

March 22, 2022
Board of Finance and Town Council Finance Committee
#2 Department Budget Hearings
FY 2022-2023

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lainie McHugh called the virtual meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. via Zoom. All those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Chairman called the roll and the clerk recorded the following:

PRESENT

Lainie McHugh
Paul Timpanelli
Michael Barker
Marty Isaac
Scott Zimov
Elaine Hammers
Vincent DeGennaro – Alternate
Marc Mascola – Alternate
Christine El Eris – Alternate

ABSENT

The Finance Committee had a quorum:

Mary Isaac, Vice Chairman
Dawn Cantafo
Michael Buswell, Alternate
Kevin Shively, Chairman
Nicole Satin

Steve Choi
Joy Colon, Alternate
Tony Scinto

Also present:

First Selectman Vicki Tesoro; Maria Pires, Finance Director; Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer; Cynthia Katske, Chief Administrative Officer; Rebeca Lopez, Internal Auditor; Ashley Gaudiano, Town Council Chairman

01022600 – EMS

Chief Leigh Goodman

- Chief Goodman gave an overall review of the EMS Department and then reviewed her Successes and Accomplishments.
- Using data analytics will allow her to increase revenue generation and strategic response plans by having ambulances and staff available when the demand is at its highest on a given day.
- Trying to drill down to determine what care the patient actually needs; e.g., may not need a paramedic and that would affect cost.
- Ambulance billing is a priority right now. Currently commercial insurance, Medicare, Medicaid and private citizens are responsible for payment. Some pay a higher percentage than others do and she is looking into obtaining service contracts with some commercial companies.
- She is requesting an additional 3 EMTs. This is in addition to the ones she previously requested using a supplemental request. The Chair feels that it is too soon to add additional EMTs at this time; need to see results of previous additions to the staff; para is in the fly car 24/7 on weekends and overnights; there is a risk of going over the allowed hours.
- \$7,000 request for equipment repairs reduced to \$4,000 for general repairs. Public works performs any building maintenance; however, they cannot fix some of the equipment, e.g. radios, since that work is specialized.
- 4 supervisors are currently on the road - 16 hours on, and then off. Once fully staffed, they will not be on the road fulltime and will be able to take calls.
- We will purchase one command car outright using ARPA funds. Had hoped to purchase an additional command car and to refit the old one as a fly car.

- On track for revenues of \$1.55 million – we have been covering our budget, except for the one year when we only covered 98%.
- There is an EMS billing and collection policy in place at this time. We also keep a record of what has been billed and collected.

01030000 – Public Works Director

George Estrada, Director

- No changes from last year noted.
- They continue to pursue grants and look to offset expenses.
- He hopes to begin the 5-year cap plan in July and keep separate from the operating budget.

01030025 – PW-Street Lights

George Estrada

- Beginning to review our existing policies with our attorneys.
- We are receiving more requests than we have in the past. Most likely these are coming from new residents. The intent of a street light needs to be addressed and the policy revised and approved by the Town Council.
- The changes to LED transition will result in a decrease in expenses, unless they decide to add more lights.

01030100 – PW-Highway

George Estrada

- Provides services to the public, i.e., leaf pickup, snow removal, etc.
- We are down 3 drivers and during the snow season we were down 4 drivers, so we needed to use Parks personnel.
- Reduction of overtime budget request \$10,000. This past year we rented a sweeper for leaf collection replacing 4 men. We recognized a reduction in overtime using this method and we are comfortable with the reduction.
- Catch basin cleaning will continue with 135 catch basin cleanings scheduled for this spring. The funding for the catch basin cleaning is located in program supplies. There are approximately 8,000 in Trumbull. We no longer use sand so it is easier to maintain them when cleaning.
- The reduction in program supplies of \$50,000 directly affects the pavement preservation program. Since we cannot cut the funds, we would need to delay this program until next year and the roads will continue to deteriorate.
- It always seems better to outsource the leaf pickup program; however, since FY '21 cost reduced with no extra manpower by renting equipment to assist in the process and getting the leaves finished before it snowed. In addition, we were able to lower the cost of overtime by not scheduling OT on peak pay weekends, etc. Typically, they do 4-5 Saturdays to meet the DEP recommendation to get the job done by the end of the year to keep the leaves out of the catch basins. In FY '22, we used the same approach. We completed before Christmas and did a second pass. In FY '23, we are asking for OT and equipment rental and should be able to finish on time.
- A reduction of \$10,000 for safety gear would result in his taking funds from another account in order to make sure his staff is compliant because he thinks he has a contract to provide every 2 years.
- A reduction in Capital Outlay of \$10,445 for a new truck. This has been going on for a few years, and this means that vehicles past their prime need extensive work. They have had to replace the floorboards, transmissions, and vehicles that rusted badly. Fixing the vehicles that are also very high mileage are “fixable” but it is throwing good money after bad.

01030101 – PW-Snow Removal

George Estrada

- The worst result of a snowstorm is the damage done to the road, especially after a frost heave, when the roads crack. We have many road repairs to do as well as mailbox repairs. The plows throw ice and snow, which will take down a mailbox without actually hitting it with the plow. We have not upheld the strict interpretation of the policy and therefore have been replacing the posts. We need to review this policy with the First Selectman and the town attorney.
- Using salt on the road does not do much in the way of deterioration on asphalt but does have on concrete and has an environmental impact. We use one salt coat and it adheres to the road better. If you cut it with sand you start to affect other systems, i.e., the catch basins and the water quality.

01030105 – PW-Construction

George Estrada

- \$100,000-line item to use for catch basins and culverts was eliminated by the First Selectman.
- We use this account for items not in the capital plan and eventually these easements and culverts need replacing. This work definitely needs to be done.
- We can use ARPA funds for this.
- The culvert is actually a pipe the goes between properties. When it collapses, the water will back-up into the residents' basements. We have 250 of these in town, and they need to be addressed and maintained.

01030200 - PW-Building Maintenance

George Estrada

- Going out to bid for custodial service; extension opportunity expires; night services.
- Currently \$142,000 per year; issues with the way the contract was constructed and the facilities being serviced. We need to re-evaluate what we can do with internal staff and what would need to be done by an agency after hours.
- Looked at several options when compiling budget: outsource; partially outsource and use in-house; or use existing custodial staff. A cost analysis was completed, and we weighed the pros and cons of each option. It was determined that option 2 provided the most balanced mix – partial outsource and existing in-house – and we are still in the same place. Option 3 had the most risk associated with it.
- The overtime was reduced from \$11,000 to \$8,000.
- We need a higher level of service than we were previously providing; we need to add additional resources to implement daily services to all buildings, i.e., restroom cleaning; garbage removal, etc.
- There is a custodian that worked at Hillcrest at the pool and the town was reimbursing the BOE. We have brought him over to work to us, being compensated through the special account, and it is hoped that he will come over to us as a town employee.
- HVAC evaluation and plan at the Police Department – there are a number of systems at the PD that are not integrated and quite ancient. Want to have one system to manage it all and will respond. It was not addressed at the time of the renovation.
- There are no part time positions currently in the budget. The number of individuals we have employed will determine how much outside help we will need to accomplish our goals.

01030300 - PW-Fleet Maintenance

George Estrada/Doug Bogen

- Department handles both maintenance and breakdowns. We get to a point where age supersedes maintenance.
- Looking into electric vehicles. The gas rates have been locked in and we are now adding \$75,000 to our budget to cover this increase.
- The First Selectman reduced the request for maintenance supplies by \$20,000.

01030400 - Recycling Center

George Estrada

- The transfer station is working with the Trumbull Sustainability team with respect to a pilot program to find additional recycling opportunities, i.e., fiber and a clean-glass recycling program. The glass is separated-out and reused.
- Reviewing flow of operations. Applied for a grant to make improvements getting into the transfer station from the roadway.

01014800 - Inland Wetlands Commission

George Estrada / William Maurer

- Continuing to support the Inlands Wetlands act; continue to investigate violations.

01030500 - Town Engineer

William Maurer

- Received traffic signal bids on Monroe Turnpike – spring of 2023 is the completion date.

- Once concern - \$700 is not enough to recalibrate the equipment. Please reinstate the \$1,500 request. Based on historical usage, we haven't been calibrating the instruments due to lack of funding.
- Oblique viewer – see 3 sides of a building. Tax assessor and zoning and engineering use it as well as public. Metro-cog is picking up the first year and now we need to pay \$3,480 for 2022-2023.

20100000 - WPCA

William Maurer

- We are replacing the Beardsley pump station -1,000 pumps.
- Looking at alternate flows and we are still reviewing data.
- 2 pump stations being upgraded – Old Town Rd and Reservoir Ave. - problems with delays due to supply shortages. Need to have everything in place before we begin.
- Put in an FOI request with Bridgeport that took 6 months and we are reviewing numbers and putting it all together; also looking into alternate flows with Stratford and Fairfield.

01060600 - Business Education Initiative

Dan Neuman

- Provide all the high school children in Town with background understanding of work world outside of school setting.
- The last few years have been challenging due to the limitations; we are starting to see things start to pick-up. The workshops are on track and the internships will take place.
- We will be able to do the site visits that were budgeted and that is where the transportation comes in.
- There is a pre-apprenticeship program available with the State of CT for electricians, iron workers, etc.
- BEI is a 501c3 non-profit and a town entity.

Recreation and Parks have been combined into one department.

01080400 – Recreation and Parks

Dmitri Paris

- All full-time and seasonal employees are now under one department.
- Easier for tracking specifics.
- Has been operating as one department with deviations for specific account, i.e. the pools, in different departments for various reasons.
- Request made to isolate the issues of each department prior to combining by the Board of Finance. Each department was combined, e.g. the salary accounts were separate and now they are combined into one. They prepared a breakout of each account by department and then combined both adding in the increases requested for each.

Decision made to continue this discussion to Thursday, March 24, 2022 when the Board of Education hearing will take place.

01010800 – Elections

Jean Rabinow and Tracy Vonick

- No changes from last year, except for primaries.
- We are reducing the checkers in line from two to one.
- No increases except for the head moderator.
- Need more stand-up privacy booths for voting. Number of voters has increased, not turnout. We must provide one booth per 250 registered voters. Law does not address voter turn-out.
- Turn out for primaries has never been high, yet we still need to increase the number of booths.

01010200 Ethics Commission

Maria Pires

- No change from last year. \$120 per year for clerk fees.

01010400 First Selectman's Office

First Selectman Vicki Tesoro

Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer

Cynthia Katsky, Chief Administrative Officer

- Same as last year - no changes; just the salary increases.
- There was no discussion.

01040000 Health Department

Luci Bango

- Very busy with Covid-19 Vaccinations.
- We applied for ELC grant funding and received + \$120,000 that we used to hire part time staff, it paid for equipment for the vaccine clinic and office supplies for Covid-19 at the clinic.
- We don't pay for the vaccines. We get it from the State. We hired a billing agency with the grant money and went above our projected revenue with the vaccines and we project we will exceed our revenue again this year with boosters, etc. and we will continue to vaccinate.
- We did 1,000 flu vaccines last year.
- Looking ahead, we still have grant money coming in through May 2023. Some items are budgeted in the event we don't get additional funds. We did over 11,000 vaccines within the first 6 months with Covid-19 and we need to be prepared should this occur again.
- Need a full-time sanitarian to inspect septic systems; there has been an uptick in construction. New pools being put in, etc. We only have 2 part time individuals at this time. We hired them with the intention of also hiring full-time person.
- Increase in the revenue due to increase in vaccines.
- Asking for an increase in overtime hours due to possible increase in vaccines.
- Increase for services and fees contractual for the billing company and a scheduling software for making appointments at the health department that then sends a confirmation to their phone. We cannot use the same billing company as EMS. We made \$35,000 on the vaccine clinics with no cost to us for the vaccine.

01013000 – Human Resources / Civil Service

Thomas McCarthy

- Over the last few years, the main focus has been covid-19 and over the last year or so there has been an unofficial hiring freeze.
- Trying to recruit qualified individuals has been difficult and if this continues we may need to look to employment agencies.
- He is continuing to manage Covid-19 and he is not aware of how many employees are vaccinated.
- Any discussion regarding the contingency account needs to take place in executive session, prior to the budget vote.
- He indicated that Human Resources does not monitor the take home vehicles.

01013000 – Employee Benefits

Maria Pires & Thomas McCarthy

- FICA is based on the salaries and fringe benefits were quoted at 8% and now at 7.5% we won't have that figure until April.
- We budgeted \$1.4 million and we are settling one tomorrow so we will settle on tomorrow

01015800 – Transit District

Maria Pires

- No change. Same as previous years.
- Our portion is \$44,084 for the Bridgeport Transit service.

01011000 – Finance Department

Maria Pires

- We received our GOFA Award again this year and we have been receiving it annually since 2016.
- We completed the Munis Cloud finance software upgrade.
- The Purchasing Policy has been approved by the Town Council and training is scheduled for this week.

- Continue to file various Grant reports with the State and the Federal Government - Locip Funding; Lotcip. Covid/CRF and FEMA Reporting for both Covid and storms;
- Continue to investigate other Munis possibilities; looking to upgrade to a web interface in November, 2022.
- Continue to monitor the special agency funds and actively close them per the internal auditor's suggestion.
- Each year, we process surplus vehicle inventory for auction. This is done by purchasing, public works and finance and we are in the process of doing one.
- We are still trying to link QDS to Munis. We were nearly finished, and then we needed to upgrade QDS and then an upgrade to Munis and then Covid hit and we haven't been able to finish. When completed it will eliminate the need for us to manually do journal entries.
- Budget is the same, except for the increase in salaries.

01013800 – Town Hall

Maria Pires

- This account is used for everything not covered in any other department.
- We are very happy to have the floater in our budget; she has been able to cover in several different departments to fill in and we have it in the budget again this year.
- There are 4 contracts outstanding; payouts for retirees, and potential position upgrades.
- Property liability and auto insurance at 4.8%. This includes both the Board of Education and the Town and covers: Buildings, vehicles, public officials, elected officials, school officials, umbrella, malpractice, public official bonds for tax collector, assistant tax collector, cyber security and employee crime dishonesty coverage.

01011400 – Board of Finance and Internal Auditor

Maria Pires

- This account covers the clerical fees, the Internal Auditor's salary, and fees for legal notices.

01012200 – Purchasing

Kevin Bova

- All services and of Town and the Board of Education goes through this department. All buildings, schools and golf course.
- The Board of Education is actually involved now in the process in accordance with the new Purchasing Policy and getting things done with transparency.
- He feels that the Purchasing Department should receive a stipend from the funds that are given the Town from the Board of Education. There is an item in the Budget for \$10,000 for overtime and then the Board of Education is supposed to reimburse the Town for work that is done by the purchasing department.
- The new Purchasing Policy gives the purchasing agent more authority to accomplish his goals.

21100000 - Golf Commission Tashua Knolls Golf

Don Espach / Joe Gaudio

- Mr. Espach indicated that they had a record-breaking number of rounds this past year; 48,000 on the Knoll (normally 38,000) and 19,000 (normally 15,000) on the Glen. It is thought that the course will maintain this level of activity.
- Should be adding \$500,000-600,000 to retained earnings from the last fiscal year, while maintaining customer satisfaction.
- We have implemented a new Tee Time Reservation and POS system, increasing customer increasing customer satisfaction.
- Recognized as the Distinguished Club of the Year by the Connecticut State Golf Association.
- A new director was hired and we are looking to hire an assistant supervisor.
- We are still facing challenges - the roof needs replacing; the mechanical equipment is aging and the mechanic is out on workers comp.; the irrigation system continues to leak, etc.; increase in the cost of supplies by 50%, and an aging building.

- Mr. Gaudio indicated that the budget is more or less the same with the following exceptions: increase in minimum wage of \$1.00 or 9% for the seasonal employees; we are adding \$200,000 in capital outlay for the following: \$100,000 - \$150,000 for a roof replacement and \$50,000 for miscellaneous projects.
- We are asking that the Board of Finance restore the following amounts for material and program supplies #533401 - \$72,000 and #533402 - \$272,000. The cost of supplies has increased. These increases have no effect on the tax burden of our residents, as we are self-sustaining.

01060800 – TCTV

Kate Donahue

- We have a new assistant working with Lara Walden. Ryan Tyler attended Trumbull High School and went through Shawn Tait's AV Club. He is hoping to revive the AV Club at the high school.
- Comparison of historical spending does not reflect a \$12,000 purchase made this fiscal year.
- The 2022-2023 budget is pretty much the same; there is a \$5,300 request for a studio router upgrade in capital outlay.
- We haven't used funds for professional services since we haven't needed any videographers.
- The purchase of a Tri-Caster for Long Hill for the Board of Ed was funded 2 budget cycles ago and the system has still not been purchased, however the bonding was authorized. The room is now being remodeled and the old system is terrible and the new one needs to be installed. In addition, they want the BOE to use the stage as its dais. Anything the BOF can do to expedite this would be appreciated.
- We are trying to reach the townspeople on the platforms they use and we are finding that many families are no longer using cable.

01010100 – Nature Commission

Sheryl Bauman, Director

- Last year, we received \$75,000 from the state and will receive another \$75,000 this year, and after that we have been assured we will receive funds each year going forward, but not necessarily \$75,000.
- We power washed the building and performed a major clean out.
- We overhauled the meadow, removing brush and invasive trees and trimmed the large maple tree and removed a large oak tree.
- Rebuilt the sunflower garden fence and started the overhaul of the butterfly garden and installed a new fence and refurbished the sign, among other initiatives.
- We have been working with Goodwill volunteers and an intern program with 2 students through the business department working with their treasure.
- We have a maple sugaring program in place as well as a k-8 microscope program and several other initiatives. Looking to increase visitation to TNAC. Want to make it a destination spot in Trumbull.
- The roof needs to be replaced/repared, the handicapped ramp needs to be looked at, there is a leak inside and the exterior doors need to be made secure; all work is done by the public works department.
- George Estrada is getting information together for our top 4 items for prices.
- There is a charge for certain activities so it is a revenue source. It also draws people to the surrounding businesses.

01080000 – Public Events

Maria Pires

- \$20,000 in budget for all events.
- Employee picnic, parades.
- No change from past years.

01010600 – Probate

Judge T.R. Rowe

- Asking for \$12,404 the same as last year.
- Probate is shared with 3 towns.
- There were no questions.

01080300 –Trumbull Day

Kathleen McGannon, Chief Administrative Officer

Cynthia Katske, Chief Administrative Officer

- Requested \$20,000 for the fireworks; it was reduced to \$10,000 and they are to use the Special Revenue Fund, which has a balance of +/- \$32,000.
- Hopes to increase sponsorship this year so they don't need to go into the reserve.
- Food trucks are already signed up again for this year.
- They use budgeted funds first and then the Special Revenue Funds.

01090000 - Debt Service

Maria Pires, Finance Director

- General Government – we pay 25% of the WPCA debt
- No short term bonding this year.

Revenues

Maria Pires, Finance Director

- The governor has capped the motor vehicle tax at 29 mills. The state will reimburse us the difference. We did not include the \$1.3 from the state. Tax payers will be paying on the 29 mills and not the 33.1 mills that we have calculated.

The following individuals were asked to go into executive session at 4:35 p.m.

- Board of Finance members & alternates
- First Selectman
- HR Director
- Finance Director

They came out of executive session at 5:05 p.m.

By unanimous consent the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Phyllis C. Collier

Phyllis C. Collier – Board of Finance Clerk