



## Town of Medway

### FINANCE COMMITTEE

155 Village Street

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Wednesday, March 29, 2023 – 7:00 PM

Town Hall, Sanford Hall

155 Village Street

Present: Jim Sullivan, Chair; Brian Cowan, Vice Chair; Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Bruce Carbone; Will Lane; Sue Segarra.

Absent: Chris Lagan; Jeff O'Neill; Michael Schrader.

Staff Present: Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Barbara Saint Andre, Director, Community and Economic Development; Peter Pelletier, Director, Department of Public Works; Julie Harrington, Director, Parks and Recreation

Police Department Staff Present: William Kingsbury, Chief; Lt. Matthew Reardon, Communications; Lt. Jeffrey Watson, Operations

Fire Department Staff Present: Jeffrey Lynch, Chief; Michael Fasolino, Deputy Chief; Craig Vinton, Deputy Chief

Parks Commission Members Present: Debi Rossi, Chair; Rick D'Innocenzo and Sean Murphy, Members

Others Present: Dennis Crowley, Chair, Select Board; Cindy Sullivan, School Committee liaison to Finance Committee; Matt Hayes, Chair, Planning and Economic Development Board

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#### **Call to Order**

At 7:02 PM Chairman Sullivan called the meeting to order with six members present. Members Chris Lagan, Jeff O'Neill and Michael Schrader were absent.

#### **1.0 Review of FY24 Departmental Budgets:**

*The following information was reviewed: Police – MPD PowerPoint Presentation; Fire – Fire Department Call Information for 3 years; Parks and Recreation – Graphs depicting field use by complex; Revenues and Expenses; Summary for Finance Committee meeting.*

#### **Police Department**

Present: William Kingsbury, Chief; Lt. Matthew Reardon, Communications; Lt. Jeffrey Watson, Operations

Chief Kingsbury introduced the other officers with him: Lt. Matthew Reardon and Lt. Jeffrey Watson.

Drawing attention to the Executive Summary, page 8 of the document submitted, Chief Kingsbury briefly reviewed the budget components, noting with each item whether it was level-funded, or an increase or decrease from the previous year. Brief discussion followed on education and officers enrolled in Masters' degree programs, availability of hybrid vehicles, and the replacement of software. It was noted that the department may approach the Finance Committee if the cost of the new software exceeds the amount currently being budgeted. As for the new position outlined on page 10, Chief Kingsbury reported that it is not a backfill.

Discussion followed. Mr. Carbone theorized that the overall budget increase is about 3% or around \$50K. Ms. Segarra asked if the salary for the new position was included in the budget; Chief Kingsbury responded that the Town Manager has indicated there are funds that can be applied to it. Regarding hybrid vehicles, Chief Kingsbury emphasized that the state mandates use of hybrid vehicles, but Ford Motors cannot keep up with the demand. The department was fortunate to get one this week, but may not get one next year which is when it was to come in. Additionally, vehicles that are available do not meet the specific needs of the department. There may also come a time when electric vehicles will be required for administrative purposes.

Responding to a question from Ms. Segarra, Lt. Reardon stated that the department is continuing the program of sharing a mental health clinician with the Town of Franklin. He added that the department gets reports reflecting the savings connected with the hospitals and medical centers. The results are staggering, and over 50% of the calls they get are ones that used to be transported to the hospital. The ones that are sent to the hospital truly need those services. There is grant money available in order to hire a second clinician but people with those specialized skills are hard to find. A second person would have weekend coverage as well as a couple weekdays. Right now both positions are fully funded with grant money. It's not clear how long grant funds may be available. Training is provided through immersion after a rigorous interview process.

Regarding the new software request, Lt. Reardon reported that the current records management system has been in use since 1997, old VMS system, and in 2004 it was upgraded to a Windows-based system with periodic updates but largely it remains the 1997 version. Technology changes (subscription-based programs, data migration, Cloud usage, etc.) in addition to the original company going out of business in the public safety arena is forcing the need for new software. Discussion followed during which it was reported that the changeover may occur shortly after January 1. The success of data migration is a priority that is available with the system being considered.

Continuing, Lt. Reardon reported that the request to add a second full-time dispatcher is included in the communications dispatch budget. He noted it has been increasingly difficult to find staff for part-time positions; the training consists of over 120 hours of mandated training. Often the dispatcher has to talk someone through EMS procedures until an ambulance gets to the location. Historically, dispatchers often entered the patrol division; that does not occur as much now but it is still a career path.

At 7:37 PM Chief Kingsbury, Lt. Reardon, and Lt. Watson exited the meeting room.

#### Fire Department

Present: Jeffrey Lynch, Chief; Mike Fasolino, Deputy Chief; Craig Vinton, Deputy Chief

Chief Lynch stated that the department's budget reflected a 3.5% increase over the entire budget, driven mostly by cost of contractual obligations and fuel expenses. There was no increase in personnel

staffing though there are step increases. He added that stipends have gone up, and an educational stipend is offered for the first time this year.

With regard to expenses, Chief Lynch reported that purchases have increased significantly as well as replacing some software, adding that the software cost will be more acutely felt next year. Additionally, the ambulance service contract is significantly higher than what was budgeted. The cost of electricity has increased while heating costs did not increase due to the warmer winter. Some line items have been level-funded. Supply expense is increased as hospitals are no longer replacing medical supplies used during ambulance calls. Additional turnout equipment will be needed due to new firefighter potentially coming on board; no on-call firefighter available to fill the slot so will hire from outside. Discussion followed on education and related reimbursements.

At this time, Chief Lynch reviewed the Call Report for a three-year period, separated by calendar year. In 2022 there was a 17% increase in calls due to the opening of the assisted living facility which is currently not full. As of now, there are 7.5 calls per day; 2.3 of those are simultaneous calls. They are dispatched to that location at least five times a week. Discussion followed during which it was noted that standard “formulas” do not necessarily work for Medway as the department is understaffed according to that formula. Mutual aid agreements are a help, but if those departments are out on their own calls, they cannot provide aid to Medway. The Call Report does not differentiate between Medway calls and those of a mutual aid nature, estimated at 10% or so. Increase in calls are related to increases in population, and people living longer whether they are in homes or elder facilities. Other communities are having similar issues with equipment needs and demands on building infrastructure.

Responding to a question from Chairman Sullivan, Chief Lynch reported that the trend in applicants seems to be lawyers or individuals with criminal justice degrees. He added that he is attempting to partner with vocational technical high schools to develop some kind of program that would lead to Emergency Services training and licensing.

Discussion followed on how billing for services; it was noted that all billing is handled by a third party. At this time, Mr. Crowley pointed out that the Select Board was concerned about the ambulances being busy and how that situation is handled. If there were more staff to handle the calls without going to mutual aid, how many more people and ambulances would be needed? There is not sufficient revenue from the outside calls to support the salary of new people. Mutual aid calls usually require ALS services (Advanced Life Support). Right now there is around \$400,000 in the ambulance reserve account.

Responding to a question from Mr. Cowan, Deputy Chief Fasolino stated that it takes approximately two years to get a new ambulance. The department is already planning the next one. It was noted that some equipment will be taken off the old one and installed in the new one.

At 8:15 PM Chief Lynch, Deputy Chief Fasolino, and Deputy Chief Vinton, exited the meeting room.

#### Department of Public Works

Present: Peter Pelletier, Director; Carol Pratt, Finance Director

Chairman Sullivan asked Mr. Pelletier to begin by identifying his three top concerns that the Town needs to be aware of budget-wise. Mr. Pelletier responded that the Water Treatment Plant is under construction, and one of the expenses is the new position of a Water Treatment Superintendent as well as an Assistant Superintendent. Expenses of chemicals and electricity will not be a consideration until it's time to develop the FY25 budget. There will be increased training for staff as well as certification and licenses for staff. There is also a stipend for the staff who handle the CDL training; it is less expensive to train staff in-house rather than go to truck training at an outside facility.

Mr. Pelletier noted that Stephanie Carlisle is the stormwater guru for the department. The current plan is to be level funded. He noted that the department has to have a phosphorous program in place in June, and have to start removing phosphorous from the water. A lot of the mechanical controls have to be revamped to meet the EPA guidelines. Mr. Pelletier cautioned that this program will only get more expensive as time goes on.

Regarding Solid Waste, Mr. Pelletier reported that disposing of collected recycling items is costing the Town money this year. It just costs more to get rid of these items. The department purchases a thicker yellow bag which increased the cost of those bags. Ms. Pratt added that, in order to balance the budget, retained earnings in the amount of \$350,000 will be used. Transfer station costs are up as the disposal costs of electronics has increased though there is no cost to the resident to drop off. Discussion followed on potential for increasing trash fees.

Net Metering is reflecting revenue due to the way it is calculated.

Chairman Sullivan asked if there was any plan for 3- or 5-year projections on trends on costs? Selectman Crowley reported that the Select Board has not yet done this but will have to when it considers raising the fee. Do we need the yellow bags as there is no longer revenue in the disposal of recyclables? Is there any identifiable benefit to the plastic bag bylaw? Industry trends can be identified at conferences and through webinar provided by DEP.

At 8:33 PM Mr. Pelletier exited the meeting room.

#### Parks and Recreation

Present: Julie Harrington, Director; Debi Rossi, Chair, Parks Commission; Rick D’Innocenzo and Sean Murphy, members, Parks Commission.

Ms. Rossi announced that Ms. Harrington was recently honored by the Massachusetts Parks and Recreation as Person of the Year. Much of the success of Medway’s programs is due to Ms. Harrington’s hard work.

Continuing, Ms. Rossi stated that the department made it through COVID, EEE and other factors; due to Julie’s creativity, they survived in spite of the limited use of the facilities. User group rates have not been increased for over five years. Ms. Rossi cautioned that they will need to start considering an increase in rates going forward. She pointed out that there are events that are open to everyone such as the concert series, Easter Egg Hunt, and others which are funded through the rec programs.

Referring to the graphs she provided, she noted these depict trends which will help with planning as time goes on. 2018 is a bump because Ms. Harrington was a new director went after the outstanding invoices. Chairman Sullivan pointed out that opening up city-wide events will help bring people to Medway, such as the food truck festival. It was noted that summer camp fees are going up.

Ms. Rossi noted that the department loses money on the grass fields which are subsidized by the turf fields. That loss is getting bigger so it is time to reassess the fees. There is a huge delta between fees charged to Medway groups vs. those to non-Medway groups. It’s difficult to compare to other communities as they charge for the field, possibly an additional charge for lighting or other component. Discussion followed on cost of replacement of turf fields which will happen in 2-5 years

Mr. Murphy asked if it is the responsibility of the department to raise the money to replace the fields; they get questions about that frequently. Chairman Sullivan responded that there is no hard agreement identifying

responsibility. It was noted that grass fields need “rest time” while turf fields can be used more consistently but then need a complete replacement. Should the people who use the fields cover those costs through fees? At its inception, there was an agreement to set aside funds for replacement but that local groups could use it at a reduced rate. Is it fair to expect residents to have that burden? At this time, Ms. Rossi reported that the commission almost came to ask for money during COVID and EEE. Right now net income is up, but there are a lot of moving parts to consider to attain a balance. Discussion followed during which it was noted that there are improvements to the field areas that are separate from the fields themselves.

Discussion concluded at 9:10 PM; Ms. Rossi, Ms. Harrington and Mr. Murphy exited the meeting room. At this time, Chairman Sullivan stepped out of the meeting room; Vice Chair Cowan took over the meeting.

## **2.0 Review of PEDB-related warrant articles for Annual Town Meeting**

*The following information was reviewed: Memorandum dated March 15, 2023 from the Chair of the Planning and Economic Development Board, and the Director of Community and Economic Development.*

Present: Barbara Saint Andre, Community and Economic Development Director; Matt Hayes, Chair, Planning and Economic Development Board.

Ms. Saint Andre pointed out that relevant Warrant article numbers are off by one as an article was removed since the memo was prepared. She briefly reviewed each article to explain what the change was. There were no questions from committee members as their questions were answered in her explanation in conjunction with the summary document.

At 9:22 PM Ms. Saint Andre and Mr. Hayes exited the meeting room; Chairman Sullivan returned.

## **3.0 Initial Review of FY24 Municipal Budget:**

*The committee had previously received the proposed FY24 Municipal Budget.*

Present: Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

At this time, Ms. Pratt reported that the number from Tri-County Regional Vocational School is a little less than what was anticipated. The Town’s FY24 assessment was recently received.

On the debt schedule, the reference to land acquisition is the land purchased at the Fall Town Meeting, and the borrowing will occur next month. The interest rate is unknown at this time; Ms. Pratt estimated that it will be around 5%. She explained how debt capacity/service works. There is money in the Warrant for the track-and-field study. Work on both the track and field will be included in the Fall Town Meeting warrant. Ms. Pratt pointed out that debt expense is a large part of the budget.

Continuing, Ms. Pratt reported that the big numbers involve retirement and insurance liability expenses. Health insurance came in close to last year, due mostly to the work of the Health Care Coalition. Responding to a question from Chairman Sullivan, Ms. Pratt stated that all member communities in the Coalition can view information from each other and there is a reserve funding component. Discussion followed during which it was noted that there are three vendors that can be considered, MIIA, Harvard Pilgrim and the GIC.

## **4.0 Emergency Transfer Request: Unemployment Expenses**

*The following information was reviewed: (1) Emergency Transfer Request, dated March 15, 2023; and (2) FY23 YTD MUNIS Budget Report on Unemployment Expenses.*

Present: Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

Ms. Potter stated that the request is for \$25,000 to cover unemployment expenses for the third quarter of the fiscal year. It was noted that administration intends to use an end-of-year transfer to cover fourth quarter expenses. General discussion followed.

**Mr. Cowan made a motion to approve the emergency transfer from the Finance Committee Reserve Fund in the amount of \$25,000 to cover third quarter unemployment expenses, as requested; Mr. Carbone seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.**

### **5.0 Initial Review of Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants**

*Revised 2023 Annual Town Meeting and May 8, 2023 Special Town Meeting Warrants had been previously distributed to the committee.*

Present: Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

#### **Special Town Meeting Warrant**

Ms. Potter and Ms. Pratt briefly reviewed the warrant articles. It was noted that these articles are mostly monetary in nature. It is likely the first two articles will be dropped.

Article 1: Free Cash Transfer: Snow and Ice Deficit – any shortfall will be covered by other monies

Article 2: Prior Year Bills – no prior bills

Article 3: Free Cash Transfer to General Stabilization – add \$200,000 to General Stabilization Fund

Article 4: Free Cash Transfer to Tax Title Services - \$20,000 for tax title legal and technical services

Article 5: Free Cash Transfer to Police Forfeiture Account – An account must be established in order to accept the deposit, and the provide reports on how the funds have been disbursed. Another deposit is forthcoming shortly.

Article 6: Sewer Enterprise Retained Earnings Transfer - \$150,000 to fund various expenses.

Article 7: Water Enterprise Retained Earnings Transfer – originally \$75,000, now \$90,000 to replace a truck

Article 8: Adjustment: Community Preservation Fund Statutory Set-Aside – This is the “true-up” to look at the actual expenses

Article 9: Repurpose Monetary Article—School Projects – for Town Meeting articles that provided funding where there are unused funds that need to be repurposed.

Noting the lateness of the hour, Chairman Sullivan asked if members had any questions on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant before the review begins. General discussion followed.

#### **Annual Town Meeting Warrant**

Article 1 – Debt Stabilization Fund Transfer

Article 2 – Transfer from Ambulance Receipts to General Fund

Article 3 – Appropriation: FY24 Operating Budget

Article 4 – Appropriation: FY24 Water Enterprise Fund

Article 5 – Appropriation: FY24 Sewer Enterprise Fund

Article 6 – Appropriation: FY24 Solid Waste Enterprise Fund

Article 7 – Free Cash Appropriation: Capital and Other Items

Article 8 – Raise & Appropriate: Roads & Sidewalks

Article 9 —Appropriation: OPEB Trust

Article 10 – Appropriation: General Stabilization

Article 11 – Capital Stabilization Transfer: McGovern School Roof Replacement

Article 12 – Field Stabilization Transfer: Hanlon Track & Field Design

Article 13 – Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund Asset Management Plan

Article 14 – Transfer from Ambulance Receipts to Capital Items

Article 15 – Appropriation: Community Preservation Committee  
Article 16 – Revolving Funds – Authorize FY24 Spending Limits  
Article 17 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Central Business District  
Article 18 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Electric Vehicles  
Article 19 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Oak Grove and Central Business District  
Article 20 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Dimensional Regulations  
Article 21 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Agricultural Residential III  
Article 22 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Groundwater Protection  
Article 23 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Housekeeping  
Article 24 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Home Based Businesses  
Article 25 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Construction Services  
Article 26 – Amend Zoning Bylaws: Solar  
Article 27 – Amend General Bylaws: Minor Changes  
Article 28 – Amend General Bylaws: Article III Fire Department  
Article 29 – Amend General Bylaws: Article X Repairs to Private Ways  
Article 30 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XI Fire Lanes  
Article 31 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XII Penal Laws, 12.9 Roadway Access  
Article 32 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XII Penal Laws, 12.16 Dog Bylaw  
Article 33 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XIV Prevention of Leakage of Underground Fuel or  
Chemical Storage Tanks and Systems  
Article 34 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XV Town Clerk Fees  
Article 35 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XIX Audit Committee  
Article 36 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XXIII Town Administrator  
Article 37 – Amend General Bylaws: Article XXIV Water Use Restrictions  
Article 38 – Amend General Bylaws: Add New Tree Preservation Bylaw

There were no questions on the nature of any Warrant articles. It was noted that the Select Board would be voting its recommendations at its April 3 meeting.

At 9:46 PM Mr. Crowley, Ms. Pratt, and Ms. Potter exited the meeting room.

#### **6.0 Miscellaneous:**

a. Due to the lateness of the house, all reports (Chairman's, Clerk's, Liaison) were postponed.

#### **b. Reminder -- Reports for Annual Town Meeting Book**

Chairman Sullivan reminded members that their committee reports for the Annual Town Meeting Book are due to him and Mr. Cowan by April 6. This gives them time to put the report together and submit it to the Town Manager's office in time for publication.

#### **7.0 Upcoming Meetings**

The public hearing will be on April 12 followed by the regular meeting during which the Finance Committee will vote its recommendations on the Warrant articles. The committee will also meet briefly on May 8 prior to Annual Town Meeting.

#### **8.0 Adjourn**

**At 10:04 PM Ms. Segarra made a motion to adjourn; Ms. Hillery seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Jeanette Galliardt, Night Board Secretary*