**Finance Committee**

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

Video of meeting can be found at <https://youtu.be/_3bqJItHCRc?feature=shared>

Members present in person: Chair Patricia Devine, Michael Sullivan, Carmen Ocasio

Members absent: Vice Chair Kocayne Givner, Kevin Jourdain

Other councilors present: Israel Rivera

Chair Devine called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to take a roll call vote that for the purposes of this meeting would be applicable to all motions to remove items from the table, place items on the table, package items together, or suspend the rules, unless there is an objection. Motion passed.

Chair Devine stated that the minutes from the previous meeting would remain tabled as they were not ready.

Item 1: Minutes of March 4, 2024 meeting

--->Laid on the table.

Item 2: 3-6-24 DEVINE - Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, FOUR THOUSAND SEVENTY AND 10/100 Dollars ($4,070.10) as follows:
FROM:
12201-51105    FIREFIGHTER        $4,070.10
TOTAL:    $4,070.10
TO:
12201-51101    FIRE CHIEF         $4,070.10
TOTAL:    $4,070.10

--->Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

Chair Devine invited Fire Department Chief Kadlewicz into Chambers to discuss the transfer. She added that Fire Commissioner, Jeff Trask, was also in attendance.

Chief Kadlewicz stated that the funding was to cover a contractual raise he was receiving with the firefighters raise that started on July 1st.

Chair Devine asked what the percentage was.

Chief Kadlewicz stated that the 2 1/2%.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 2. Motion passed.

(2:30)

Item 10: 3-20-24 Devine- Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "FFY2023 MASSACHUSETTS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY EMPG GRANT, $12,350, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

J. Trask stated that this was a yearly grant primarily used for equipment for the Emergency Management Department, including previous purchases of mobile traffic signals, light towers, generators, and IT equipment. He noted that there was no match. He then emphasized that this allowed them to get equipment they wouldn’t otherwise be able to get with tax dollars. He explained that these funds would provide funding to upgrade the Emergency Management Operations Center at the Fire Department. He added that the training center at that location was used for large municipal events such as the St. Patrick’s Day Parade and Road Race. He noted that much of the equipment there was over 20 years old and this would get them a new wall mounted computer, provide video conferencing capability, and allow them to bring in live video from drones and from the State Police. He also stated that it would allow them to fund trainings to teach their civilian volunteers. He noted that the state required an in-kind match, which was already covered by the work of the Emergency Management team.

Chair Devine asked to confirm that the training room was at 600 High Street.

J. Trask stated that was correct.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 10. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

(5:10)

Chair Devine made a motion to remove item 3 from the table. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 3: 3-20-24 Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year
2024, EIGHTY SEVEN THOUSAND AND 00/100 Dollars ($87,000) as follows:
FROM:
14101-51101 PAY-ENGINEER $20,000
14251-51106 PAY-PROP MAIN & DEMO 22,000
14301-51103 PAY-REFUSE LABORER 20,000
14251-51107 PAY- HIGHWAY LABORER 14,000
16501-51106 PAY-HMEO PARKS 10,000
16501-51106 PAY-HMEO PARKS 1,000
TOTAL: $87,000
TO:
14102-53010 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES $20,000
14252-52600 R&M STREETS 22,000
14301-51300 PAY-REFUSE OVERTIME 20,000
14221-51300 PAY-CITY PROPERTY OVERTIME 14,000
16501-51300 PAY-PARKS OVERTIME 10,000
14211-51300 PAY-ADMIN OVERTIME 1,000
TOTAL: $87,000

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

Chair Devine invited DPW Director, Carl Rossi, into Chambers. Building Maintenance Supervisor for DPW, Sean Sheedy, also joined. She asked to clarify what HMEO stood for.

C. Rossi stated that it stood for Heavy Motor Equipment Operator. He then explained that this transfer was to balance the line items for the rest of the fiscal year, including paying the consulting fees for the Interim Engineer. He expressed a hope that a City Engineer would be hired within the next month, noting that discussions to address the salary were currently taking place in the Ordinance Committee. He explained that R&M Streets was for pothole repairs and line striping. He further explained that overtime had been under budgeted, partly due this having been his first budget as Director and he had barely a month to work on it. He also noted that Refuse Overtime was often due to picking up trash on Saturdays when there was a holiday or any events in the city. He noted that when those events take place, money is made at the parking decks. He added that during the Patronales Festival, around $10,000 was made from the parking decks during those four days. He also stated that $7,060 was made during the two days of the St. Patrick’s Day Parade and the Road Race. He then stated that he would plan to separate overtime needs for events and for holidays during the next budget cycle for better accounting. He also stated that city property overtime was under budgeted because he hadn’t realized there were so many events at the senior center, on top of overtime at City Hall for custodians.

S. Sheedy explained that a lot of overtime comes up at City Hall, including due to a water main leak over the recent winter requiring him, as well as plumbers and HVAC technicians, to work overnight to get the job done and reopen City Hall. He added that overtime included attending late consulting meetings, and other emergency repairs at city buildings. He also explained that overtime included custodial employees at city buildings for evening events, as well as late Council and subcommittee meetings, noting that they needed to stay until meetings were over.

C. Rossi stated that Parks Overtime was due to weekend baseball games over the summer. He then expressed concern that the parks were not getting enough revenue to cover the overtime. He also explained that Admin overtime was for biweekly DPW Board meetings for their office manager to do the minutes. He then stated that he would properly fund these items in the next budget. He added that the overtime, outside of snow removal, which could not be controlled, was only about 5% of his overall budget.

Councilor Sullivan asked if there were other concerns with aging infrastructure at City Hall that the Council should be aware of beyond the emergency water main break. He recalled seeing a steam pump sprinkler system in the basement.

S. Sheedy stated that the building had a steam pipe system and what he saw was the apparatus for that, which covered the south end of the building. He added that there was another one for the clock tower, which was antiquated and needed to be upgraded. He emphasized that there needed to be more investment in the building’s infrastructure. He also stated that the War Memorial Building was in need of repairs of the heating system, estimated to cost around $40,000.

Councilor Sullivan suggested that some of the repairs may qualify for CPA or CDBG funding.

S. Sheedy stated that he did apply for CPA funding for the final phase of the stained glass windows but had been denied because they had a lot of applicants, including other major projects that had been approved such as the Wistariahurst retaining wall. He expressed his intent to apply during the next cycle to make those repairs.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 3. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

(16:25)

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to suspend the necessary rules to remove item 9 from the table out of order. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 9: 3-20-24 Devine- Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, TWENTY ONE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND 00/100 Dollars ($21,300) as follows:
FROM:
8811-10400    CAPITAL STABILIZATION         $21,300
TOTAL:    $21,300
TO:
15412-52500    R&M BUILDINGS & GROUNDS         $21,300
TOTAL:    $21,300

---> Return to Auditor 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

S. Sheedy stated that this needed to be transferred into a different account, 14222-52505 labeled R&M Senior Center. He then explained was to cover the landscaping costs at the Senior Center, adding that this was returning money that came out of that budget account.

Chair Devine asked to clarify that it was borrowed and now it was going back in.

S. Sheedy stated that was correct. He then explained that the account was just labeled wrong. He then explained that the funding was for an emergency repair for the water heater. He noted that it was able to be done quickly with no loss of service at the building. He added that it came with a full warranty.

City Auditor, Tanya Wdowiak, stated that the clerical error was her mistake. She then stated that she could file an order with the accurate account number for the next Council meeting to replace this one.

Chair Devine asked if this could be voted on that evening.

T. Wdowiak stated that it could be.

S. Sheedy asked if he would need to return to discuss that new order.

T. Wdowiak stated that she would take care of it.

Councilor Sullivan asked if a new order needed to be filed.

T. Wdowiak stated that she had done it before.

Chair Devine noted that this order had already been signed off on by the mayor.

T. Wdowiak stated that she would file a new order and have the mayor sign off on it. She then explained that this order had already been discussed. She noted that the previous Finance chair, Joe McGiverin, used to handle it that way. She explained that the notes from the administrative assistant could also reflect that.

Admin Asst Anderson-Burgos stated that in this kind of situation in the past, the way it was handled is that this order would be returned to the Auditor since financial order could not be amended on the floor, and then the committee report would essentially be given on the new order.

Chair Devine made a motion to return item 9 to the Auditor. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Councilor Sullivan asked if the order would appear on the next Council agenda.

Chair Devine expressed her understanding that it would.

(21:40)

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to remove item 4 from the table. Motion passed.

Item 4: 3-20-24 Devine-Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  WORKPLACE SAFETY GRANT, $11,000, NO MATCH" grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

C. Rossi stated that their safety officer, Carl Fritz, applied for a safety grant for $11,000 with the intent to use it for certifying their employees for work zone safety as well as taking a CPR and AED course. He then stated that the purpose would allow their own employees doing the work of traffic flaggers and save the city money in the long run.

Chair Devine asked for clarification that this would train employees on injury prevention and safety education.

C. Rossi stated that was correct.

Councilor Sullivan asked if the city had received this grant before.

C. Rossi stated that he believed the city had a few years earlier but he was not completely sure.

Chair Devine made a motion to approve item 4. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

(23:45)

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to remove item 5 from the table. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 5: 3-20-24 Devine- Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE ON DISABILITY, $89,850, NO MATCH " grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

C. Rossi stated that this would allow them to evaluate sidewalks for ADA compliance. He noted that the previous City Engineer applied for this and that it was just awarded in February.

Chair Devine asked if there was a lot to be evaluated.

C. Rossi confirmed that there was.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 5. Motion passed.

(24:50)

Chair Devine made a motion to suspend the necessary rules to remove item 7 from the table out of order. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 7: 3-6-24 DEVINE - Ordered that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "Friends of City Hall" $10,000 donation and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said donation.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

S. Sheedy stated that this was a donation from the Friends of City Hall in anticipation of doing work on the stained glass windows during the current CPA cycle. He then explained that while the CPA grant was denied, the Friends of City Hall still wanted to move forward with the donation and have it put into a safe account to be only used for the windows.

Chair Devine asked Ms. Wdowiak if she would take care of that.

T. Wdowiak stated that she would.

S. Sheedy asked Ms. Wdowiak how that fund would work to secure that it could not be touched.

T. Wdowiak stated that it would go into a fund similar to those for big projects so that it was segregated from the general fund, coming with a fund number and account that would roll over year to year.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 7. Motion passed.

(27:20)

Chair Devine made a motion to remove item 6 from the table. Councilor Sullivan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 6: 3-6-24 [DEVINE - Ordered, that there be and is hereby appropriated by transfer in the fiscal year 2024, THIRTEEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED FORTY TWO AND 00/100 Dollars ($13,342) as follows:
FROM:
11411-51103    PRINCIPAL CLERK - ASSESSOR         $13,342
TOTAL:    $13,342
TO:
16912-52420    REPAIR & MAINTENANCE WISTARIAHURST        $13,342
TOTAL:    $13,342](https://holyokema.v8.civicclerk.com/Meetings/Agenda/ItemFields?id=662)

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

Chair Devine noted that Megan Seiler from the Wistariahurst was in attendance for this item. She then stated that the administrative assistant communicated with Chief Assessor, Deb Brunelle, on this and learned she would be on vacation and unable to attend. She read from the email communication:
“This was coming out of her budget as only sending funds out to another department's budget, the committee likely would just be looking for a quick explanation of the surplus. The surplus in the Clerks line item was because we had an employee leave employment with the city. The position was vacant for 5 months. A new person filled that position mid February. The surplus of funds was requested from the auditor for the benefit of Wistariahurst.”

M. Seiler stated that this was for an emergency repair that needed to be done on their boiler, adding that one of their water pumps failed, leading to no heat in the building. She added that some of the copper piping froze from colder temperatures, leading to it breaking and water leaking everywhere and setting off the fire alarms. She stated that the repairs had been done but plumbers, the people who installed the boiler, as well as electricians had to come in. She then deferred to Mr. Sheedy to further explain that process. She explained that this expense was outside of what was expected maintenance for the building.

S. Sheedy stated that a pump, it continued to draw cold air in which ran across the heat exchange, freezing it and making it explode, causing thousands of gallons of water to dump out in the carriage house. He then explained that they brought in plumbers and HVAC technicians to make the repairs, as well as add ball valves to help them isolate the unit if something similar happened in the future.

Chair Devine asked for an explanation of the valves.

S. Sheedy stated that valves isolate each air handler unit and were never installed originally, which was the reason they were required to shut down the heat.

Chair Devine asked what time of day this happened.

S. Sheedy stated that it was around 9 p.m. He then stated that they were there all night and several days to get it going again. He noted this was part of the reason for the overtime that was discussed earlier.

Chair Devine asked when this happened.

S. Sheedy stated that it had just happened.

M. Seiler stated that it happened on Valentine’s Day.

Councilor Sullivan asked if there was any damage to any of the historic features of the buildings.

M. Seiler stated that there was not.

S. Sheedy stated that the water drained into the sump pump boiler pit. He added that fail-safes led the boiler to go into trouble mode and shut itself down.

Chair Devine made a motion to approve item 6. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

(33:30)

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to remove item 8 from the table. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Item 8: 3-6-24 DEVINE - Ordered, that in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 44 Sec. 53A, the City Council hereby accepts the provisions of the "MASS DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY RESOURCES GREEN COMMUNITIES COMPETITIVE GRANT, $197,404, NO MATCH "grant and authorizes the establishment of a Fund or other method appropriate for the accounting of the receipts and expenditures of all resources associated with the administration of said grant.
Sec 2-509 - Grant Reporting
Any city department, of which has received grant funding by approval of the city council pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, or any other authorizing criteria, shall within a reasonable period of time, but no later than 60 days from the conclusion of said grant, generate a detailed report which outlines the planned outcomes with the documented actual results. Said report shall be submitted to the city clerk for addition to the city council's next agenda.

---> Approved 3-0-2 (Givner, Jourdain)

DISCUSSION:

Chair Devine introduced Yoni Glogower, Conservation Director.

Y. Glogower stated that this was a construction grant for energy infrastructure improvements to municipal buildings. He noted that Holyoke was designated a green community in 2010 and had submitted annual reports to remain in good standing with the program and be eligible for these grants. He then explained that he worked with Mr. Sheedy as well as the School Department on this, and that this would go to retrofitting and replacing lighting fixtures at two schools with LEDs, as well as doing weatherization improvements to a few municipal buildings, including the City Hall Annex and the War Memorial Building. He noted that there would be a simple payback of less than 9 years for the LED improvements and 6.3 years for the weatherization measures, saving the city around $18,000 a year. He added that this was also the first step to updating heating systems to get heat pumps into the buildings. He then explained that they would go out to bid for contractors to do the work. He added that they expected it to be completed within the next fiscal year but had until FY 26 to complete it.

Chair Devine noted the documentation mentioned Den and Metcalf Schools, as well as City Hall, the City Hall Annex, the Children’s Museum, and the War Memorial Building.

Councilor Sullivan noted that the letter referenced Daybrook Watershed.

Y. Glogower stated that was a typo, noting he used an old cover letter from a different grant. He then stated that the body of the letter referred to the Green Communities grant.

Chair Devine emphasized the importance of this grant, especially with the work that needed to happen in the Annex.

Councilor I. Rivera commended Mr. Glogower for chasing down grants, allowing the city to get funding for work.

Councilor Sullivan made a motion to approve item 8. Councilor Ocasio seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 PM