

TOWN COUNCIL
Town of Trumbull
CONNECTICUT
www.trumbull-ct.gov

TOWN HALL
Trumbull

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FINANCE COMMITTEE BUDGET HEARING
Various Town Departments
MINUTES
APRIL 4, 2023

CALL

TO ORDER: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. All present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL: The called the roll call and recorded it as follows:

PRESENT: Chairman Kevin Shively, Vice Chairman Mary Isaac, Dawn Cantafio, Anthony Dorsey, Tony Scinto, (arrived 7:07 p.m.)

ABSENT: Nicole Satin, Joy Colon, Alternate, Mike Buswell, Alternate

ALSO

PRESENT: First Selectman Vicki A. Tesoro, Town Attorney Daniel Schopick, Chief Administrative Officer Kathleen McGannon, Finance Director Maria Pires, Town Council Chairman Ashley Gaudiano, Economic & Community Development Director Rina Bakalar, Fire Marshal/Emergency Management Director Megan Murphy, Deputy Emergency Management Director Andrew Kingsbury, Town Clerk Mary Markham, Chief of Police Michael Lombardo, Assistant Chief Glenn Byrnes, Sgt. Anthony Lopes, Animal Control Officer Lynn Dellabianca, Library Director Stefan Lyhne-Nielsen, Kate Donahue of TCTV, Parks & Recreation Director Dmitri Paris, EMS Chief Andrew Weber, Public Works Director George Estrada, Public Works Director of Operations Rich Infante, Fleet Supervisor Doug Bogen, Director of Health, Luci Bango, Registrar of Voters Jean Rabinow.

The Chair noted the Council can increase to the first selectman level or to the BOF level.

01 GENERAL GOVERNMENT

TOWN ATTORNEYS 01012800 – Attorney Schopick was present and indicated:

- The Chair noted there had been one change by the BOF, a reduction of \$30,000. Attorney Schopick noted a 2/3 vote of the Council is necessary to increase.

(Councilman Scinto arrived at 7:07 p.m.)

HEALTH DEPARTMENT 01040000 – Director of Health Luci Bango was present.

- No change by the BOF.
- \$52,000 is the cost for vaccines. Last year they had done 980 vaccines, (70 of the flu-zone, 45 units of the high dose and two of the flu-block with a total cost of \$41,505 which is only for the flu, they also purchase Shingrix, 10 doses costs approximately \$1,800.
- They have to purchase all of the flu vaccines at once, once they run out they can't order more. They do secure the order early, if they pay ahead of time they do get a discount.
- Currently there is no charge for COVID vaccine, but don't know what will happen in the future, there is some confusion on that.
- They did add extra for shingles vaccine, the rest of the vaccines come free through the state vaccination program. They did not really add extra for COVID. They're saying on average, it might be \$130 per shot. It is impossible to budget for that best.
- Last year they did a little over 1,000 COVID vaccines.

07 LIBRARY

LIBRARY 01070000 – Stefan Nielson was present:

- There was a slight reduction from the Department request. The Chair noted they could not reinstate the reduction because the council can only go as high as the first selectman's recommended budget.
- They do more business per hour on Sundays than they do on other days.
- The carpet installation is moving forward, they have the company, the product and have been meeting with them. Dmitri Paris has been part of the meetings. They will have to close the library for a day or two for installation and are looking at mid-to-late August which tends to be their slower time.
- It was confirmed the modulars, (individual spaces that are soundproof) would be installed at the same time.
- The library was built in 1974 there are inherent issues with a building of that age.
- The new air conditioning unit is great and is running great, it was installed a couple of years ago during the pandemic.
- Utilities are paid by the Finance Department, he would not know if utility usage had gone up or down.
- They have brought back all the full-time staff, all the permanent part-time positions of those that had been furloughed during COVID. They have had some retirements and are in the process of hiring. They have not brought back all of the student shelvers, because they do not need them currently. They are getting busier and using all of the current staff members.

- With regard to technology the library handles their own content, creates their own data & programming, databases and the catalog. Hardware and website is handled by the Town IT Department.

02 PUBLIC SAFETY

ANIMAL CONTROL 01022400 – Lynn Dellabianca was present:

- They have just recently hired someone, there is no longer a vacancy.
- They have not had progress with the on-line licenses, they had added a line for email addresses in the paper licenses. They are trying to capture those. The state has a bill in the legislature, but it is not known if it will be for the individual towns or if the state is going to take it over, and we do not know if it is going to pass.

01 GENERAL GOVERNMENT

ELECTIONS 01010800 – Jean Rabinow was present:

- The BOF reinstated 7 line items in total related to primaries.
- There is a possibility of two primaries in the next fiscal year, the one they hope will not happen is the primary fill open seats, and the one they know will happen is the presidential primary in April of 2024.
- They do not know what the actual cost will be for early voting and also don't know for sure how it will implemented.
- There are three bills in the legislature which hypothesize one early voting location per town, preferably on public transportation. Town Hall would be ideal because there's a bus stop right across the way. However, quite a bit of the testimony in front of GAE favored varying the number of early voting locations by the voting population of each city. If that's the case, it is possible Trumbull may have two.
- They will probably not be using tabulators. The legislature is looking at people getting their ballots, filling it out in person for early voting, and then stuffing it into an envelope and handing back. There would not be a need for a tabulator temp, they have budgeted for, but will need a lot of extra ballot counters for Election Day, when the ballots are finally opened. This makes it difficult to budget for.
- They are hoping they will let them pick certain hours of the day for early voting.
- Once the early voting has taken place, somebody has to enter the names of every person who has voted into the Secretary of State system, because they can't have them double voting.
- It's not clear right whether there will be down time during the working day, or on the weekends, which means overtime and again they don't know how to budget for that either.
- The state is talking about funding for at least the first year or two of early voting, but it's not in the bills as currently written. The GAE has promised they will try to get it in. It does look like an unfunded mandate in the future.
- They do not know how this all will balance out and will probably be coming back for a supplemental not for the primary in September if there is one, but definitely for the November primary.
- It was confirmed there is some funding for early voting in the budget, but no one knows what the reality will be.

TOWN CLERK 01013600 – Town Clerk Mary Markham was present:

- The Chair noted the BOF had reinstated two line items related to the primary.
- Early voting may take away some of the absentee ballots, they are also in the dark how their office will be affected.
- It was confirmed a person could register to vote and vote early on the same day.
- They do bring in extra people to issue the absentee ballots.

VITAL STATISTICS 01040200 – Mary Markham

- No changes were made and there were no questions.

TECHNOLOGY 01012600 – William Chin was present:

- The primary change is specific to Office 365. The original budget was miscalculated. The line item for Microsoft licensing was a lot more than just office and was reduced to just cover office for Office Standard 2021 that was a mistake and has been corrected.
- The other line item restoring funding for servers and storage replacement was taken out of this year's budget they have already paid for a Voice-Over IP server upgrade as part of the BOE & Town project. The finance director knew there was money in the original bond project and pulled the money from there instead of this year's capital outlay account. They want us to pay for next year server licensing in this budget to help next year's budget along, but had earmarked the money for other things and kept my capital outlay for next year lower because he thought he had that money, that was a correction as well.
- The 30,000 capital outlay would have to be a supplemental, he needs 30-40 laptops to catch up on upgrades before the next 1.5 years, the only put 10 in next year and was going to use the rest of the money on this year's budget to purchase those now. The servers for the video is included in the \$30,000.
- The workstation replacement plan is on for five, six years, depending on what the use of that computer is and try to run it as long as possible. Several years ago, a large number of desktops were purchased and upgraded everybody all at once. That was a finance project. In the next phase, those are due to be replaced next year. What they are trying to do for next year's budget is to convert to a virtual desktop environment and put an investment into the server room and continue the lifespan of those, and run one program to call back to the server and for their further desktop software.
- The town side is networked together, but there are certain restrictions for the police department.
- There is backup service, a lot of our equipment is redundant and use the police department as one primary area, and town halls is the other primary area, and they replicate back and forth to each other, if something goes down in one location, the full network still stays up. So we replicate back and forth between the police department and here and then for backups that goes off site.
- There is charter cable internet to some of the smaller offices. The major offices are on fiber with the smaller ones being on cable internet, all connected back.
- They recently replaced the batteries. Most of the office locations have a generator. So we just only have to carry on the 15-20 second span on the battery.

06 EDUCATION

TCTV 01060800 – Kate Donahue was present and indicated:

- There were no changes. The budget is less than last year.
- TCTV is still at the THS.
- The new system will be able to livestream from Town Hall and will pull over the internet. It will go to TCTV because they will be recording with the livestreaming.
- Livestreaming sports is very popular and they can get more data on who is watching.
- Ms. Donahue will pass on the stats on who is watching to the Council after this meeting.
- TCTV is getting quotes for the trcaster and is hoping to have it by this summer.
- TCTV has storage that they host and maintain, the video on demand library there are duplicate files sitting on YouTube servers that are served by YouTube, depending on which way that people come to that.

EMS 01022600 – Andre Weber was present:

- Full-time positions are 75% full, the per diem staff is doing everything they can to come in and are trying to modify where they can.
- The crews do a great job on turn-around time at the hospitals and their mutual aid coming into town has significantly decreased and are on par to be lower than the last two years.
- The revenue ebbs and flows since COVID, but it is getting better.
- It was confirmed they have everything they need to do their jobs, although they would like more full-timers hired

FIRE MARSHAL 01022800 – Megan Murphy was presents and indicated:

- Capital Outlay was decreased because she was able to purchase the radios this year.
- A vehicle was purchased with ARPA funds and went into service, all full-timers have vehicles, when the part-timer comes in he rides along with someone unless a pool vehicle is available. Sometimes it is challenging but they are making it work.
- All in the department are fully trained and certified and do not see a need for additional fire marshals, however she does see a need for additional clerical staff in the future, they are going to give it a year to analyze and figure it out.
- They should reach their \$50,000 revenue projection for this year and had projected the same for next year. The revenue comes in from building plan reviews and/or licensing inspections, but is in the process to figure different sources of revenue she has a few ideas but needs to flush them out before sharing. She does not want to steer development away from the town either.

FIRE HYDRANTS – No questions.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT 01023400 – Megan Murphy & Andrew Kingsbury were present.

- There were no changes by the BOF.
- There was a reduction in the overall budget by \$30,000 which was for the lightening protection system. It is something they would like to add for the town. They have been working towards being a weather safe town. They will work towards finding a grant.

POLICE 01022000 – Chief Lombardo was present:

- There were no changes

- It was confirmed filling the part-time dispatcher position is difficult but have interviewed some people recently.
- They have not purchased tasers, they are part of a leasing program, they purchased tasers last year and this is year #2 of 5.
- With regard to the social worker position their goal is to not have someone respond to a violent act but to follow up with and guide them through the system if need be. The position has been posted and have had approximately 8 applications.
- Currently they have 70 police officers.
- It was confirmed they have to promote from within the department.
- It was confirmed they could use the vacant officer salary funding to cover the over-time account. They have done that transfer in the past.
- As the town expands they hope to be at a good point, the police are first responders for serious calls.
- The town has EAP which is confidential and the police department also developed their own peer support group.
- The new expanded exercise room is working out well.
- They do have police dogs, they work a day shift and an evening shift and do help other towns as well and vice versa.
- The body cameras have been received but have not been deployed yet.

The Chair called a recess at 8:21 p.m.

The Chair called the meeting back to order at 8:28 p.m.

PLANNING & ZONING 01014200 – Rina Bakalar was present.

- One change was made because there was a hire at a higher rate because the temp has been with them for two years has a lot of skills and has put a lot of time in already. This position is funded from two departments, the \$1,500 increase is in both department line items.
- The new owner of the mall has been responsive on leasing and has been in on all of the meetings, they are holding the line on their budget for renovations.
- The garage that needs to be 70-75% replaced is moving forward and expects work to begin in the spring.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 01014600 – Rina Bakalar was present

- The apartments will have a sidewalk from the side of the complex to the mall, not the back side, the topography on the back is too steep.
- The mall study will look at all real estate and see what is potential on those parking lots based on the leasehold agreements. They have to think differently with this property.
- Tech Hub is a grant program to bring jobs back to this country, the program is still being developed. It may be incorporated into the mall.
- The committee noted the Emergency Management is looking for a grant for the lightening protection system they want.

PUBLIC WORKS – George Estrada was present:

PW-STREET LIGHTS 01030025

- The street light policy is with the Town attorneys to be developed.
- Electricity for street lights is a flat rate. Any changes are based on a rate change.

PW-HIGHWAY 01030100

- Increase is to restore departmental request due to supply chain issues/cost.
- I leased vehicle was restored one vehicle was swapped for the other, if the mason truck can't be fixed they will take another, they will not put good money after bad, it will just be parked. They have options.
- There are a number of vacancies, and are in the process of hiring a Maintainer II. Some of the vacant positions will need to be replaced immediately and are in discussions with Finance on how to handle the rest of the year. The goal is to have a list with HR that they can hire from for the year.

PW-SNOW REMOVAL 01030101

- Have a surplus, they used half of the salt and would like to purchase salt.

PW-BUILDING MAINTENANCE 01030200

- There was an increase of \$75,000. The intention was to do proactive work, there has been emergency work that they have had to react to this year. They want to get into proactive work beyond just emergency work. This could be put off a year if necessary, but it has been delayed for a while. The \$75,000 will be prioritized by talking to a lot of the stakeholders.
- The departmental request was \$340,000 and was trying to get to what is actually happening, it was to support what they are seeing. There is \$200,000 in this budget set aside and will need all of it and will show how it is broken down. Mr. Estrada will forward the data that he is preparing for the BOF's next meeting, it will show the historical need.

FLEET MAINTENANCE 01030300

- There was one change - \$15,000 to restore partial funding for vehicle repair, which is in line with escalation and supply chain issues.
- The overtime was taken on an average.

RECYCLING CENTER 01030400

- Are in negotiations at this time, the \$3 million is a worst case scenario, it is an unknown at this time.
- The reduction is based on our tonnage, a reduced volume. They are not sure what is driving the reduction.
- Contamination rates are all in an influx at this time. There is a lot of work to be done as a state on recycling.

TOWN ENGINEER 01030500

- The \$6,000 increase is for the Town's consulting fees that support projects in several places, such as for the project at the mall, (garage). The Town Engineer feels the additional is needed and requested the BOF restore it.

ENTERPRISE
WPCA FUND 20

- The force-main in Beardsley Park is currently being replaced.
- The current contract with the BPT WPCA is through 2026 and then a 3-year extension is possible through 2029. It was confirmed they are in discussions and exploring the Town's options.

PARKS & RECREATION 01080600 – Dmitri Paris Parks Superintendent was present:

- There were a number of changes at the BOF, some departmental requests were restored
- Salaries Overtime – There have been promotions and hire salaries as a result, they expect they will need more in the account due to scheduled overtime. Per contract they can get paid for it or take it as comp time. It was prudent to have a buffer.
- \$40,000 was restored to go back to pre-COVID levels of programming. They have had a remarkable response to the programming. The general public wanted to go back. The tennis program sold out across the board.
- \$5,000 additional for park stickers were not billed out this year and are billing them now, it was not budgeted for. Out of town stickers are \$112 and are selling very well due to pickle ball.
- There was a swap for a vehicle, much the same that was explained for Highway.
- The pools will be ready to go for the summer.

TREE WARDEN 01080800

- \$161,000 was restored. This was based on a solid average based on historical data. This will allow for some preventative work. Chairman Gaudiano noted she struggle with this restoration. The department will do its best to work within their means. Prevention is tangible.
- It was noted UI's ground to sky program is taking much costly & dangerous trees off the Town's list, but the Town has to remove the wood.
- The contract for tree removal has exhausted its 3-years including extensions. They will have to go out to bid.
- There is no state funding for Rails-to-Trails.

Councilman Scinto will send questions for the Tax Assessor in advance-he will send them to Maria Pires and Chairman Gaudiano and they will be forwarded to Ms. Duffy in advance. The Tax Assessor and Social Services will be asked to come to budget hearing on 4-19-23. Probate, Nurses the TNAC will not need to attend and the Building Official also does not need to attend.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss the Finance Committee adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:59 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Margaret D. Mastromi
Margaret D. Mastromi, Clerk

