



Canton Finance Committee
801 Washington Street
Canton, MA 02021

Minutes Voted on: 2/9/22
Vote: 7-0-1

Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2022

Finance Committee Members Present: Dan Cole, Tom Emery, Karen Foley, Emilio Mauro, Tim McKenna, Reuki Schutt and Cindy Thomas.

Finance Committee Members Absent: Dave Clough.

Guests Present:

Ellen Jones, Finance Committee Recording Secretary
Louis Jutras, Information Systems Manager
Arafat Knight, Veterans' Agent
John (JR) McCourt, Recreation Commissioner
Helena Rafferty, Deputy Police Chief
Randy Scollins, Finance Director

Call Meeting to Order: Chair McKenna called the virtual meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Discussion – Municipal FY23 Operating Budget Requests for the following Departments

210 – Police Department and #292 – Animal Control – Helena Rafferty, Deputy Police Chief

Deputy Police Chief Rafferty provided the following information regarding the Police Department's FY23 operating budget requests:

- The Deputy Chief is requesting a \$36,000 increase to the Shift Overtime Salary line item for a total FY23 budget request of \$300,000. This request is based on contract provisions. The Police Department is facing, and will be faced with, a number of upcoming retirements and resignations as well as a patrolman out on leave due to personal injury. All of these absences will have to be covered. She stated that it has been difficult to estimate the cost of shift overtime and that she is estimating that this cost may exceed \$300,000 and that she will have to come back to the Finance Committee for a budget supplement.
- The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has allowed more participants into the Police Academy. Canton will be sending three recruits to the academy in February and they will have completed their training by the end of the summer.
- Mr. Scollins informed the Committee that the Patrolmen's and Sargent's unions have unsettled contracts and that there is a provision in Department #910 for estimated contract costs. These estimated costs include overtime, holiday pay, and other accounts that would be impacted by a cost of living increase. There is a contract provision line item in each department's budget to allow for cost of living increases. These amounts are moved from #910 to the department's budget once contracts are settled.
- Paid holidays are not tied to individual employees. Paid holiday adjustments, such as for the new Juneteenth federal holiday, must be requested. Ms. Rafferty is requesting an increase of \$23,700 for the Paid Holidays budget line item from \$126,300 for FY22 to \$150,000 for FY23.
- Out of Grade Pay – If a patrolman fills in for a sergeant they are paid out of grade pay. Ms. Rafferty is seeking a \$1,000 increase to the Working Out of Grade Salary line item from \$2,000 for FY22 to \$3,000 for FY23.
- Ms. Rafferty is requesting a \$60,700 total increase to the Police Department's salaries budget for FY23.

In response to Mr. Cole's inquiry if there would be any budget offset or attrition with the officers that are resigning. Ms. Rafferty stated no. This is due to the fact that the officers who are resigning are fairly new to the department and would have a comparable salary to new hires.

- With regard to the FY23 operating expenses for the Police Department, Ms. Rafferty stated that the Police Department has hydro air and that the line item entitled "heating fuel – oil" should in fact be labelled "heating fuel – gas", as the Police Department heats with natural gas rather than oil. An increase of \$3,000 is being requested for FY23 for heating fuel bringing the total request to \$18,000.

- An FY23 budget increase of \$8,198 is being requested for the electricity line item due to increased costs. A total budget of \$65,000 is being requested for FY23 for electricity.
- An FY23 budget increase of \$3,000 is being requested for the Repair/Maintenance of Radio Equipment due to the increase costs and difficulty of purchasing batteries for the radios. A total budget of \$10,000 is being requested for the Radio budget line item.
- A grand total budget increase of \$83,398 is being requested for FY23 for the Police Department's budget. Most of this increase is salary driven.

#292 – Animal Control – The Deputy Police Chief is not seeking a budget increase for FY23 for the Animal Control Budget of \$135,017.

Mr. Scollins commented that the public safety budgets are well-managed and are working within their budgets. He further stated that the 1.5% overall budget increase for the Police Department was a misrepresentation of the real budget increase because of the unsettled contracts not being included in the Police Department's budget. This amount will eventually be transferred from Department #910 to Department #210 thereby reflecting a larger increase than the 1.5%.

Deputy Chief Rafferty commented that it is currently difficult to find individuals interested in the police profession. The Civil Service Exam is now being offered on a yearly basis instead of every other year. She also stated that other towns are struggling with hiring police officers as well. COVID has not had a great impact on the police academy, as they have been prepared for it.

#155 – Information Systems – Louis Jutras Information Systems Manager

Mr. Jutras provided the following information regarding the FY23 Information Systems budget:

- Mr. Jutras is requesting a \$34,400 increase to the Software License budget line item. This increase is for a new software product. This new product is to address threat response from the Antivirus platform. He stated there is one year left on the current license. The \$34,400 is an extra add on to the current product. This will match up with the term of the contract. The Town has had the product for five years and it is usually purchased in 3-year blocks. The \$34,400 will add a new functionality.
- The School Department supports their own software package.
- MUNIS, the Town's financial software package is included in the MIS budget at an annual cost of \$100,000. Licenses cannot be comingled.
- The Town does not have Microsoft Teams software because the number of licenses could not be accommodated within his budget.
- Mr. Jutras stated that he has received correspondence from Tyler Technologies about the direction that they are headed in with the next version of the software package and the requirements for it. The Town is currently using Version 2020. After that, 2021 will only be good for one year. A new product is in development for hosting in cloud services. Tyler Technologies is trying to streamline to save on staffing and knowledge, which may become a strain on the MIS budget. To add in various levels of the financial software costs \$25,000 each.

Mr. Mauro inquired whether there are state or federal grants available to cover these growing cyber-security costs as these technologies becomes more monetized and causes more stress on the budget. Mr. Jutras stated that with regard to licensing state contracts, the state has not taken on Tyler Technologies. The state offers training infrastructure but the Town still has to do backups and keep and maintain firewalls in place. Mr. Jutras added that most grants currently available are for in-house equipment and not for cloud-based cyber services.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion made by Ms. Schutt to approve the January 19, 2022 minutes as written was seconded by Ms. Thomas.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Schutt	Aye	Mr. Cole	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye	Ms. Thomas	Aye
Ms. Foley	Aye	Mr. McKenna	Aye
Mr. Emery	Aye		

The motion to approve the January 19, 2022 minutes passed 7-0-0.

Ms. Thomas inquired if the Town has suggested a certain percentage increase for departments for their electricity and heating fuel budgets. Mr. Scollins stated that these costs vary by departments and that he and the Town Administrator will be meeting with department managers to discuss their budgets. Some departments have been informed that there is a new rate agreement and that costs might be slightly lower as opposed to increases.

Mr. McCourt joined the Finance Committee meeting at approximately 7:50 p.m. Mr. McCourt explained that lighting for the various fields that the Recreation Department maintains is driving their electricity costs.

Mr. McCourt discussed the following budgets that fall under the purview of the Parks and Recreation Director:

#630 Parks & Recreation – Mr. McCourt provided a summary of budget requests for the Parks & Recreation budget as follows:

- Mr. McCourt is requesting increases to three salary line items Playground Programs Salaries (\$2,000 increase), Recreation Part Time Worker Salaries (\$1,600 increase), and Lifeguard Salaries (\$4,000 increase) to meet the increase mandated by the state. Mr. McCourt could not predict if the increases to minimum wage would be enough to attract candidates. There was no Pool Director last year. The Town does have a Recreation Revolving Fund that can be used to supplement programs.

Mr. Scollins commented that the Select Board interviewed two strong candidates at their meeting the previous night to fill the Parks and Recreation Director's position left vacant at the departure of Ms. Elizabeth Francis.

Mr. Mauro inquired if the wages being offered by the Parks and Recreation Department were comparable to other local towns. Mr. McCourt stated that they were in the process of contacting last year's staff for rehiring but that he has not gone through a salary analysis of other town's salaries. Mr. Mauro is hopeful that the Town will be able to attract the most qualified employees through competitive wages.

Mr. Cole inquired about the \$56,409 increase from \$261,238 to \$317,647 to the Maintenance Worker budget line item. An additional maintenance worker was added to the Recreation staff. The Parks and Recreation Department has been faced with increased demands due to the opening of the Paul Revere Heritage Park. There has been no direction on what will be required of the Parks and Recreation Department for maintaining the Earl Newhouse Waterfront facility. The Department may need more staffing or assistance from an outside vendor. The \$317,647 includes the extra staff approved last year.

Mr. Scollins suggested to the Finance Committee that before they make their final budget recommendation they should assess if the current staffing is sufficient to manage all the properties they are responsible for.

- Mr. McCourt is requesting an approximately 5% increase for the Electricity budget from \$29,000 to \$30,500 for FY23. This is the first year that the pool was running at 100% but the rink is not at 100% yet.

Mr. McKenna inquired if there was any plan for solar panels at the rink or pool. Mr. Scollins stated that the solar farm on Pine Street is generating \$360,000 to \$400,000 of positive revenue per year. Mr. McCourt explained that the four large circulating pumps at the pool are efficient but complicated. Mr. Mauro stated that it is included in the Master Plan to have as many solar panels as possible throughout the Town's properties as well as the expansion of public electric charging stations for town vehicles.

Mr. Scollins reported that the Town is developing the Request for Proposals for the Municipal Energy Aggregation Program for residential electricity adopted at last year's Annual Town Meeting. He further stated that the Town is buying electricity in bulk and that the December cost per kilowatt decreased.

- Mr. McCourt stated that both sides of the Metropolis Rink are in the sun and that the Town could benefit from installing solar panels on the building.

#542 – Youth Services – Mr. McCourt is not requesting a budget increase for the \$5,000 Youth Services FY23 budget.

#650 – Parks Department (Paul Revere Heritage Site) – Mr. McCourt provided the following information for the FY23 Parks Department budget:

- Mr. McCourt is not requesting a budget increase for the \$80,000 Paul Revere Heritage Site FY23 budget. For now he stated that the budget is adequate but as demands increase at the Park the Town will have to review the budget.
- The Town has been plowing the walking paths at the park.
- New bathroom facilities are being considered for the park, which could have more demands on the Parks and Recreation Staff.

#700 Rink Enterprise – Mr. McCourt provided the following information for the FY23 Rink Enterprise budget:

- A \$13,342 increase to the Transfer to General Fund budget is being requested for FY23.

- A \$3,000 increase to one debt service budget line item with a \$2,500 decrease to another debt service budget line item results in a requested net \$500 increase to the debt service budget.

Mr. Scollins reported that the Town did not receive any bids for the Zamboni Request for Proposals due to issues that potential bidders had with the requirements that were in the bid specifications and that potential bidders were uncomfortable with the delivery deadline given supply issues.

#543 – Veterans Services Department – Mr. Knight provided the following information with regard to the FY23 Veterans’ Services Department budget:

- Mr. Knight is requesting an increase of \$21,000 to the Clerk Part-Time Salary budget line item from \$0 for FY22 to \$21,000 for FY23. This request will restore the Part-Time Clerk position that has not been filled since FY20 due to the retirement of the employee that was in that position. This position will assist the Veterans’ Agent with filing Chapter 115 claims, Memorial Day events, and office coverage in the Veterans’ Agent absence.
- A \$284 increase is being requested for the Dues & Memberships budget line item from \$300 for FY22 to \$584 for FY23. This is for a website fee as well as memberships in the Massachusetts Veterans Service Officers Association (MVSOA) and the Southeast Veterans Service Officers Association (SVSOA).
- A \$9,000 increase is being requested for the Memorial Day Supplies budget line item from \$3,000 to \$12,000 for FY23. This increase is for special events such as the June Women’s Veterans Breakfast, the 9/11 Anniversary ceremony, a Veterans Day luncheon instead of a breakfast, an annual Purple Heart event and the cost for 5,000 to 8,000 flags placed at the cemetery two times per year (cost of \$1.85 per flag). Mr. Knight also purchases wreaths for Memorial Day, Veteran’s Day and for various grave sites and memorial markers located throughout Canton. The \$2,000 cost for the rededication of the POW Bridge (located on Chapman Street) will be covered by the American Legion.

Mr. Knight has one senior volunteer worker helping him out but due to confidentiality issues and HIPAA rules this volunteer is not able to help with some of the work.

Mr. Scollins stated that at last year’s Annual Town Meeting a budget of \$25,000 was approved for maintenance expenses for the American Legion located on Town property. The \$25,000 budget belongs in the Veteran’s budget and will carry forward from year to year. A new budget line item account will be set up for this budget.

Next Meeting Date: The Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 9, 2022. Mr. Scollins stated that Laura Smead, Victor DelVecchio, and Alan Hines would attend the meeting to discuss their FY23 operating budget requests. He also stated that the Revenue Forecasting Committee would be meeting on February 8 at 9:00 a.m. and that he would present its recommendations to the Finance Committee the following night as an agenda item to consider and to vote on as the FY23 revenue estimates.

A motion made by Ms. Schutt to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. was seconded by Mr. Mauro.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Emery	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Ms. Foley	Aye
Mr. Cole	Aye	Ms. Schutt	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye		

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m. passed 7-0-0.

Minutes reviewed by: Emilio Mauro

Respectfully submitted,

Timothy McKenna
Chair, Canton Finance Committee

**Canton Finance Committee Meeting
Meeting Documents
February 2, 2022**

Please note: Some meeting documents may be found on the Town's website under the Posted Minutes section (Laser Fiche).

Information regarding the FY23 Municipal Budget may be found at the following link:

<https://www.town.canton.ma.us/407/Municipal-Budget-Capital-Information>

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