

Financial Matters Sub-Committee June 12,2020
Executive Session Minutes

Members present: Christine Saulnier, James Broderick, Mary McNally, Diane Bishop, Mike Kane, Tom O'Connor, Kathleen Hill (ex-officio)

Chris opened the meeting at 9:00am. Jim made a motion (second Tom) to enter into Executive Session and return to Open Session only for the purpose of adjournment. Voting YES were Saulnier, Broderick, Bishop, Kane, and O'Connor. The committee moved into Executive Session at 9:02am

Chris began the Executive Session by summarizing an email she received from School Committee Chair, Greg Thompson. Mr. Thompson notified Chris that despite the fact that the Finance Committee had voted to reduce the School department budget by \$200,000, the School Committee voted to reduce its budget by \$143,387. Chris reiterated the Finance Committee would use the \$200,000 amount in its FY21 proposed budget.

The purpose of the meeting was to address the requester for a Greeter at the police department when the dispatch center moves into WESTCOMM on July 1. The greeter will take the place of a dispatcher at the window and will be available to address public concerns and requests as well as other administrative functions. In the absence of a recommended Greeter, there will be no one at the window and Chief Dalessio is concerned about the problems associated with a 'dark station'. His intention is to provide the same level of face to face window service the residents have come to rely on. Committee members posed a variety of questions to the Chief as follows.

Tom, 'If 911 calls go directly to WESTCOMM, who answers the 525-5440 number?' *The police number will be answered by the greeter. If the nature of that call is an emergency, it will be routed back to WESTCOMM otherwise the greeter will take the call. July 19-May 26, 20 had 1321 calls. January 20-May 26, 20 has 572 calls to date.*

Tom, 'What data exists as to time of day and frequency of call?' *Most calls come in during daylight hours and are typically 'soft' calls or 'low officer assist' calls.*

Chris noted that based on the data, it translated into approximately 132 calls/month or approximately 33 call/week.

Chief Dalessio noted that there is 4 FTE dispatchers @ \$18./hr and a deputy dispatcher 2 \$21./hr with a \$5,000 stipend. He clarified that the stipend was given to this individual by former Town Manager Denise Menard and negotiated without his participation.

Mike noted that if the deputy dispatcher remained after July 1 as a greeter her salary would remain the same and also mentioned that the individual receives compliments for a high quality of skill and service on the job.

Kathy, 'Is there any knowledge of the pay rates at WESTCOMM, should our present employees seek jobs at that location?' *The pay rates at WESTCOMM are reasonably the same.*

Chris stated her concern about building a new position based on the skill set of a current employee who may be considered for the job.

Chris, "Is the impact of the officer retiring in July included in the new budget submittal?" "If that position remains unfilled for FY21, will it be added back to a budget request for FY22?" *The retirement of the officer in July and keeping the position vacant is reflected in the June 1 submittal. The net impact of this unfilled position paired with the proposed greeter model will be approximately \$60,000. The FY22 budget request will include returning this position to the department.*

Tom, "With the greeter model, what happens when an individual is arrested, or an arrestee is placed on suicide watch?" "Are the current dispatchers under a contract?" *With the exception of the current dispatcher who might be interested in the greeter position, all other greeters will require a training. If an arrestee is placed on a suicide watch, a separate officer is called in to sit 1:1 with that person. It is 'short money' for guaranteeing safety and protecting the liability of the Town.*

Mary commented about the dispatcher's contract saying it was bargained for a 3-year period and it is about halfway through its duration. She stated that the contract includes the language 'subject to appropriation' as it relates to each fiscal year. There could be the potential for a legal challenge, however, she feels the dispatchers may be just looking for a little monetary consideration instead.

Diane, "Will the hourly rate for a proposed greeter be less if the individual who considering the job takes employment elsewhere?" *Yes.*

Chris asked if the proposed greeters will be part of the Town Employees Union (TEU). Mary indicated that very shortly TEU employees will be voting on whether or not they wish to remain in the union or individually withdraw from its membership.

Finally, Chief Dalessio asked committee members to consider the fact that the 911 call center (WESTCOMM) is strictly for emergencies. The WESTCOMM model was never intended to take the place of all other police department functions.

Mike made a motion (seconded Tom) to leave Executive Session and return to Open Session only for the purpose of Adjournment. Voting YES were Saulnier, Broderick, Bishop, O'Connor, Kane, and Hill (at request of the Chair). The committee left Executive Session at 9:46am. Jim made a motion to adjourn (second Tom). Voting YES were Saulnier, Broderick, Bishop, Kane, and O'Connor. The meeting adjourned at 9:47am.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Hill
(ex-officio)