

**Needham Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting of January 11, 2017**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Chair Rick Zimbone at approximately 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Chambers at the Town Hall.

Present from the Finance Committee:

Rick Zimbone, Chair

Members: Barry Coffman, John Connelly, Tom Jacob, Ken Lavery, Rick Lunetta, Louise Miller, Carol Smith-Fachetti

Others present:

David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

James Healy, Memorial Park Trustees

Theodora Eaton, Town Clerk

Stephen Popper, Director of Public Facilities Construction

Carys Lustig, Acting Director of Public Facilities Operations

Cecilia Simchak, Administrative Analyst, Public Facilities

Citizen Requests

There were no requests to address the Committee.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

MOVED: By Mr. Jacob that the minutes of January 4, 2017, be approved as distributed, subject to technical corrections. Ms. Miller seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0.

FY2018 Departmental Budget Requests:

Memorial Park

Mr. Healy stated that the budget remains at \$750 which is used to buy flags at Memorial Park and for the flag pole on the hill. They also buy POW flags. He stated that occasionally, funds are used for very minor repair work. He stated that much work is performed by the DPW, Public Facilities, and Park and Recreation Departments. He stated that no additional operating funds are needed.

Mr. Healy expressed concern about the building's structural integrity, and stated that the proposed capital project should consider rebuilding, and not just renovating the building. Mr. Healy also stated that, unknown to the Trustees, there is a working group that meets at Town Hall to discuss the Memorial Park capital project which includes Town employees and a consultant. He stated that he feels that the Finance Committee should be aware of such working groups and should be participating if possible. He is concerned that the process is advancing

without public meetings. Mr. Zimbone stated that if there is a consultant, that the PPBC is likely funding it, and is aware of the working group. Mr. Healy stated that the minutes of one meeting indicated that arrangements are being made about use of the Memorial Park building without the knowledge of the Trustees.

Mr. Healy stated that he believes that the Board of Selectmen do not wish to seek funding for the Memorial Park Building project at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting, though the project is in the capital plan. Mr. Davison stated that there is a placeholder in the warrant for funding for the project, but he does not have more specific information at this time.

Mr. Connelly stated that the budget request mentions a problem with trash pickup. He asked if additional funding is needed. Mr. Healy stated that trash pickup has been a problem for 4 years, and that the Town is planning a trash summit in the summer or fall to address trash pickup from parks. He stated that the problem at Memorial Park comes after the High School lunch time, as well as after public or sporting events. Ms. Miller asked if there are any other issues that the Trustees would like to address. Mr. Healy stated that there are no other needs, since the Town provides employees to help with maintenance and repair work.

Town Clerk

Mr. Lavery introduced the budget and described the functions of the Town Clerk's office. He stated that 45% of the voting for the November 2016 election was done early. Ms. Eaton stated that the salary line in the budget is decreasing due to a reduction from 3 elections to one. She stated that early voting went well. There is a task force of Town Clerks to review the regulatory requirements and recommend improvements. Mr. Zimbone asked about the records management project mentioned in the budget request that is progressing slowly. Ms. Eaton stated that she had hoped to have the vault better cataloged and mapped. They have made much progress in the protection of archival records, but need to do more in the area of records management. Mr. Zimbone suggested that a year with fewer elections and a budget decrease would be a good year to request funding to get a project done. Ms. Eaton stated that she was going to request funding for additional poll pads, but she needs to wait until the state is more specific about changes in polling requirements. She stated she would speak to the Finance Director about additional possible needs.

Public Facilities Department

Operations Division:

Mr. Coffman introduced the budget and described the responsibilities of the operations division. He stated that there are 53 staff and a DSR4 requesting one additional staff member. He stated that 33% of work orders are planned and 67% are reactive maintenance. He stated that outside contractors are used for reactive work since it cannot be projected. He stated that the software program they use for work orders is useful, and they are considering expanding to mobile devices. Ms. Lustig stated that the DSR4 is for a Contract Administrator. The position was suggested by prior Director Chip Laffey. She stated that the position is needed for effective management of all the contracts and contractors. She stated that there is currently the Director

and two shift supervisors overseeing 49 staff as well as contractors from 6:30 a.m. to midnight. The management is spread thin, particularly in the summer when there are additional projects at the schools. She stated that she would expect to see savings from efficiencies if there is better oversight. Ms. Miller asked what the budgets were for contract work. Ms. Lustig stated that there are about \$600K of contracts from financial warrant articles, and \$500K within the Professional and Technical line of the budget. Ms. Lustig stated that Ms. Simchak handles the procurement and administrative management of contracts, and the shift supervisors and Director handle the operations management. Mr. Coffman stated that as new buildings have opened in Town, staff workers have been added, but no additional management staff. Mr. Lavery added that four retirements are expected in the coming year, which provides an opportunity for change.

Mr. Connelly asked about the management structure. Ms. Lustig stated that the staff report to the shift supervisors who report to the Director. She stated that the new position would be a step above the shift supervisors and also report to the Director. Mr. Connelly asked if there has been research whether such a position exists in other places. Ms. Lustig stated that they have not done market research, but there is a Contracts Administrator position in the DPW engineering division with a similar function. She stated that they have worked with Human Resources to match the salary with the responsibilities. Mr. Zimbone requested an organizational chart for the Public Facilities Department.

Ms. Miller stated that this is not the correct position for the department's needs, and that there are not enough contracts to warrant this type of position. She stated that the DPW has more and bigger contracts. She stated that they do appear to need someone with more technical knowledge of facilities to help with predictive maintenance and to decrease use of tradespeople. She stated that they should not be using engineers to assess maintenance needs. Ms. Lustig replied that the scopes of the contracts are not as big as the DPW, but there are many contracts in Public Facilities and they engage in on-call contracts almost daily. She stated that the shift supervisors are using the computer program to develop better preventative maintenance, though that is somewhat different from predictive maintenance.

Mr. Zimbone agreed with Ms. Miller, stating that a new person needs some technical knowledge of systems, but also needs an understanding of construction and engineering to be able to oversee whether things are being done correctly. He supports looking more deeply into the needs and expanding the responsibilities of a new position. He stated that there is more to be done than is being done now, and that systems are becoming more complex. Ms. Lustig stated that some of the projects under \$500K are handled by the PPBC because of the complexity.

Mr. Coffman stated that the Facilities Operations expense budget has increased significantly primarily due to the chiller rental. Otherwise, there is no material change in expenses. Ms. Lustig stated that they are considering seeking an appropriation in May 2017 for the chiller replacement, but because of timing issues, they would not be able to start the work until summer of 2018.

Construction Division:

Mr. Connelly introduced the budget and described the projects being managed. He stated that they are using a contractor for some project management work. The DSR4 request for an additional Project Manager has been withdrawn for FY18. Mr. Popper stated that the position

has been deferred. In order to get all of the work done in house, another person is needed, but they felt that at the salary range being considered, they would not get a person with adequate qualifications.

Mr. Zimbone asked about the Memorial Park project, and whether they were considering a complete teardown and rebuild. Mr. Popper stated that is definitely being considered. He stated that he is working with the contractor to develop a schedule. He stated that it is on track for feasibility work in April 2017. It will be too late to seek design fund in May 2017. He stated that it would be tight to try to seek design funds in fall of 2017. He stated that he would recommend construction begin in June of the year when it starts. He stated that there is not yet a consensus of what project is being planned and when it will take place.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Connelly stated that the timing of the request for the Contract Administrator in wrong since there is currently no head of Public Facilities Operations. Despite the best intentions of this request, the new Director should weigh in on any new position. Mr. Zimbone stated that he agreed, and that he planned to speak to the Town Manager. Another idea that has also been raised would be to add a new position above the Director of Operations and the Director of Construction that would coordinate both divisions. Mr. Davison noted that the Director of Facilities Operations position has been advertised and the application window has closed, and applications are being considered.

Finance Committee Updates

There were no updates.

Adjournment

MOVED: By Ms. Miller that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned, as there was no further business. Mr. Lavery seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0, at approximately 8:25 p.m.

Documents: Department Spending Requests FY2018; Public Facilities Construction Master Planning Schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Mizgerd
Staff Analyst

Approved January 18, 2017