

Budget and Finance Committee

10/2/23 6:30 PM

Meeting Post: <https://www.cityofnewburyport.com/budget-finance/events/339421>

Roll:

B/F: Zeid, Wright, Khan

Other Members: Shand, McCauley, Preston

Staff: Manning, Levine

Agenda: (green = coming out of cmte, pink = coming out of cmte amended, yellow = staying in cmte)

• TRAN00169 09 26 2023 Mayor's Office: Parklet Maintenance Fund \$10,000 to HWY Downtown Parklets \$10,000

- Maintenance costs were for \$14,380
- Parklet costs are shown
- SZ - So is this a PL
- SZ – So we are losing money? Doesn't include DPS cost
- EM – Yes
- **Motion to approve AK/MW, 3-0**

• ORDR00491 09 26 2023 Port Parks Alliance Gift Acceptance \$2425.00

- MW – 5 Trees
- AK – Hoping this was done in coordination with dept. Parks Commission?
- SZ – Is this to support location
- EM – Check on the jurisdiction
- Jane Snow/9 Coffin – Parks Alliance – the person can request specifically. They do check with the dept.
- **Motion to approve AK/MW (3-0)**

• ORDR00492 09 26 2023 FY2024 Supplemental Budget (COTW)

- Funds available for a variety of reasons. Some will still be left at the end.
- **1** – EM Fire Chief out on leave
- Put in accidental disability retirement
- There will be a hearing on Oct 17 and retirement board will decide what they want to do.

- If they do then 3 physicians will issue independent physicians will opine as to if the retirement was because of his job or another factor
- This will cover 1st half of the year. This amount is net of weekly indemnity coverage (e.g. IOD policy which provides a 1k per week)
- We are at the mercy of the retirement board
- Could be asking for more if it continues
- SZ – so you think the entire thing will wrap up
- AK – funding source? This isn't quite the right thing?
- EM – it will cover the \$1k per week until a very large cap
- MW – If the retirement board does not decide that he qualifies for accidental disability retirement. Are we on the hook?
- ALevine – Contract is expired but we could be in a position that we could be on the hook until the employee gets to retirement age (65)
- SZ – just to follow up so the Retirement board is in control
- ALevine – Yes, that is correct.
- JM – 6 years is about \$900k of liability
- SZ – Why do this now?
- EM – Right now there are enough funds in IOD line but we don't want to run this into a deficit.
- SZ – Isn't subject to appropriation
- ALevine – Regrettable situation
- SZ – So what we do now? Want to understand how we got here
- AK – Is anything contractual. Confused about timing?
- ALevine – Short story was there was an application for disability that was then withdrawn
- EM – It has gone longer than we had hoped
- JM – City has fewer and fewer option
- JM – Chair, post-mortem makes sense
- SZ – We could also shorten this if we want to as another alternative
- AK – Am of the inclination to support through end of December.
- **Motion to Approve – AK/MW, 3-0**

- **2** – This is a recommended grade increase
- SZ – What does this work out to year over year
- EM – About 5%
- EM – Grades are formulaic, 77,564 would be moving from grade K to L. And at a step 4.
- SZ – So anyone at this would get this rate
- EM – Yes
- JM – So basically why is this coming up

- EM – Wanted to wait but this is consistent with asst. assessor
- **Motion to approve AK/MW, 3-0**
- EM – this is not a union position

- **3** - SZ – What was raise from 23 to 24
- EM – FY24 included 5% increase going from 66762 to 70100. Total raise will then be 11 which is a 16.38% increase
- AK – Not increasing headcount. Was there an increased need in the dept?
- Wayne – Really upgrade to this position that has not been recognized. Want to focus on that. It's not really a promotion. It's paying for what they were doing all along
- ALevine – bring in line with the responsibility
- MW – foreman and office manager do the same thing.
- Wayne – That is correct
- SZ – Why is this not split across parks, water, and sewer
- ALevine – This person is the point of contact there are other people
- Wayne – we need to solve this. They are taking a lot of calls because they are available. This position is not supposed to be W/S but they are because they get this information. Software/GPS
- **Motion to approve, AK/MW, 3-0**

- **4** – This is 10,500 Tree Warden
- SZ - Where did this number come from
- Wayne – looked at a lot of job descriptions
- Wayne – took a low of the job descriptions, average hourly rate. 8 Hours a day
- SZ – Why can't this be baked into a position.
- ALevine – Baked into State legislature, 3 year position
- ALevine – the best way to fill this in is how we're doing it or sub it out
- CP – To add one point. The tree warden has jurisdiction on street trees.
- Wayne is willing 2-2.5 hours a day
- Employee is willing to do what it takes
- Wayne – contracting this out would probably \$20k
- AK – Great to have someone willing to give life
- AK – don't want to see Parks suffer
- **Motion to approve, AK/MW, 2-1 (SZ)**

- **5** – This is an engineering staff increase
- EM – 2 out of 3 positions are open Eng 1 and Eng 2
- Asst City Engine, 33% each, FY23to24 was 3%. This increase will go to 80k so it's 8.6%
- Eng 2 – 50% dps highway, 25% water/sewer each. FY23to 24. Increase was 4.6%.
- Civil Eng 1 – New FTE in FY24 budget request.
- **Motion to approve AK/MW**
- MW Financial engine is based on 2.5%. So we have to be considerate.
- HS – What is not getting done with these positions being vacant
- Staff – A lot
- **Vote, 3-0**

- **6**
- Reduction
- **Motion to approve, AK/MW (3-0)**

- **7** – this is a GPS
- EM - This is a wireless subscription and this is expected to be \$9k each year
- EM - This is a new line item
- EM – GPS can only be used during snow per union contract
- **Motion to approve AK/MW, 3-0**

- **8**
- before it was paid for by facilities management
- Now line is needing to double
- MW – Help me understand the genesis of porta potties
- MW – We might need GPS
- Wayne – Mostly downtown
- Wayne – successful downtown
- Wayne – Waterfront Trust have been replaced
- EM – Facilities in parks are separate \$7.5k but they are being cleaned at the same frequency
- Wayne – this is all for downtown weekend cleaning
- ALevine – Long term plan, restrooms get closed
- Wayne – Down at Cashman a lot of them get locked and people want to use them after hours

- CP – Vandalism
- Jane Snow – 9 Coffin St – Who cleans the stuff like the garage? Why aren't those bathrooms open? We had them built but they aren't going to be opened.
- SZ – institutionalizing this because it is supplemental. Also this is all downtown.
- AK – Hearing everything, downtown funds? What's long term plan? Explore ideas. Transfer?
- **Motion to approve AK/SZ, 0-3 (SZ)**
- **WITHDRAWN BY ADMINISTRATION**

- **9** – CDL Status
- **Motion to approve AK/MW, 3-0**

- **10**
- Pot holes during the winter
- Wayne – in the winter it has to be hot and it has to be hot
- Wayne – want to do 10 year outlook on equipment
- AK – this wasn't in CIP
- ALevine – CIP was in flux with new DPS leadership
- Wayne – Dump truck and pickup truck are also gone this year
- Wayne – make it work it as long as it can
- **Motion to approve, AK/MW (3-0)**

- **Tax rate comes in first meeting in November, try and finish by last November**

• **ORDR00493 09 26 2023 Local Acceptance of Prudent Investor Rule for Trust Funds**

- By default Mass public funds have to go into a short conservative list that doesn't do much better than AAA/money market
- This would expand that list that would then allow for longer term assessment.
- Stabilization trust funds, pension funds, and opeb funds.
- Stabilization funds already prudent investor
- Prudent investor is still conservative but focus on securing principal
- Was recommended by the Mass Treasurers and Collectors assn.
- We haven't talked to MHTL, City Solicitor but a lot of guidance
- MW – Banks struggle a lot with this

- MW – when you match things up then it works
- **Motion to approve, AK/MW (2-1)**

- **ODNC00129 11 01 2022 Defining Conflict Rule for Dept. Heads (COTW)**

- Chair circulated amended

Unlikely to discuss:

- **ORDR00336 03 28 2022 ARPA Amesbury 250K (COTW)**
- **TRAN00153 05 08 2023 Mayor: Multiple \$3,483,773 to Multiple \$3,483,773 revised 6/15/2023 (Atkinson Common Request only all other matters adjudicated)**
- **ORDR00472 06 26 2023 Streets Sidewalks Loan Order \$6,000,000 (COTW)**

Public Comment:

Stephanie Niketic – Why remove the address aspect from 129?

SZ – Make it so that it can gain consensus

Adjourn:

AK/MW – 3-0, 8:22pm

Recording:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/1bH0L-Jj0XYqK5wo7FKFep9sNbXsiOrZCNMGw3WzUE_BqCjHFoGRVvf-MuYJcae2.IEiZc0ELCo8Jfdob