



Board of Finance 2023-2024 All Day Budget Workshop

Friday, February 3, 2023

Meeting Room -Town Hall 8:00 a.m.

Approved

Attendance

Board of Finance Members Present: Chairman Kevin Houlihan, Vice Chairman James Leahy, Kevin Moffett, Joseph Nuzzo, Ajeet Jain, and Alternate Meghan Rabuse

Board of Finance Members Absent: Kevin McNabola

Staff: John Cifarelli, Finance Director; Audrey Geer, Assistant Finance Director; Deborah Satonick, Recording Secretary

Guest: Robert Lim

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Mary Shaw
TOWN CLERK

1. Orange Police Services – Chief Robert Gagne & Assistant Max Martins

- Chief Gagne began his presentation by citing crime statistics in the town of Orange, noting that medical emergencies continue to increase due to the aging demographics within the town. The Chief indicated that as the town continues to develop, the need for additional patrol staff also increases. He stated that he plans on having this discussion with the First Selectman.
- Chief Gagne stated that some of the budget drivers are salaries, technology, and vehicle requests. Also, some increases are driven by the Police Accountability Bill. The Police Department is considering the strategic placement of cameras in the town that can read license plates as an investigative tool. With this proposed budget, the department is in need of two patrol vehicles and two motorcycles. The cost of this is approximately \$55k per patrol car and \$30k per motorcycle. As far as the technology requests, Chief Gagne would like to add an additional position in IT support that would report directly to the IT Director of the town.
- Lastly, Chief Gagne addressed some of their Capital items. He reported that the roof on the Police Station is fifty years old and needs to be replaced. In addition, the radio mask on their roof is rotting away and he would like to replace it with a ground-standing one. He also would like to add a Microwave System Enhancement at High Plains Community Center.

2. Town Clerk – Mary Shaw

- Ms. Shaw discussed the uncertainties with the early voting election process, attributing to the proposed increase in operating expenses.

3. Tax Collector – Tom Hurley

- Mr. Hurley reported increased costs in postage and legal notices. He also reported that he has obtained four quotes to replace their front-end tax payment system, claiming that their current system is eight years old and obsolete. This proposed system would allow for online credit card payments in addition to a kiosk placed at Town Hall. Lastly, he cited needed building renovations in his department as well as the need for a new copier/scanner/printer. He submitted a new handout to the Orange Board of Finance with his new budget increase of \$21,733.

4. Public Works – Robert Brinton

- Mr. Brinton requested a new position of Maintenance Technician with a salary of \$65k. There is currently one maintenance person on staff, and he is being overextended. Mr. Leahy questioned the advantages of hiring a permanent staff employee with paid benefits versus using outside contractors.
- There was a discussion on the increased costs of gas, diesel, and electricity. Mr. Foyer addressed the reason why sand and salt should still be purchased in spite of the current stockpile in reserve. Also, it was noted that the cost of curbside pickup has doubled, and the rates have increased dramatically.
- Lastly, Mr. Brinton distributed photographs of the roof at High Plains Community Center. Due to leaks in two separate locations, the entire roof was examined and found to be in very bad condition. It was determined that this building is a good site for solar power after a new roof has been installed. The proposed new roof would be a Capital Expenditure item.

5. Community Services – Dennis Marsh

- The Board of Finance commended Mr. Marsh for doing a good job as the temporary Acting Director. The new Senior Service Coordinator begins next week, and Mr. Cifarelli advised that the Youth Services Coordinator may be changed to a full time position. Mr. Marsh discussed the services they provide, including Bridges.

6. Parks and Recreation – Dan Lynch

- Mr. Lynch discussed the new software allowing for online registration. The program is user friendly and will cost \$8500 per year. This system will be rolled out for their April Vacation Camp.
- Mr. Lynch discussed field improvements as they support the fields at Old Tavern Sports Complex, High Plains, and at the schools. All of the fields need some degree of maintenance work.
- The self-support account has a good size balance that can be used for needed equipment such as a truck or lawn mower. Mr. Cifarelli noted that as of June 1st, the minimum wage goes up to \$15 per hour and all other salaries will need to be adjusted accordingly.
- The High Plains Fairgrounds continues to be rented and is sold out by summer. The proceeds may be used to install new lighting under the large pavilion or repair the scoreboard in the gym at High Plains. The fees for Parks and Recreation programs, such as a Summer Camp, continues to be lower than other venues. These programs are set up as “Revolving Accounts” in that the proceeds can be used for field or ground improvements.

7. Case Memorial Library – Kathy Giotsas

- Ms. Giotsas distributed handouts of their Summer Newsletter along with illustrated programs and informationals regarding the services that are provided by the library. She stated that the library is an educational support for the town and services all ages of the population. She reviewed each line item with the Board members and is requesting a 5.29% increase from last year's budget.

8. Information Services – Paul Mongillo

- Mr. Mongillo explained the reasons for the 11.90% increase in the budget. He indicated the purchase of Munis software, repair and maintenance, and the renewal of software licenses have all contributed to this increase in their budget.

9. Capital Projects Committee – Ralph Okenquist

- Mr. Okenquist submitted all of the Capital items to the Board of Finance, totaling \$11,218,884. The repair of the High Plains Community Center roof is not included in this list as this roof repair was just recently realized. The roof for the Police Department is also not included in this dollar amount. The Board of Finance members reviewed this list with Mr. Okenquist and they will need to prioritize the projects and look at different avenues of available funding, such as State funding, bonds, etc. This topic of discussion will be added to their "Next Steps" list by the Recording Secretary.

10. Budget Discussion

- The Board members had a brief discussion regarding the proposed 2023-2024 Amity budget and decided collectively that they would support up to a 0.46% increase based on subsequent years of a built-in surplus that is being carried over from year to year.

Mr. Leahy made a motion to support up to a 0.46% increase in the Amity 2023-2024 proposed budget, seconded by Mr. Moffett. All were in favor and the motion PASSED unanimously.

(Ms. Rabuse left the meeting at 2:45 p.m.)

11. Approval of Minutes – January 23, 2023

- The Board members reviewed the January minutes and made edits and corrections as needed.

Mr. Moffett made a motion to approve the amended January 23, 2023 Board of Finance minutes, seconded by Mr. Jain. All were in favor and the motion PASSED.

12. Adjournment

The Orange Board of Finance Budget Workshop ended at 3:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Satonick
Recording Secretary