



TOWN OF TEWKSBURY

TOWN HALL
1009 MAIN ST
TEWKSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS 01876

FINANCE COMMITTEE

David Aznavoorian, Chairman
Raymond Lisiecki, Vice Chair
Damin Sutherby, Clerk
Thomas L. Cooke
Bruce Panilaitis
Laurence Sanford

Meeting Minutes for February 15, 2014

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 p.m. by David Aznavoorian, Chairman, at the Pike House (Temporary Town Hall). Present were Raymond Lisiecki, Thomas Cooke, Larry Sanford, and Bruce Panilaitis. Also present was Richard Montuori, Town Manager, and Melissa Johnson, Recording Secretary.

Damin Sutherby and Karen Kucala, Finance Director, were not in attendance.

2) FY15 Department Budget Review

Public Library

Present was Diane Giarusso, Library Director. Ms. Giarusso noted that the FY15 library budget shows some moderate growth and she is grateful for that. Included in the FY15 budget are additional funds for the books budget, network membership fees, and also a few office supplies. The library budget has mainly remained level funded over the past few years. There has been a growth in library use through the Merrimack Valley Consortium. Ms. Giarusso noted that the library has been supplementing the supplies budget with State Aid. Last year the library was able to meet the minimum appropriation, but there was no guarantee. As a result, additional funds are being requested this year. Ms. Giarusso explained that the library is in need of an additional staff member; however, this has been put on hold for now as they do not want to lose the waiver for not meeting the book quota. The library is requesting a \$5,000 increase in FY15.

Mr. Sanford asked approximately how many people visit the library a year and Ms. Giarusso noted approximately 171,000 people every year. Mr. Sanford asked what happens if the book quota is not met and Ms. Giarusso explained the library would lose the waiver. Discussion took place on what would be required to open on Sundays for four hours. Ms. Giarusso noted that she would need 5 staff members. Mr. Sanford asked why opening on Sundays is not being requested. Ms. Giarusso explained that at this time it is not one of the priority goals and that there are significant funding goals that need to be met first. It would cost approximately \$21,000 to open for four hours on Sundays. Mr.

Montuori explained that he requested the department heads present a level funded budget with top two priority items.

Mr. Panilaitis asked if there is a way to adjust the hours during the week to open on Sundays. Ms. Giarusso explained that it is not so much a staffing issue, but more of an issue of when the patrons will know when the library is open as it is difficult trying to ensure they know the hours.

Mr. Panilaitis noted that the line items on energy use and repairs and maintenance are a single number of \$85,000 and \$30,000 and requested a breakdown for both. Mr. Montuori will provide this as well as a square foot cost. Mr. Panilaitis suggested finding a way to reduce copier lease fees by utilizing the copy center at the high school.

Mr. Cooke noted that for several years he has felt that equipping the library with a cable connection should be a priority. This would allow the library to broadcast its programs to those who are unable to attend them at the library through the local access channel. Mr. Cooke noted that residents pay a franchise fee and suggested using those funds to connect the library to cable. Mr. Montuori explained that he has requested both Verizon and Comcast install lines at the library and the senior center. The cost for this is approximately \$16,000 to \$20,000 for each provider; approximately \$40,000 for each building. Mr. Montuori is negotiating the contracts and will continue to work on this over the next several months. The new IT director is expected to start soon and can possibly get software to broadcast live from any location.

Mr. Cooke asked if any subscriptions have been added over the past year such as the Museum of Science. Ms. Giarusso explained that the Friends of the Library pay for those types of subscriptions and they have recently added Tower Hill. This is something that is frequently reviewed by the Friends of the Library. Mr. Cooke noted the budget for books is modest and asked if recycling, rebinding of books, etc. is included in the budget. Ms. Giarusso explained that they do not typically rebind books as it is usually cheaper to purchase them as a discount is received from the vendor. The Friends try to sell the old movies and DVDs. Mr. Cooke asked about the old books that are dropped off outside of the library and Ms. Giarusso explained that the Friends run that program and the library does receive funds from this.

Mr. Lisiecki explained that there are two parts to State Aid: books and hours and asked how close to reaching full State Aid for the hours. Ms. Giarusso noted approximately 5 hours. Mr. Lisiecki noted that the full amount would then be received; which is a \$7,000 increase from what is currently received and suggested using this to help fund the \$21,000 it would cost to open the library on Sundays.

Mr. Aznavoorian suggested offering subscriptions to knowledge bases as possible additional revenue stream. The program is web based and a subscription fee is paid to the library. Ms. Giarusso noted that she would like to discuss this further with Mr. Aznavoorian in the future.

Council on Aging

Present was Linda Brabant, Director of Council on Aging.

Ms. Brabant explained that Mr. Montuori requested she identify two priority items for the FY15 budget. The first priority identified by Ms. Brabant is to upgrade the position of Senior Clerk Secretary to either an Administrative Assistant under the Personnel By-Laws at 40 hrs/week or an Office Manager under AFSCME. The second priority identified is to provide additional funds for landscaping. Ms. Brabant explained the staffing issues at the center over the years and also noted that the Friends of the Elderly currently handle landscaping and she is unsure how much longer they will be able to bear the burden of this cost. Currently, the town mows and the Friends do the beds, mulching, swale mowing, fall cleanups, etc. The cost is approximately \$8,600.00 per year. Funds have been moved from utilities to repairs and maintenance to address landscaping.

Ms. Brabant explained that with the exception of the shifting of funds for landscaping, the FY15 budget has been level funded. Ms. Brabant explained that the center has been self sufficient with regards to the programs and activities offered and reviewed some of these programs. Ms. Brabant discussed staffing and explained that without the volunteers she would not be able to do what she does. In the past year, the Senior Center has become the temporary host site for the Veteran's Agent Office and is also the host site for the Merrimack Valley Nutrition Program for its Tewksbury Meals on Wheels and congregate meals programs.

The Shawsheen Regional Technological High completed the first phase construction of a wood working building. It is hoped that the electrical portion of the project will be completed in the spring of 2014 by the Tech Students and Instructor.

Mr. Montuori noted that there is also a reduction in salaries from FY14 to FY15 as Ms. Brabant is retiring at the end of March and the salary for the new Director will be less.

Mr. Cooke noted that he was involved in the construction of the senior center and is aware of the issues with the building. Mr. Cooke feels the COA budget is lean for the services that are provided. Mr. Cooke thanked Ms. Brabant for her years of services to the town and to the elderly.

Mr. Panilaitis also thanked Ms. Brabant for her years of services and asked what other services could be provided at the Center if additional staff was added. Ms. Brabant discussed the TRIAD that is being worked on with the Police and Fire departments as well as implementing a hot lunch program with meals cooked on site and discussed some of the problems with Meals on Wheels. Mr. Montuori noted that he would like to speak with the Shawsheen Tech to see if its culinary program could help with hot lunches. Mr. Panilaitis suggested also seeing if any local businesses are willing to help.

Ms. Brabant discussed the LRTA roadrunner program and noted that she would like to see to this extended out to the Boston area as there are many medical facilities in these areas.

Mr. Aznavoorian noted that outreach and communication are great goals and asked if there is a central way of doing this with the police, fire, etc. Ms. Brabant explained that the TRIAD will help with this.

Town Clerk, Parking Clerk, Board of Registrars

Present was Denise Graffeo, Town Clerk.

Ms. Graffeo explained that the mission of the Clerk's office is to uphold the integrity of the Town's democratic process, to maintain and preserve public records, and to act in the best interest of the Town and the Commonwealth by providing efficient, innovative, and quality services in a fair and impartial manner to all. Many of the Clerk's operations are governed by statute and the budget reflects this. Ms. Graffeo noted that the FY15 budget has been level funded from FY14. Mr. Montuori noted that the big change was moving funds around within the budget. Beginning in April, the Town Clerk's position will change from an elected position to an appointed position. Mr. Montuori noted that this will need to go to town meeting to change the personnel bylaw to reflect this. The two priority items identified by Ms. Graffeo are to increase the hours of the 25 hour part-time Account Clerk position to a 37.5 hour full-time and to hire staff to redesign, organize, and manage information posted on the municipal website.

Mr. Cooke thanked Ms. Graffeo for her services and commended her on her work. Mr. Cooke noted that Ms. Graffeo has not requested much within the budget. Ms. Graffeo explained that she speaks with Mr. Montuori throughout the year and he has been great at meeting the clerk's office needs.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that CPA funds were recently used to restore some of the records and asked if the additional CPA funds can be used. Ms. Graffeo explained that she does have a document management program that she has been working on for a few years. The CPA funds were also used to store records at Iron Mountain and there is a monthly fee for that. Mr. Montuori noted that the new town hall will allow the Clerk's office to maintain the records properly in the future. Mr. Lisiecki suggested a display case at the town hall to display some of these historical documents for public viewing.

Discussion took place on the State election and reimbursement received from the State. The reimbursement is enough to cover next year's State election; however, there is a desire to maintain some of the funds for the town election.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if any new voting equipment is being purchased. Ms. Graffeo explained that \$60,000 was appropriated at town meeting for new voting equipment. A bid has been put out for all new voting booths and the hope is to have this completed for the April election. Mr. Aznavoorian noted that if there are any wish list items he would like to see them.

Community Development

Present was Steve Sadwick, Director of Community Development, Edward Johnson, Building Commissioner, and Lou Ann Clement, Board of Health Director.

Mr. Sadwick explained that the Community Development, Building Department, and Board of Health budgets have all been level funded and there are no significant increases other than 2% salary increases and step increases. The cuts in staff that have occurred over the years are slowing being rebuilt in the three departments.

Ms. Clement noted that the Board of Health budget has been level funded as requested by the town manager. Ms. Clement explained that she would love to offer other programs, but are unable to due to limited funds. A new public health nurse has been hired and has been working to get the community healthy. Ms. Clement noted that they are not doing routine inspections as much as they should be. Mr. Montuori noted that a sanitarian has been out on medical leave.

Mr. Johnson explained that the building department serves approximately 30 customers per day, answers to approximately 50 telephone calls per day, and are in essence the front end support for community development. The FY15 budget has been level funded with the exception of a step increase for the local inspector and longevity for one of the permit technicians. There is also a \$500 increase in staff development to attend seminars required by State law.

Mr. Panilaitis noted that two of the BOH's priority items are two different screenings and asked if there are any other funds to support the start up cost for this. Mr. Montuori noted that he is not aware of any such funds. Mr. Panilaitis asked if cholesterol screenings would be done at an annual doctor's visit. Ms. Clement confirmed this and noted that it is important that people know this. Mr. Panilaitis asked how much of the building department documentation can be found online and Mr. Johnson explained that almost all of the information can be found online including the building permit application.

Mr. Cooke requested Ms. Clement provide an overview on animal control permits and sanitarian inspections. Ms. Clement explained that animal control has been shifted into the town manager's budget. The health department is still responsible for animal bites, beavers, etc. Ms. Clement and the sanitarian do inspections for restaurants, tanning salons, school kitchens, etc. The department staff consists of Ms. Clement, one full time secretary, one full time sanitarian, a part time public health nurse, and an animal inspector who does livestock. Mr. Cooke noted that a few years ago sanitarian inspections were outsourced. Ms. Clements explained that was done under a State grant that is no longer available. Mr. Cooke asked what role the BOH has in rubbish. Ms. Clement explained that any receptacle issues are directed to the town manager and trash on someone's property would be directed to the BOH. Mr. Johnson noted that the building department also receives trash complaints. Mr. Cooke asked if there is a way of centralizing this. Mr. Sadwick explained that Mr. Johnson and Ms. Clement work together on these types of issues.

Mr. Cooke asked who is doing weights and measures and Mr. Montuori explained this was contracted a couple of years ago with NMCOG. Mr. Cooke asked if this revenue stream has been lost and Mr. Montuori confirmed this and explained that previously when Mr. Johnson was handling weights and measures he had no help. Since that time, a part time staff member has been added and this item can now be looked at again. Mr. Cooke asked how Mr. Johnson handles inspections as he is the only inspector and commissioner. Mr. Johnson explained that he does not handle sewer or septic and noted that there is also a part time staff member at 15 hours that assists with inspections. There has been a decrease in commercial and an increase in residential. Mr. Cooke noted that one of the town manager's priorities was to improve the permitting process and he feels there is room to improve the operations within the Community Development department.

Mr. Montuori explained that he meets with the directors weekly to discuss any issues that may be occurring. Mr. Montuori feels the town has a good permitting process and the staff does a good job moving things along. The people who have the most trouble with the process seem to be the ones that do not follow the process correctly and/or have incomplete information.

Mr. Sadwick noted that one of the other duties of the building commissioner that does not get mentioned often is that he is also the zoning enforcement officer and this can take up a significant amount of time.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that the BOH letter requests to restore 10% cuts that elected officials took. Mr. Montuori explained that all elected officials took cuts and this has not been restored. Mr. Lisiecki asked if the town has reached its 10% to meet the affordable housing quota. Mr. Sadwick explained that negotiations are still occurring to keep 77 units from Shawsheen Place. If the units can be maintained the town will be 70 units away from reaching the 10%. If the 77 units are lost, 147 units will be needed.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if there is any way to justify an increase in the nurse's hours or if there is a possibility to contract with another community. Ms. Clement explained that there is a coalition; however, Wilmington and Andover are not a part of it.

Police Department

Present was Timothy Sheehan, Chief of Police.

Chief Sheehan explained that over the past year a narcotics units has been started and the arrests associated with this have been outstanding. There has been an increase in crime at the West portion of town (Woburn Street) as well as on Andover Street (Cracker Barrel). Chief Sheehan discussed the Federal Grant that was received for an additional school resource officer. There has been a 10% increase in arrests; which is the trend since 2008. Chief Sheehan noted that citations have decreased and accidents have increased and explained that the officers are so involved in other matters that they are unable to properly address citations. One of priorities for the police department is two new officers for a traffic unit. This was also a priority last year and still has not been met. The FY15 budget reflects 2% salary increases, additional funds to promote an officer from

Lieutenant to Detective, and additional funds to change the IT position to Deputy Chief of Administration. Chief Sheehan explained that the current IT person, Matt Small, was hired as a dispatcher and then transferred over to IT. The Deputy Chief of Administration retired some years ago and the position was never filled. Chief Sheehan discussed some of the responsibilities covered by Mr. Small and noted that he currently makes less than the secretary's. After reviewing the budget with Mr. Montuori, it was determined that at this time only one additional traffic officer can be hired.

Discussion took place on a regional dispatch center and Chief Sheehan noted that this is something that they are in the process of researching. At least two other communities would be needed. The communities discussed to date have been Tewksbury, Lowell, and Chelmsford. This would likely be one of the largest regional centers call volume wise. Discussion took place on the cost savings of a regional dispatch and Chief Sheehan noted that there would still be a need to assist people at the window at the police station.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that the budget for uniforms has been moved from operating to salary at a higher amount (\$8,800). Chief Sheehan explained that this is relative to the IRS audit that was recently conducted. The town was told that they could no longer issue the \$1,000.00 clothing allowance and that these funds need to be taxed.

Mr. Lisiecki noted that there are four vehicles listed for replacement and suggested purchasing current year vehicles as there may be a savings.

Mr. Cooke asked if the school resource officer is still under a grant. Chief Sheehan explained that the current resource officer was never under a grant. A grant was recently awarded to add an additional resource officer. Mr. Cooke asked if the school resource officer provides reports and if an incident count is known. Chief Sheehan explained that he meets with the school resource officer weekly and also receives reports. Chief Sheehan will provide the information on incident counts. Mr. Cooke noted that Mr. Montuori's budget message states that no new staff will be added unless there is an increase in service. Mr. Cooke feels that staff for a traffic unit cannot be justified and discussed the additional expenses that would come along with this such as training, overtime, etc. Mr. Cooke discussed the resources that are spent to have an officer at the school and questioned whether we are getting the value for the money that is spent.

Mr. Montuori explained that his recommendation in his budget message was based on two parts: costs savings or increase in service. This is service orientated. Discussion took place on the need for a school resource officer and some of the safety issues that can occur such as bullying, drugs, etc. Chief Sheehan noted that the school resource officer covers all of the schools even though she may be stationed at the high school. Chief Sheehan discussed the benefits of having a school resource officer and noted that most residents would prefer to see the resource officers at the schools. Chief Sheehan feels an untrained officer cannot be placed at the school. Mr. Cooke requested an incident report to justify this.

Mr. Panilaitis noted that in 2011 repairs and maintenance was \$174,000; this year it is at \$64,000, and asked why there is such a difference. Mr. Montuori explained that lines items were shifted around. Mr. Panilaitis asked if there is any potential use of cameras to help with criminal activity. Chief Sheehan explained that they are always looking for way to improve their operations and discussed some of the civil liberties that are affected with the use of cameras.

Mr. Aznavoorian asked if the cameras have been installed at the high school and Chief Sheehan confirmed this and reviewed some of the capital items. Mr. Lisiecki asked about the license plate reader that was recently purchased. Chief Sheehan explained that the reader was purchased under a grant and there are issues on storage time as there are currently no regulations on this. The reader only helps with unregistered vehicles, uninsured vehicles, stolen vehicles, etc. And is strictly motor vehicle related.

3) Future Proposed Meeting Dates

Thursday, February 27, 2014	7:00 p.m. Police Station Community Room
Saturday, March 1, 2014	8:30 a.m. Pike House
Thursday, March 6, 2014	7:00 p.m. Pike House
Thursday, March 20, 2014	7:00 p.m. Pike House
Thursday, March 27, 2014	7:00 p.m. Police Station Community Room
Thursday, April 3, 2014	7:00 p.m. Police Station Community Room

Adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Cooke made the motion to adjourn at 12:20 p.m.; seconded by Mr. Lisiecki and the motion carried 6-0.

Approved: June 19, 2014

**Documents Presented and/or Discussed
February 15, 2013**

- 1) Town Manager's Recommended FY15 Budget
A copy can be found at the Finance Department or with the Town Manager