 4% or \$6,500. Also proposed are modest increase of \$5,000 has been added for the Parks & Grounds Miscellaneous Contractual Services and Snow & Ice Repair and Maintenance and Equipment to accommodate the rising costs of parts and materials associated with repairs.

Mr. Magaldi stated that there is a proposed 1.1% increase to Materials and Supplies due to increased costs of materials including sand and salt, as well as costs associated with the former Textron Property. Mr. Magaldi

added that the costs of the salt had gone down but had been level-funded to accommodate unpredictable weather.

Mr. Doherty asked how contract snowplow removal employees had been going and if Wilmington was competitive in their pay. Mr. Magaldi noted that rates for contractors had been raised this year, resulting in a full staff. Mr. Magaldi added that it had been difficult statewide to fill these positions, and it was important to be on top of staying competitive in the market.

Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the prices of fuel had begun to recede, and the town continued to save money by switching over to more fuel-efficient vehicles. Mr. Magaldi stated that the fuel budget had been level-funded. Mr. Doherty asked what the life expectancy was for a police cruiser. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the life expectancy would be determined by the vehicles used; frontline cruisers are running nearly 24/7 and would be expected to last 1-2 years, and then be passed on to a detective unit, or administrative staff.

Mr. Magaldi reviewed the Furnishing and Equipment budget which has increased by \$29,300, in FY 24, the budget had decreased by 34.35% due to a relocation of items to the capital plan in efforts to reduce the operating budget. Items included in the FY 25 Furnishing and Equipment budget include (1) Zero-Turn Mower for the Cemetery Division, \$24,000. (2) Diagnostic Software Upgrade for Cummings Diesel Engines, \$6,500. (3) Stand Up Mower for the Highway Division, \$9,500. (4) Irrigation Pump Repair and Maintenance Program, \$8,000. (5) Fence Extension at Yentile Field, \$6,500. (6) Swing Gate behind West Intermediate School, \$2,400. (7) Swing Gate behind Boutwell School, \$2,400.

Mr. Magaldi noted the Capital Outlay requests for FY 25. Items included 1) One Heaving Duty Vector Jet Truck, \$330,000; the cost totaling \$660,000, the additional \$330,000 coming from Water Division Capital. (2) One Heavy front loader, \$205,000. (3) One Baseball Infield Groomer, \$38,000. (4) One Heavy Duty Mini Wing Mower, \$50,000. (5) NPDES General Permit Services, \$75,000. (6) Phased Cemetery Development, \$60,000. (7) Lowell Street Fields/ Recreation Area Phased Improvements, \$50,000; to supplement the remaining earmark funding. (8) Drainage Culvert Living at 340 Ballardvale Street, \$135,000.

Mr. Magaldi noted that item number 4, the Heavy-duty Mini Wing Mower, was brought up in the Finance Committee meeting in November, and advanced funding had been requested. Mr. Magaldi added that if advanced funding is approved, the mower would arrive in several weeks and be available for use on the 175 Lowell Street property.

Ms. Manganelli entertained a motion for the Finance Committee to approve spending \$50,000 for the requested Heavy-duty Mini Wing Mower; funds are to be taken from the Finance Committee's discretionary funding account. Motion was seconded by Mr. DiOrio.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Neville asked what the lifecycle was for the mower. Mr. Magaldi noted that it would depend on how the equipment is maintained and used but is expected to last 8-12 years. The addition of this piece of equipment will ease the use of the town's flagship mower, possibly extending its life.

Kevin McDonald of 140 Andover Street asked where in the town bylaws, it was outlined that the finance committee could bypass town meeting and allow for a \$50,000 purchase. Mr. Doherty noted that the committee's ability to do this was not part of the town's bylaw but was allowed by state laws. Mr. McDonald noted he was opposed to the addition of an employee, as the town is self-insured, and it would cost the town

more than contracting these services. Mr. McDonald continued to explain his understanding of the town's employee health insurance. Mr. Doherty asked Mr. McDonald to stay on topic.

VOTED: To approve spending \$50,000 for the requested Heavy-duty Mini Wing Mower; funds are to be taken from the Finance Committee's discretionary funding account.

Mr. Magaldi informed the committee of his appreciation for their support. He added that the DPW is requesting smaller items, such as the addition of \$3,600 to the overtime budget to get through the spring; as well as 2,400 dollars to aid spring cleanup. Mr. Magaldi acknowledged that there were no further questions and turned the room over to Joseph Lobao, Deputy DPW Director.

DPW WATER

Mr. Lobao stated that the Personnel Services budget had increased by 1.5% related to step increases and overtime; Mr. Lobao noted that COLA has not been factored in. Contractual Services had decreased by nearly 40%, driven by three adjustments, including the MWRA Assessment, Professional Contractual Services, and the annual DVP Assessment. Utilities had increased by 3.1%, driven by the rising cost of telephone and heating costs for the two water treatment plants. Materials and Supplies had increased by 7.4%, caused by two adjustments, the maintenance of facilities, and the increase of chemicals used to safely treat drinking water. Furnishings and Equipment decreased by .2%. Capital Outlay had increased 204%, and Transfers had increased 11.6%.

Mr. Lobao detailed the Furnishings and Equipment budget for FY 25. Items included (1) Replace SCADA Unit for Sargent Water Treatment Plant, \$10,000. (2) Two NTU Meters for Sargent Water Treatment Plant, \$20,000. (3) Forklift for Sargent Water Treatment Plant, \$8,000. (4) Altitude valve Hillside Way Water Storage Tank, \$19,000. (5) Water Line Locator, \$3,500. Mr. Lobao informed the committee of the importance of upkeeping the water treatment facilities.

Mr. Lobao noted the Capital Outlay requests for FY 25 included an increase of over four million dollars, which is driven by the Route 38 Water Main Replacement project, as the current system is 70 years old. Mr. Lobao added that borrowing is intended for this project and that the item was included in his presentation for transparency. Items included (1) In-house Water Infrastructure Upgrade Program, \$100,000. (2) Redevelopment of Shawsheen Ave. and Salem St. Wells, \$55,000. (3) Granular Activated Carbon Replacement, \$750,000. (4) Route 38 Water Main Replacement, \$4,500,000. (5) Browns Crossing Wellfield Redevelopment, \$130,000. (6) Heaving Duty Vector Jet Truck, \$330,000; the cost totaling \$660,000, the additional \$330,000 coming from free cash (7) One Small Pick-up Truck, \$36,000. (8) Inspectional Services, Water Main on Butters Row Bridge, \$35,000. (9) Inspectional Services for Water Main on Main Street Bridge, \$37,000. (10) New Transformer for Sargent Water Treatment Plan, \$100,000.

Mr. Lobao detailed the Route 38 Water Main Replacement project, as the current system is 70 years old, and has been on the town's docket. Mr. Lobao noted that there will be a MassDOT project replacing the stretch of road, and it would make sense to complete the Water Main Replacement while the road is torn up.

Mr. Doherty informed the committee that he received his water bill and it had increased by 6%. Mr. Doherty asked Mr. Lobao, what the free cash was for the Water and Sewer Department. Mr. Lobao explained he did not have the number on hand, but would reach out to Finance Director, Bryan Perry.

Mr. Jackson commended Mr. Lobao for his transparency, information, and thoughtful planning. Mr. Jackson asked if everything in the Water and Sewer budget was funded through the department, and not taxation. Mr. Lobao confirmed that was correct, and the Water and Sewer accounts are essentially self-sustaining.

Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the department is continually working to receive grant funding for the Water Department and any projects subject to grant funding.

DPW SEWER

Mr. Lobao stated that the proposed Public Works Water and Sewer Budget FY 25 budget had decreased by .7%. Mr. Lobao noted that the Personnel Services account had increased by 2.5%, driven by step increases, noting that COLA had not been factored in. Materials and Supplies had decreased by 3.9%, due to the MWRA Sewer Assessment, the costs related to the MWRA Assessment are projected, and final numbers typically are presented in June. Mr. Lobao noted historically, the projected numbers have been fairly accurate, and Capital & Debt had increased 61.4%, driven by the design of the Industrial Way Sewer Pump Station Replacement, which was originally constructed in the 1960s.

Mr. Neville asked if the department had researched the lifecycle and cost of purchasing a used Heavy-Duty Vactor Truck. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that this piece of equipment is few and far between and the available ones, typically have already been deemed unusable.

Mr. Neville asked if the gates requested for the Boutwell and West Intermediate School were replacements, as gates were already on site. Mr. Magaldi noted there was one gate that was relocated but needed to be replaced.

Mr. Neville noted at last year's Town Meeting, that it was voted to look at the high school turf field. He added that Mr. Magaldi had provided an excellent explanation of grass vs. turf, and why maintaining turf was the better option. Mr. Neville asked if it had been considered to replace the turf with grass. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that this issue had been discussed in July at the Select Board Meeting. The positives and negatives were discussed, resulting in the Select Board endorsing a synthetic field, with the possibility of exploring options. Mr. Magaldi informed the committee that the design is currently in progress, where details will be decided. Mr. Magaldi briefed the added costs associated with maintaining a grass field vs. turf.

Mr. Neville recommended the summer help program, as he participated in his youth. Mr. Magaldi noted that even though the summer help employees were only with the department for a few weeks over the summer, it has resulted in permanent full-time employees joining the department after graduation.

Mr. Cimaglia expressed his appreciation of the DPW for their efforts in producing a lean budget and their continued dedication to the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kevin McDonald of 140 Andover Street, requested to comment, however, he was informed that he reached his three-minute time limit, aforementioned by the Finance Committee Chair at the beginning of the meeting.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Dennis Kelley, Superintendent of Public Buildings introduced himself to the committee, adding that he is more than happy to get answers for them that he might not have on hand. Mr. Kelley acknowledged former

Superintendent of Public Buildings, George Hooper's, commitment to preparing for the transition, welcoming himself into his new role.

Mr. Kelley informed the committee that the goal of working with Mr. Cimaglia and Mr. Hooper before his retirement was to level-fund the FY 25 budget. Mr. Kelley provided an overview of Personnel Services, emphasizing Mr. Hooper's retirement had driven a decrease of .08%. Mr. Kelley noted there were no overtime increases. Mr. Kelley added that summer help had been difficult to find, and last year only two had been hired. Mr. Kelley noted that it is being considered to add a full-time painter, to offset the astronomically high costs of painting.

Mr. Kelley informed the committee that the fuel budget has not increased from last year. Mr. Doherty asked how many of the buildings are run on natural gas. Mr. Kelley informed the committee that 10 buildings are run on natural gas, some buildings do not have the availability, and the buildings whose future are yet to be decided have not been changed to natural gas. The committee and Mr. Kelley discussed the future energy commitments set by the government. Mr. Kelley noted that electrical costs are expected to increase by 8.6-10%. Driving an estimated increase of \$350,000 to the overall budget, even with the town changing to energy-efficient light bulbs.

Mr. Kelley stated that the town utility budget, which supports alarms, monitoring, maintaining equipment, and repairs had been level-funded. Mr. Kelley noted that the HVAC Fund had also been level funded, as public buildings staff performs most services. Mr. Kelley noted that the new building projects will be operating off of newer systems, and there will be a learning curve, and details are not yet available, he added that there will be estimates in next year's budget. Mr. Kelley informed the school's budget, Asbestos budget, Town Building Expenses budget, Miscellaneous Facility repairs budget, Roof Repairs budget, and Training and Conference budget have remained level-funded.

Mr. Kelley totaled the Public Buildings Department's FY 25 budget at \$5,847,060 a .9% increase from the FY 24 budget of \$5,791,871.

Mr. Kelley informed the committee that the Capital Items, were minimal, as the town is currently going through two major building projects. Items included (1) A Super Duty Box Truck Replacement. (2) Foreman's Car Replacement, as the DPW recommended replacement. The committee asked that Mr. Kelley meet with the DPW to discuss possible existing vehicles that could be used for replacement.

Ms. Manganelli thanked Mr. Kelley for his presentation. Ms. Manganelli noted that it is difficult to decide on repairs and updates for buildings with an uncertain future, and asked Mr. Kelley about the windows at the West Street School, as she had heard that the windows were leaking terribly in the classrooms. Ms. Manganelli questioned the option for temporary repairs. Mr. Kelley stated that repairs could be done in-house and that he would work with the Principal on the issue, as it had not been reported to him.

Ms. Gallezzo asked for a status update on expected repairs at the Harnden Tavern. Mr. Kelley informed the committee that \$98,000 had been allocated for the roof of the main house and \$68,000 for the roof of the carriage house. The project had been out to bid but had come back with a low of \$288,400 and a high of \$468,000. Mr. Kelley informed the committee that the Bid Spec will be altered, creating a procurement for each roof. Mr. Kelley added that Museum Curator, Matthew Beres, is pursuing a grant that will match up to 100% of already allocated funds. Ms. Gallezzo asked if the Window Replacement Project had been out to bid. Mr. Kelley informed the committee that the project is in development.

Mr. DiOrio questioned the need for a total roof replacement. Mr. Kelley informed him that it had been decided and that the issue was voted on. Mr. Doherty explained the Finance Committee's experience with their site visit, noting that they could see the sky through areas of the roof and that there were buckets for frequent leaks.

The Finance Committee thanked Mr. Kelly for his presentation.

Mr. Cimaglia noted that Assistant Town Clerk, Meghan Jones, who found the grant opportunity for the tavern, is also working towards a historical grant to restore deteriorated death records.

Mr. Doherty asked Mr. Cimaglia for an update regarding the antique truck located within the carriage house at the Harnden Tavern. Mr. Cimaglia did not have answers on hand but would find the information before Thursday's meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Selectmen Frank West of 2 Birchwood Road provided the history of the antique truck and how it ended up at the tavern.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Finance Committee Reviewed the Minutes from March 23, 2023. A motion was made By Mr. Neville, seconded by Mr. DiOrio, and unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes from March 23, 2023

The Finance Committee Reviewed the Minutes from April 29, 2023. A motion was made By Ms. Manganelli, seconded by Mr. Neville, and unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the minutes from April 29, 2023

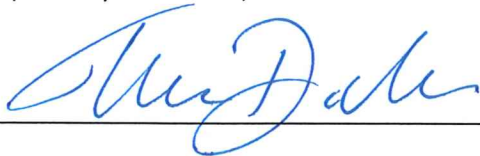
ADJOURN

At the conclusion of the discussion, being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Manganelli for the Finance Committee to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Gallezzo and unanimously:

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas F. Donahue

Recording Secretary