



Town of Medway

FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Wednesday, April 2, 2020 – 7:00 PM
Sanford Hall, Town Hall
155 Village Street

Present: Frank Rossi, Chair; Todd Alessandri, Vice Chair; Sue Segarra.

Participating Remotely: Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Brian Cowan; Will Lane; Jim Sullivan.

Absent: Jeff O'Neill; Michael Schrader.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Administrator (remote); Carol Pratt, Finance Director (remote); Allen Tingley, Police Chief; Jeffery Lynch, Fire Chief.

Call to Order

At 7:01 PM Chairman Rossi called the meeting to order. A quorum of seven (7) members was present.

Discussion/Review – FY21 Budget & STM/ATM Warrant

Police Budget

Present: Allen Tingley, Police Chief.

Chief Tingley briefly reviewed the Police Department Budget, noting that one of the biggest increases is the salary. He indicated that much of it is reflected in one-time fees, one for a lieutenant who has been there over 30 years. The department will go through the progression to fill that spot meaning an officer is moved up, creating an opening, and the sequence continues. The biggest hit is several officers who are moving in various step increases over the course of the year. The retirement hit will be around \$45,000 which includes vacation payout and other things as outlined in collective bargaining agreements. Other factors include a slight increase in differentials and holiday pay. There is high overtime rate for full-time employees who fill openings in shifts.

Chairman Rossi asked about educational credits. Chief Tingley noted that, out of 25 officers, 12 have college degrees. Six officers have masters' degrees, eleven have bachelors' degrees and the rest have associate degrees. Crossing guard received a 2% COLA increase.

Discussion followed on other budget items such as cost assessment centers, telephone expenses, internet service for academy students, and uniforms. Regarding vehicles, the department is replacing one marked cruiser, an unmarked vehicle and a motorcycle. Vehicles are usually traded in.

Fire Chief Jeffrey Lynch

Present: Fire Chief Jeffrey Lynch

Mr. Boynton spoke briefly about the original budget request for additional firefighter/paramedics. The Board of Selectmen discussed total quality perspective especially relative to call volume, and the fact that the Salmon facility will be coming on board in May of 2021. The Town needs to be sure they are fully able to accept this new population. The Selectman added four new firefighters for May of 2021. The FY21 impact is roughly \$60,000 (for two months) after moving some funds around in the budget.

Responding to questions from the committee, Chief Lynch stated he anticipates 250 calls per year from Salmon. We have two ambulances, with a third one that is being equipped with ALS, but it is not always staffed. With the addition of staff, two ambulances will be covered all of the time. The 250 call number was determined based on conversation with the facility administration as well as another fire chief with a similar facility in his community. It was noted that the Town is paying 35% of the benefits, but after January 2021 that goes away. The budgetary impact will be covered by Exelon funds.

Discussion followed on the Salmon facility coming in May 2021. Chief Lynch noted that the hiring of additional staff will be coordinated with the opening of the facility. If the opening is pushed back, the hiring will be pushed back. On opening, the facility won't be full and it allows time for us to train. Brief discussion followed. Mr. Boynton stated that it takes the better part of 3-4 months to train firefighter/paramedics so knowing the opening of the facility is critical. Revenue is estimated; Mr. Boynton reported that the current revenue is around \$700,000 and the added calls will be on top of that. Revenues can go toward the replacement of an ambulance or making upgrades to an existing one. There will also be an increase in clothing for four new hires, turnout gear, etc. Mr. Boynton added that there is an increase in the overtime line when there are simultaneous calls that overlap each other.

Responding to a question from Chairman Rossi, Chief Lynch reported that, when the Town got to the ALS level of service, it was difficult to find fully trained people with medical qualifications. When we get them, they will be a licensed paramedic, but we will likely have to send them to the firefighting academy. Brief discussion followed. It was noted that there is often a waiting list to get into the academy.

Chief Lynch stated the department has been working toward getting the high school mentorship program started when the virus situation happened. The program will be put on hold for this year; both Tri-County and Medway High are interested in participating.

Ms. Hillery asked about Fire Purchase Services. Chief Lynch responded those are costs for services we don't provide ourselves that do not have a dedicated line item in the budget. Service contracts, for example, for the ALS equipment and the photocopier maintenance contract. Mr. Boynton clarified that several years ago the EMS was merged with Fire which accounts for a large balance.

Mr. Boynton expressed appreciation for the leadership team as this is a difficult time with all the calls related to COVID-19, and their efforts are greatly appreciated.

Review of budget summary pages

Present: Michael Boynton, Town Administrator; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

Brief discussion followed on the budget summary pages. Ms. Pratt reported that there is revenue from the marijuana cultivation facility that comes to the Town in \$10,000 increments which is then disbursed to various departments as outlined in their Host Community Agreement. It is to be used for things like community education and outreach as well as drug testing. Other areas reviewed included health insurance, the Snow and Ice Budget, tax title work, and Enterprise Funds.

Mr. Boynton clarified that there should be no changes to the Warrant other than a small tweak to the language of one article. Local property taxes are still due May 1 unless state law pushes it off. Expenses for COVID-19 would be covered in Special Town Meeting Article 8. The Annual Town Meeting Warrant will be finalized next week. Discussion followed on whether the Finance Committee should vote its recommendations on April 8. There are a couple of bids that will be opened after that public hearing so those articles will have to be TBD. Those recommendations can be finalized at a pre-Town meeting if Town Meeting goes forward as scheduled for May 11 or pushed out until June.

Miscellaneous

Chair's Report

Chairman Rossi reminded members that subcommittee reports are due on April 6. Mr. Cowan volunteered his availability to help with contacting department heads or others to help get the reports moving along. He replaced Kevin Dickie as liaison on committee. Chairman Rossi read through the report assignments. Last year's report is posted on the Finance Committee page for reference.

Clerk's Report

There have been no disbursements from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund; the original balance remains at \$100,000. Mr. Alessandri noted that the School Committee will be voting authorization for Dr. Pires to come to Finance Committee for \$30,000 for the purchase of van to transport special education students. It was noted that there may be COVID-19 expenses that may be presented for payment out of the Reserve Fund.

Liaison Reports

These were postponed. Chairman Rossi asked that members work on their reports for the Annual Report for Town Meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Draft minutes from February 12, March 11 and March 25, 2020 were reviewed.

Mr. Alessandri made a motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2020 as amended; Ms. Segarra seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Mr. Alessandri made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2020 as amended; Ms. Segarra seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Mr. Alessandri made a motion to approve the minutes of March 25, 2020 as amended; Ms. Segarra seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

Upcoming Meetings

At this time, Chairman Rossi took a poll on member availability for next Wednesday's meeting and public hearing, and checked with those participating remotely. He asked those who plan to participate remotely to forward the Remote Participation Sheets. He needs signed documents for tonight and for next week.

Brief discussion followed on next week's meeting and public hearing. Concern was expressed that, if Town Meeting is rescheduled, the warrant articles may change and may necessitate reconsideration by the Finance Committee. If it moves forward as planned, there will be a pre-Town Meeting gathering before the May 11 Special and Annual Town Meetings.

ADJOURN

At 8:40 PM Mr. Alessandri made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Segarra seconded. No discussion. ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0 (Alessandri, aye; Cowan, aye; Hillery, aye; Lane, aye; Rossi, aye; Segarra, aye; Sullivan, aye).

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt*