

# Advisory Budget Committee

## Minutes

October 11, 2022

This meeting was at the Barrington Town Hall with remote participation available.

Members Present: Steve Saunders, Peter Royce, Michael Houst, Scott Shephard, John Morris

Alternate Members Present: Bill Irving (acting member)

Others Present: Conner MacIver, Amy Doherty, Chief Joy, Deputy Chief Brooks, and Dannen Mannschreck

Steve Saunders called the meeting to order at 4:33pm.

Steve Saunders thanked the Chief and Deputy Chief for joining the meeting.

Steve Saunders asked why the narrative said there is no cost of living adjustment (COLA). Chief Joy explained that he didn't include that in his explanation because the Select Board has not yet finalized budgeted wage adjustments.

Chief Joy said he was not asking for another full-time officer this year as the plan presented in 2021 called for. Staffing continues to be an issue with gaps in double coverage, but it will not be requested this year. Steve Saunders brought up the safety issues and coverage issues. Michael Houst asked how many more staff members would be needed? Chief Joy said he would be able to maintain consistent double-coverage on patrol with two additional full-time patrol officers.

Officer Surawski is still deployed and expected to return in March of 2023. They just hired Officer Tougas from the Town of Nottingham and per diem Officer Turner. The school district has been having conversations regarding a school resource officer (SRO). The ABC would like to work with the school to formalize a plan for that.

Steve Saunders asked for clarification on the part time officers line and suggested that we add money in the incident fund to fund a potential part time position. The group decided that with Officer Surawski's vacancy there would be sufficient surplus funds available and also felt it would be unlikely that the Town would find someone to hire.

John Morris asked for clarification on the health insurance increases. Conner MacIver explained that there were many census changes and that he budgets for what employees' current elections are. If there is a vacancy, he budgets for "worst case scenario" of a family plan election.

Chief Joy brought up the highway safety grant funds and the matching has always been 25% matching. The new process will allow the \$17 per hour cruiser hours to fund the match.

Dannen Mannschreck entered the meeting at 4:54 pm

Chief Joy discussed the police cruiser budget line and was able to secure a cruiser at a great price. He would recommend keeping the \$40,000 in that line to purchase this vehicle. The 2017 Dodge Charger will be traded in with 120,000 miles and not the 2017 Ford Taurus that was in the narrative. The Dodge Charger has a failing engine and will die before the Ford Taurus.

The Police are requesting a Warrant Article in the amount of \$11,000. They plan to spend this on a shredder and handguns with optics.

John Morris suggested looking into a shredding company and the Police will investigate it.

The police cruiser replacement schedule will be provided at the Select Board meeting on Monday. The group was able to view a copy at the meeting and suggested that the information be presented by year.

The group discussed tasers and their useful life. They are unsafe and will not be used once they are past their useful and warrantied life.

Deputy Chief Brooks discussed the \$25,000 feasibility study for a Public Safety Building renovation/expansion performed by the Town's engineering firm: CMA. They received CMA's final report. Two options they received are to stay at the location they are at and build a second floor and a new sally port on the police side or to purchase a new plot of land and build new. Chief Joy discussed difficulties that the current building has. The Police have met with the Library to discuss bonding. The price would be between \$3 and \$3.5 million to execute the project. This will be brought forward in the 2023 warrant article.

Steve Saunders asked if the Police needed to ask for any contingency funds for any "band aid projects" next year. The Police couldn't identify any. Conner MacIver said he thought the generator would be a possibility. The group discussed grant options to help fund a new generator.

Conner MacIver encouraged the group to explore the Public Safety Building renovation/expansion project and see what information they need to support it and to send questions along. This will be presented at Monday's Select Board meeting.

Michael Houst asked what happens to unexpended funds in the Police budget. Conner MacIver explained it goes to unassigned fund balance.

Chief Joy wanted to point out that the vehicle maintenance line has stayed the same for 2023 even though the 2022 budget is \$5,000 overspent. The budget relies on the \$17 police detail rate to fund that line. If details decrease, the funding source will decrease as well.

Steve Saunders suggested that the group review the details of the Public Safety Building renovation/expansion project and submit questions.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Amy Doherty.