



**Canton Finance Committee
801 Washington Street
Canton, MA 02021**

Minutes Voted on: 2/23/22
Vote: 5-0-1

**Meeting Minutes
February 16, 2022**

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

Finance Committee Members Absent: Tom Emery.

Guests Present:

Andrea Capone, Library Director
Charlie Doody, Fire Chief
Ellen Jones, Finance Committee Recording Secretary
Randy Scollins, Finance Director
Mike Trotta, Superintendent of Department of Public Works

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

#610 – Library – Andrea Capone, Library Director

Ms. Capone provided the following information regarding the Library FY23 operating budget requests:

- **A new Young Adult position for \$32,300 per year is being requested for FY23.** This position will support the increasing number of tweens and teens population visiting the Library after school during the 2:30-8:00 timeframe. A dedicated employee is needed to support this large group that has now returned to the library after COVID. This group can range from 50-60 in a space where adult supervision is needed. On days when school is only in session for ½ days such as the Galvin Middle School ending around 11:00 a.m. the cafeteria has voluntarily provided food service to the library for these tweens and teens. The Library Director is very appreciative of this service.
- The Library is open 56 hours per week and there is currently only one 35 hours per week Young Adult employee. If the current Young Adult employee is occupied providing coverage in another part of the Library where a staff member may be absent this leaves a void in covering the tweens and teens group. The Library has to have all services provided to the public covered. This sharing of the Young Adult employee in another department could result in the Young Adult position not being covered for the tweens and teens. Disruptions to other patrons in the Library can occur when the group is unsupervised and the Library does not want to have to call law enforcement for behavioral issues.
- The demand for E-books from the Library has exploded especially since COVID. Ms. Capone is requesting **an \$11,000 increase for a total budget request of \$41,000 for FY23 for the E-Books budget line item.** She is predicting the budget line item will be overspent for the FY22 budget of \$30,000. During COVID there has been a significant number of patrons signing up for E cards. The demand for E-books outpaces what they can provide. Ms. Foley inquired if the budget line item of #16102-55100 Books and Periodicals could be reduced as it appears that it may be underspent for FY22. Ms. Capone stated that the Library needs the entire \$115,000 budget for FY23. The Library cannot rely on late fines and fees to supplement the budget. For many of their E-Books the Library needs to catch up on back orders for collections they need to purchase to complete a series. The Library must still purchase the E-Books from the suppliers. They are "beholden" to the publishers. Because of the platform for sharing there is a platform fee that the Library must pay. The Library does use the state contracts for purchasing, however, the Publishing Houses set prices with E-Book vendors. The Library must spend 15% of their bottom line budget on books. They are allowed to count 10% of technology purchases towards the 15%.
- The Friends of the Library volunteer organization helps supplement the Library for special programs. Ms. Capone reported that the Library Trustees voted at their meeting on February 15th to resume offering the Library Meeting Room as rental space to the public again. However, the rental of Library spaces is an unreliable source of revenue for the Library and, therefore, is not factored into the budget.

- An FY23 budget request for **an increase of \$12,000 to the Building Maintenance and Supplies budget** line item is for HVAC maintenance and lawn equipment.

#220 – Fire Department – Charlie Doody, Fire Chief

Chief Doody provided the following information regarding the Fire Department FY23 operating budget requests. He stated that he is looking for three main budget requests for his budget as follows:

- The first item being requested are 5% increases to all of the salary line items as per the contract recently negotiated for FY22 and FY23, or 2½ % increase per fiscal year. Mr. Scollins clarified that the majority of these contract increases will be carried in Department #910 and have not yet been moved out of the Fire Department budget into #910. A new strategy that the Fire Chief has implemented is adjusting the overtime budget line items to reflect the additional contract increases. This avoids the Fire Chief from having to request a Finance Committee Reserve Fund Transfer at fiscal year end to cover the budget being overspent due to overtime expenses.
- The second item the Chief is requesting for FY23 is all of the other contractual salary increases due to a new holiday being added (Juneteenth Day), new stipends (such as the Master Mechanic stipend).
- The third item Chief Doody is requesting for FY23 is **adding a Deputy Fire Chief of Operations for an annual salary of \$119,643**. The other position would be a Deputy Fire Chief of Administration.
- Chief Doody provided a one-page summary (see meeting documents) stating that the structure of the Canton Fire Department has remained largely unchanged for the past 25 years with the exception of the addition of an EMS Coordinator, the progression to 11-man shifts and the progression of Captains to manage the shifts. Chief Doody provided two organizational charts. He described the existing organizational chart as an inverted T which has not been working well for managing the department. The second organizational chart has two Deputy Fire Chiefs with various aspects of the current department being assigned to these two Deputy Chiefs. Critical services being divided between the two managers improves efficiency in the organization. Chief Doody reviewed what each Deputy Chief would be responsible for. The Chief would also like to focus on Community Paramedicine.
- Chief Doody provided additional information about the Fire Department:
 - The Emergency Management Services generates the largest amount of revenue for the department at \$1.3 million.
 - The Department must be vigilant regarding license renewals.
 - The age of the Fire Department stations is causing increased costs for the Department.
 - The Department has one mechanic for \$3 million of equipment.
 - The Department has secured \$525,000 of grants over the last five years which is getting more difficult to manage.
 - There has not been enough time to do long-range Strategic Planning for the Department. With the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief close in age with the possibility of retirement at or around the same time, succession planning needs to be looked at as to who may run the Department in the future.
 - The Chief has a goal to obtain Federal Accreditation for the Department.
 - During COVID the Fire Chief's role shifted more to Emergency Management. Currently the Fire Chief receives a \$6,000 stipend for his role as the Town's Emergency Manager. **For FY23 the Fire Chief is requesting a \$3,000 (per contract negotiated) increase to this stipend for a total annual stipend of \$9,000 as the Town's Emergency Manager.**

In response to Chair McKenna's question if the new organizational chart was based on comparable organizational charts with other town fire departments, Chief Doody responded that the new chart was based on "best practice to manage better the various departments" and that this chart was "typical of a modern, suburban department".

In summary, the Fire Chief is looking for the following budget increases for FY23:

- **#220 - Fire Department - \$187,964 increase or 3% increase** from the FY22 base budget contractual salary increases, new Deputy Fire Chief, electricity, software maintenance, cancer screening, building maintenance and supplies and contractual lease increase for year 4 of a 5-year lease for a garage at Draper Mills).
- **#215 – Dispatch Services - \$7,976 contractual increase or 3% increase** from FY22 base budget. The Town is a member of the Holbrook Regional Command Center. The annual membership fee is increasing 3% for FY23. Canton is ahead of the State's schedule to soon require communities be a part of a

community dispatch center. The Police Department does not currently utilize the Holbrook Regional Command Center for dispatch. All 911 calls for Fire and Police emergencies go into the Police Department who then dispatch them to the Command Center.

- **#221 – Fire Alarm - \$3,925 increase or 17% increase** from the FY22 base budget (for repairs and maintenance).
- **#231 – Ambulance - \$36,106 increase or 8% increase** from the FY22 base budget (contractual salary increases, supplies, medical supplies, stretcher service agreement and ambulance billing).
- **#291 – Emergency Management - \$3,000 increase or 9.5% increase** from the FY22 base budget.
- **The Fire Chief is looking for a total budget increase of \$238,971 or a 3.4% increase from the total budget of \$7,069,525 for FY22 to a total budget of \$7,308,496 for FY23.**

With regard to the Canton Alliance Against Substance Abuse Committee (CAASA), the Fire Chief is not seeking any budget increase to the FY22 \$10,000 budget for FY23. The Town received a \$1.2 million grant allowing them to hire a Program Coordinator.

In response to Chair McKenna's inquiry regarding Fire Department apparel, the Chief thanked the Finance Committee for their support and that both fire stations have extractors and dryers for removing carcinogens from the equipment. At the suggestion of Mr. Scollins \$20,000 has been removed from the annual capital request and added to the Fire Department's annual budget allowing the Fire Department to keep up with the demand and need for apparel/equipment replacement.

Ms. Thomas inquired if the Fire Chief was having staffing/hiring difficulties similar to the Police Department. Chief Doody stated that not as many individuals were taking the exam to become a firefighter. He stated that Canton requires firefighters to become Paramedics as well which is a 14-16 month intensive program. This requirement has been negatively impacting their ability to hire new firefighters. The Fire Department has several vacancies due to retirements and medical leaves. There will be a list of eligible hiring candidates that will come out in March. Last year, the Chief stated that they recruited three seniors from Canton High School to join the Fire Department. They will try this approach again this year by hiring graduating seniors. Chief Doody stated that he likes to keep hiring local people.

Various Departments of Public Works Budgets – Mike Trotta – DPW Superintendent

Mr. Trotta is requesting FY23 budget increases for two of the eight budgets he manages.

#420 – Highway Maintenance

- This budget has been underfunded for a number of years. Mr. Trotta is requesting an additional \$52,000 for an FY23 total budget of \$1,145,060. The breakdown is as follows:
 - Reporting requirements - \$24,000. MS4 Storm water permit requires annual reporting to the Federal Government. Under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the Town is required to keep annual recordkeeping with regard to street sweeping, catch basin cleaning and catch basin replacements. The Town uses CitiWorks software to keep track of these records.
 - Building Maintenance Supplies - \$10,000. This increase is based on need.
 - Communications - \$4,000. The Town negotiated with the unions for some of the working foreman with cell phones to receive a stipend for the use of their personal cell phones.
 - Tools & Hardware - \$8,000. This increase is based on need.
 - Sand, Stone & Gravel - \$6,000. This increase is based on need.

Mr. Trotta stated that a budget of \$135,587 for Highway Maintenance expenses is insufficient to make repairs on highway equipment.

#400 – Public Works Administration - Mr. Trotta stated that the Town reclassified the \$100,385 salary from the Assistant to Department Head Salary to a budget line item entitled Storm Water Manager. The Town has publicly advertised for a Storm Water Manager and interviewed one candidate for the position. However, the Town and the candidate could not come to an agreement regarding the candidate's request for flexible hours (four days with 10-hour days). The Town does not currently have a flexible working policy in place. They continue to actively work on filling this position. This Manager will develop a budget and an Enterprise Fund along with a fee structure. Annual Town Meeting gave the authority to establish a Storm Water Enterprise Fund. The Town has spent 10 years of negotiating with EPA. The EPA is very prescriptive in what they want done by the Town. The Town has been meeting the minimum levels of requirements. The requirements that deal with phosphorous and nitrogen levels in the

water will require a full-time employee. Mr. Trotta is estimating that a budget of \$400,000 will be needed and wonders if the Town can fund this budget out of the General Fund. The Town Administrator, Mr. Scollins and Mr. Trotta do not think it can be funded out of the General Fund and that the Town and Storm Water Manager will need to develop a fee plan.

#427 – Highway Equipment Maintenance – Mr. Trotta is requesting a \$65,000 increase for FY23 to the Repair/Maintenance Equipment Budget Line Item #14272-52425 as follows:

- The five-year average for this line item is \$160,000.
- The three-year average for this line item is \$188,000.
- Many of the Highway Equipment Maintenance work is done in-house by three talented mechanics. These mechanics are especially busy during winter storm season with repairs. However, some transmission repairs, hydraulic repairs and time consuming/lengthy repairs are sent out for repair. Mr. Trotta noted that one of the truck engines blew out with the last storm.

#192 – Public Buildings/Property Maintenance – Mr. Trotta stated that he will remove the \$3,000 increase being requested for the Electricity budget line item under this budget as the Town recently has an agreement that lowers the Kwh rate that became effective in December 2021.

Overall, Mr. Trotta is requesting an increase of \$117,000 on a \$3,239,092 budget which is only a 3.6% budget increase.

In response to Mr. Mauro's question if the budget was sufficient enough given the current rise in labor and materials costs, Mr. Trotta did not see any reason why they would not succeed with the increases being requested. He also stated that capital requests help with sufficiency. Mr. Mauro also inquired if there were other Towns that have established a Storm Water Enterprise Fund that Canton could use as a model. Mr. Trotta stated that Milton established one 2-3 years ago. He believes that Millis and Newton have established a Storm Water Enterprise Fund. The Town of Chicopee established one a decade ago. Nationwide there are probably only around 1,000 towns that have established Storm Water Enterprise funds. The fund will be self-supporting, much like the Water and Sewer Enterprise Funds.

Mr. Clough inquired about the Meals for Prisoners budget line item under the #491 Cemetery Maintenance Budget. The Town hires prisoners in the Fall and in the Spring from the Sheriff's Department for outside clean-up work. The Town has to supply them with lunch and coffee and donuts.

#640 - Water Enterprise Fund – Mr. Trotta provided the following highlights to the Water Enterprise Budget for FY23:

- A new budget line item #56100-58986 for \$100,000 is being added to the budget to cover the cost of a contract for maintenance under a Tank Management Program with Suez Technologies. This is a 15-year agreement to manage the water tanks. This was funded out of Annual Town Meeting 2021 \$3 million request to spend over FY21 and FY22. The \$100,000 will be built into the budget going forward.
- The \$78,985 salary for a labor position was reclassified to the Sewer Enterprise budget.

Mr. Scollins stated that there is an increase to Water Enterprise chargebacks to the General Fund for \$81,456. The MWRA budget of \$2,137,222 is an estimate. The assessment from MWRA is usually released by March. Mr. Trotta stated that the wells are in good condition. There were repairs to one of the water treatment plants. The plant is offline for 6-7 weeks so the MWRA usage will be up but will not affect the assessment until FY24. There is always a lag of about 18 months from the time of usage to the time billed to the Town. The Pecunit Water Treatment Plant will be moving to a Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filtering system. This will go out to bid in the Fall of 2022.

#600 – Sewer Enterprise Fund – Mr. Trotta stated that the only impact to this budget was a \$57,671 salary that was not filled last year. The payroll has been added back in for FY23. There was also a correction with the Charles Lenhart's salary.

The \$429,495 transfer to the General Fund may be adjusted once the MWRA assessment is finalized.

Mr. Mauro inquired if the MWRA assessment is based on the rate at the time the water is used or if it is the rate 18 months later. Mr. Scollins stated that MWRA develops their budget and then the Town's percentage of the total budget is figured. Total MWRA consumption is divided by the number of communities that participate in MWRA. The MWRA budget is based on a calendar year. The FY23 budget is for six months of 2020 and six months of 2021.

#423 – Snow and Ice – Fixed Costs Budget – Mr. Trotta stated that the Snow and Ice FY22 budget is “broke”. Before the blizzard in February that left 23.5 inches of snow in Canton, the budget had a balance of \$45,000. The cost for that storm may be approximately \$30,000 leaving \$15,000 to be spent by the end of the fiscal year on salt for the salt shed. So far in FY22 the Town has received 50 inches of snow.

Mr. Scollins reported that Mr. Trotta has asked him to earmark \$200,000 of the \$600,000 Finance Committee Reserve Fund for a transfer to the Snow and Ice Fund at the end of FY22. Mr. Scollins has three other Reserve Fund Transfer requests for FY22 totaling approximately \$30,000.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion made by Ms. Schutt to approve the February 9, 2022 minutes as written was seconded by Mr. Mauro.

Roll Call Vote:

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

The motion to approve the February 9, 2022 minutes passed 7-0-0.

Next Meeting Date: The Finance Committee will meet on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Scollins stated that Blue Hills Regional Technical School will be presenting their FY23 Assessment. The Finance Committee will discuss and vote the FY23 budget target numbers for both the School Department and Municipal Department. Mr. Scollins will follow up with the School Finance Director regarding the School Department budget.

A motion made by Ms. Schutt to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. was seconded by Ms. Thomas.

Roll Call Vote:

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

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:44 p.m. passed 7-0-0.

Minutes reviewed by: Dave Clough

Respectfully submitted,



Timothy McKenna
Chair, Canton Finance Committee

**Canton Finance Committee Meeting
Meeting Documents
February 16, 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>

Agenda for February 16, 2022 (1 page).

Additional FY23 budget information provided by Fire Chief Charlie Doody, Background for Deputy Fire Chief Position Request with two Organizational Charts, received on February 16, 2022 (3 pages).