

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS MEETING HELD: January 25, 2023
LOCATION: 84 Somers Road, East Longmeadow, MA 01028

ATTENDANCE: P. Abair, M. Lynch, B. Fenney, D. Keane, M. Berman and B. Taddia
ABSENT: T. O'Brien

P. Abair called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm and asked if anyone is recording the meeting other than the webinar. B. Taddia commented yes, for the DPW minutes.

REVIEW/APPROVE MINUTES from 11/15/2022 meetings: P. Abair entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes dated November 15, 2022; M. Lynch made a motion to approve the minutes. P. Abair seconded the motion. The vote was taken and was unanimously affirmative.

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT: Bruce went over all division increases/decreases with the Board.

FY24 Draft Operation Budget Review:

Building 422	Sewer 440	Snow & Ice
Salary: \$531,827.56 (+4.19%)	Salary: \$677,038.43 (+17.57%)	Salary: \$20,297.00 (0%)
Non-Salary: \$428,700.00 (+12.61%)	Non-Salary: \$1,386,330.32 (+7.78%)	Non-Salary: \$127,875.00 (0%)
Total: \$960,527.56 (+7.79%)	Total: \$2,063,368.75 (+10.8%)	Total: \$148,172.00 (0%)
Highway 421	Water 450	Waste Collection
Salary: \$1,384,361.63 (+0.73%)	Salary: \$659,764.73 (+5.8%)	Salary: \$22,056.00 (+6.5%)
Non-Salary: \$571,067.32 (+9.3%)	Non-Salary: \$2,023,794.21 (+5.1%)	Non-Salary: \$107,600.00 (+23.0%)
Total: \$1,955,428.95 (+3.09%)	Total: \$2,683,558.94 (+5.3%)	Total: \$129,656.00 (+19.8%)
Stormwater 490	Utilities 429	
Salary: \$219,649.09 (+42.8%)	Non-Salary: \$1,898,980.00 (+44.0%)	
Non-Salary: \$140,400.00 (+6.90%)	Total: \$1,898,980.00 (+44.0%)	
Total: \$360,049.09 (+26.3%)		
Total Public Works:	\$10,199,741.29 (+12.58%)	
Total Salaries/OPEB:	\$3,514,994.44 (+7.2%)	
Total Operational:	\$6,684,746.85 (+15.6%)	
General Fund Liabilities:	\$5,092,764.51 (+16.7%)	
General Fund w/o FY23 Utility Increase:	\$4,512,884.51 (3.4%)	

BUILDING COMMENTS

P. Abair: Like to commend Bruce and team for keeping track of the energy resources and expenditures; and how monies are being spent; the gas and electric worksheet of usage by area will greatly help the green initiative scenario going forward for setting targets and understanding the usage.

HIGHWAY COMMENTS

B. Fenney: Collaborated with the Union and created four new Labor positions; these positions were taken out of our Skilled Labor pool at a reduced hourly rate; created this position to attract candidates when hiring without

required licenses (CDL); this will give room to grow within the department; we having training programs in place. **P. Abair:** Given the 25% turnover, I think we should be having discussions with our employees and see what's bothering them and have a reflection of ones self; DPW handles complex equipment and we need better quality individuals and keeping them; would like to see the number of people leaving decrease. **M. Lynch:** There is substantial value in having annual review and formal discussions with employees; helps with employee development; employees need to voice out there interests to their supervisor: I need help with this, these are my problems can you help me; you can go back to collective bargaining issues and understand them. **B. Fenney:** Our goal is to promote within and train the people that we need. Re. Professional Tech Other increase: Looking to purchase 2 Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons per year for driver awareness and work with the police and school department to put them where is makes sense, for pedestrian safety.

SEWER COMMENTS

B. Fenney: Re. Full time salaries/wages increase: Hiring a Sewer Foreman who will be required to get a treatment license to understand and mitigate any issues that may flow into SWSC system. Re. Other purchase services: this line item reflects the main interceptor project, river crossing and York St pumping station, treatment plant and SWSC true-up projection.

WASTE COLLECTION COMMENTS

P. Abair: Can we extend the transfer station schedule in the fall (October through November) for people who work; we are not going to have an increase in service without an increase it cost. **M. Lynch:** We could explore having an existing part-time position to pick up the extra hours. **B. Fenney:** Possibly, from 3-6 pm, however, there are no lights and it does get dark out this time of year; will review.

WATER COMMENTS

B. Fenney: Re. Solar credits increases: We build up credits and then periodically have to adjust our schedule Z allocated percentage of credit distribution based on usage.

UTILITIES COMMENTS

B. Fenney: Will tell the finance oversight committee that we are looking to lock in electricity and gas contracts and will go back and adjust budget amounts accordingly. **M. Lynch:** Would be better to request our highest risk hoping that the prices will go down and we end up with a surplus, which can be returned to the Town or reallocated to another unit that needs it. **P. Abair:** Re. Energy Gas & Oil increase: when looking at usage it is hard to judge; you can't use an average because everything was shut down, schools were closed (COVID); better off to use the average of the current timeframe; too many variables; do the best you can with the worksheets.

STORMWATER COMMENTS

B. Fenney: I am calculating based on initial costs a \$7.00 increase per year for our residential stormwater fee from \$25 to \$32 yearly.

OTHER COMMENTS

M. Lynch: We are able to have enterprise funds cover almost half of our budget requests? **B. Fenney:** Yes, that is built in our rates and fees, which is self-sustaining based on our rates structure. **P. Abair:** Now we are ordering equipment and hopefully get the capital funding (pump station); we need to look at total cost including principal & interest on some of the bonding to keep the rates reasonable without a dramatic increase and still be able to operate and maintain the services to the Town. **B. Fenney:** Our reserve in the Water fund went down because I received wrong information for debt and interest figures. **P. Abair:** We need to do a prediction on what we want the reserve to be; we want it to be reasonable based on our current expenses and what's out there to be spent for projects. It's a balancing act of what want the rate to be which is reasonable at the same time maintain

services within the structure. **B. Fenney:** We need build up the reserve in case something catastrophic happens like one of our pump stations go down. Re. the new purchase of 382 N. Main: I haven't built any money into our building maintenance or utility division budget. I will supply more information at the next board meeting and keep the data separate from our bottom line. **P. Abair:** I prefer that we keep it in a supplemental budget to support the building and not mix into our budget; homeowners need an explanation of the purchases; there are a lot of services in the building that need to be maintained (elevator, cleaning service, HVAC system, tenants); DPW doesn't have the skills and processes in place to maintain the building. **M. Lynch:** The new building has an elevator so the cost to maintain it is substantially lower. Re. the budget: I want to acknowledge all the hard work that goes into this; I appreciate all the analysis, reviewing historical spending, what the budget is, what new programs and activities and cost of services that will take place for the next fiscal year; it's very challenging to project out especially utilities and collective bargaining which is driving the increases; as well as the cost of labor and supplies which everyone is noticing throughout the community. From a perspective review, I think that everything flows well together and is easy to understand. For future budget reviews, I suggest that our conversations be adjusted to high-level increases or decreases that meet a threshold of \$5K or more. **B. Fenney:** Moving forward we can keep that threshold. It is a big task and appreciate Bob and team for their contributions; I couldn't do this alone. **P. Abair:** Overall, the team does an excellent job of summarizing the information and getting it into a format that we can understand; and keeping great notes on the operations of the department; the majority of the people in Town don't understand the DPW's involvement; there is an educational process in presenting these reviews to the committee of what the DPW does for the Town; and how essential it is for the Town that we maintain the services that everybody wants but they are all behind the scenes; but there is a cost to them.

OTHER BUSINESS: 2022 Annual Town Report **B. Fenney:** Read off all the DPW divisions' accomplishments to the board, which will be submitted to the Town Manager; and will then be published to the Town of East Longmeadow's website. **P. Abair:** Would like to see this report on the DPW website so our homeowners can go see what we do. **M. Lynch:** For the next meeting would like a high-level overview on FY23 spending; along with a projective narrative on a surplus/deficiency for FY23.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING: **B. Fenney** will send an email invite for the next meeting and will have it posted to the Town website.

P. Abair entertained and made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:50 pm; M. Lynch seconded the motion; there being no further discussion the vote was taken and was unanimously affirmative.