

Minutes

Board of Finance Meeting

March 27, 2012

Room 119 7:30 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Liz Mao at 7:35 PM. All members of the Board of Finance were present except Jamie McLaughlin. Also in attendance was Kate Clarke Buch, Finance Director. The meeting was taped for broadcast over Channel 79.

BUDGET REVIEWS (budget changes made by the BoF shown in bold)

Parks & Recreation. Liz Mao and Gwen Mogenson met with Susan Swiatek, Director of Parks & Recreation, to review this budget. Ms. Swiatek was present during the meeting to answer questions, as was Jane Branigan, Chairman of the Parks & Recreation Commission.

One planned increase discussed was in the grounds, fields and building budget, which shows a \$10,000 increase. A large portion of the increase is to cover installation of cable lines to facilitate communications with the new gate house and warming hut at Weed Beach. Also included are extra funds for maintenance and operations costs for the new facilities.

Liz Mao mentioned the administration budget. She pointed out that the Board of Selectmen had cut \$1,800 from the conference and meetings budget. Attendance at conferences is required for Parks and Recreation staff to earn the continuing education credits they need to maintain their certifications. **Ms. Mao proposed restoring this \$1,800 cut (equivalent to a negative cut).**

For the capital budget, and expenditure of \$61,700 is planned for next year, which will include replacement of a pickup truck, a trailer, a leaf vacuum, and two mowers. Separately, but related to capital expenditures, Sue Swiatek mentioned that she expects that the Weed Beach project will be substantially completed by the third week in May.

In terms of Parks & Rec revenue, it was noted that beach permit fees are not being raised for the coming year. The reason is that the department did not get funding for new beach sand this year, so it felt that increasing the cost of permits could not be justified. However, several changes to revenue budgets were discussed in the meeting. A higher volume of beach parking permits is expected, so this budget was raised \$10,000 to \$240,000. The budget for other fees

was raised from \$95,000 to \$120,000. Also, paddle court revenue was raised from \$27,500 to \$37,890 due to an increase in court fees. **In total, the BoF raised the planned Parks and Recreation budget by \$47,390 (equivalent to a cut).**

No other changes in the Parks and Rec budget were proposed.

Senior Center. Joe Duwan and Lori Bora reported on their analysis of the Senior Center budget (Sue Swiatek joined this discussion). One budget increase mentioned in particular was the increase in part-time labor costs, which was to reinstate part-time assistance for building maintenance. Also discussed were the slightly higher program costs, which was due in part to higher program attendance and food costs, which will be addressed in more detail going forward. No changes were proposed to the operating budget.

For the capital budget, the department plans to spend \$8000 for a new dishwasher. They assured the Board that it will be possible to move this dishwasher into the new facility when it is constructed. No changes were proposed to the capital budget.

Building Control. No changes to the budget. One increase in the budget, \$3,680, is for the acquisition of file cabinets for records storage.

Police Department. Joe Duwan reviewed this budget. Their analysis of the budget, as discussed in the meeting, was as follows:

- Overall
 - 13 categories totaling \$5.86mm
 - Additional budget of \$1.13mm for the police pension contribution and \$0.33mm for police retirement benefits
 - Total: \$7.32mm, the largest Town budget category behind debt service
- Major issues
 - *Overtime.* Tighter monitoring is recommended. Planned budget of \$400,000 is \$50,000 higher than the current year. Some of this is due to the Student Resource Officer (SRO) at the High School
 - *SRO.* New this year; entails an officer from patrol being assigned to the high school. The overtime costs will be funded indirectly by a reduction in the Youth Services grant.
 - *Facilities management.* An investment in facilities management is suggested to support the new, sophisticated building
 - *Fleet management* – see below.

Details on Operating Budget

- Police Admin \$657m, up \$103m

- Admin Lt Ray Osborne moved from Patrol to Admin
- TeleStaff scheduling software being implemented, which will streamline scheduling
- Uniforms up \$1,700
- Investigation & Identification \$449m, down slightly from \$454m
 - Overtime of \$26m, same as last year, \$14m spent 6mos
 - Copier/Equipment rental expense down \$8m
- Patrol \$3,737m up from \$3,655m last year
 - Admin Lt Ray Osborne moved from Patrol to Admin
 - Step increment \$37m versus \$0 last year
 - Overtime – \$400m (discussed above). The BoS has requested greater overtime accountability, and Police Chief Duane Lovello began capturing more data beginning January 1st. **Mr. Duwan suggested that the BoF cut \$25,000, which was approved.**
- Records \$305m up from \$294m last year
 - **Mr. Duwan suggested cutting \$4,278 from software maintenance (digital voice logger is gone). Also suggested cutting \$1,000 in proposed overtime. Both approved by the BoF.**
- Youth Division \$179m down from \$180 last year. No change.
- Marine Patrol \$11m, up \$1m for engine maintenance.
- Professional Standards \$154m vs \$153 last year (state now charging for training services).
- Traffic Control \$5,689 up from \$3,800. No change.
- School Crossing \$64m versus \$64m. No change.
- Communications \$54m versus \$54m. **Mr. Duwan proposed cutting \$5,172 office equipment (UPS warranty gone). Approved by the BoF.**
- Fleet Services \$124m – up slightly. No change.
- Station Operations \$126m – up from \$118m. No change.
- Prisoner Custody \$1,200 flat. No change.

Capital Requests

- New boat motors – \$20m eliminated at BoS
- Field-based reporting software – \$44m eliminated at BOS
- Radar units (forward and backward) – three requested, two approved at \$5,912
- Fleet review:
 - 24 "pieces of rolling stock" per budget book, but this excludes two Harley motorcycles (leased at total of \$8,600 per year)

- Nine marked patrol cars, plus (also in Patrol) a 2005 GMC Denali pick-up that is not pursuit rated (acquired via court forfeiture this year, but patrol painted) and a 2008 Ford Expedition for K-9 duty
- Proposed capital for fleet replacement – four new Caprice cars for \$196m – two marked, two unmarked
 - Base cost of \$31,000 (actual bid for the cars this year was \$29,500)
 - Radios are \$3,232 each or \$12,928 total
 - Other equipment cost of \$12,937 each or \$51,750 (computer, lights, etc)
 - Two cameras \$10,010
 - Estimated trade-in of \$2,500
- Mr. Duwan recommended developing a policy and system for determining vehicle replacement needs.

Public works. Liz Mao and Martha Banks reviewed the Public Works budget. They made several points:

- Staff costs are higher in Public Works management and engineering due to staff being added to clear a backlog of work. Also higher in this department is professional services, which is due to more survey and mapping work as well as a software maintenance contract.
- In the roadway and walkway maintenance budget, they noted an increase in the tree maintenance budget, which is due to the higher number of service requests. They also noted an increase in overtime budgeting, which the department felt was more realistic. They also noted an increase in motor fuel and lubricants cost, which is due to the higher price of oil.
- In the waste management budget, they noted higher software and telecommunications costs, which will entail the installation of fiber optic links between town hall and the scalehouse.
- In the public building management budget, maintenance costs are higher due to kitchen repairs at the senior center. Heating fuel costs are lower due to the conversion to natural gas.
- In the parking operations and maintenance budget, snow removal services are down, due to a successful new bid for this work.
- **In the capital budget, the Board proposed restoring \$30,000 to upgrade lighting in the town Hall auditorium.** This decision will be made final at the next meeting.

Sewer operating fund. Liz Mao and Martha Banks also reviewed this budget. It was noted that negotiations are continuing with the city of Stamford regarding the sewer contract. No changes were proposed to these budgets.

Parking fund. No changes.

Debt service. The BoS approved budget should be \$10,340,810, not the \$11,400,186 shown in the budget review.

The BoF discussed its infrastructure and contingency budgets, and decided that additions to these budgets would not be needed in the coming fiscal year.

MINUTES

Minutes from the following meetings were discussed; edited versions were approved as follows:

- March 6th. Joe Duwan moved approval; passed 5-0-1 (Jon Zagrodzky abstained due to absence).
- March 13th – police contract meeting. Lori Bora moved approval; passed 4-0-2 (Liz Mao and Jon Zagrodzky abstained due to absence).
- March 13th – statutory meeting. Gwen Mogenson moved approval; passed 5-0-1 (Liz Mao abstained due to absence).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Lori Bora made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and approved 6-0 at 10:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Zagrodzky
Clerk