



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

FINANCE COMMITTEE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Monday, March 30, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

**Adams Free Library,
1st Floor Annex Meeting Room
92 Park Street, Adams Ma**

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CALL TO ORDER: On the above date, the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen held a Joint Meeting at 6:00 PM at the Adams Free Library. Chairperson of the Finance Committee Carrie Burnett opened the Meeting for the Finance Committee. Present from the finance committee were Chairperson Carrie Burnett; Vice-Chair Jay Meczywor, Members Carol Cushenette; Justin Duval, Jay Nocher, David Lennon, Bob Murray, Rachel Tomkowicz Erin Mucci, Carrie Burnett, and Sarah Kline. *Members Michele Butler, Jeff King, Stephanie Melito, and Timothy Burdick were absent.*

Chairman John Duval of the Adams Selectboard called the meeting to order simultaneously. Present from the Adams Board of Selectmen were Chairman John Duval and Members Joe Nowak, Howard Rosenberg, and Rick Blanchard. Vice-Chair Christine Hoyt arrived at 6:55pm.

Also present were Jay Green, Town Administrator; Crystal Wojcik, Town Finance Director; Corporal Joshua Baker, Sergeant Greg Onorato, Sergeant Matt Wright, and Chief Scott Kelley of the Adams Police Department; Ryan Biros, John Harris, and Chief Griffin Willette of the Adams Forest Wardens Department; Amalio Jusino, Emergency Management Director; Tammy Daniels of iBerkshires, and Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

Inspectional Services: *Jay Green, Town Administrator introduced the operational budget for the Department of Inspectional Services. He stated that Gerry Garner, Director of Inspectional Services, has access to a revolving fund which is where the fees from permits go.*

Weights and Measures: The state of Massachusetts has been doing this work. This year, the Department of Standards raised the cost by \$1500 which the Town is grateful for as they initially made the determination that Adams is too large of a community for the state to inspect.

Board of Health

Board of Health operating expenses now includes a line items for marketing and promotional materials.

The training and educational line item is not reserved for the members of the Board of Health alone, but for the Code Enforcement Officer as well.

Member Nowak asked how abandoned property is handled by the code enforcement officer. Gerry explained that there are a number of steps that can be taken including surveying the property, attempts to reach owners of property, use of demolition funds, receivership programs, board of health interventions, and more. The cost of demolishing a house can run between \$60,000 and \$100,000. There are also a large number of steps that must be taken before demolition including asbestos remediation, oil take remediation, and other clean up activities.

Facilities:

There is no tax implication of having a transfer station attendant. The Facilities budget does not include a line item for Gerry Garner's salary as it is included in the Inspectional Services Department.

Chairman Duval asked how the credits from the Solar Field are applied. Crystal Wojcik, Town Finance Director explained that the majority of the credits are applied to the Wastewater Treatment Plant as it is the number one consumer of electricity it in the Town.

Chairman Duval asked if the Town utilizes the Transfer Station as a way of disposing of trash. Jay Green stated that the Town cannot do that as the Transfer Station is only for residential waste not commercial.

Registry of Deeds: The Registry is in collaboration with the Town of Adams to negotiate a proper lease for the building and to work on some of the capital needs of the building. The registrar was able to work with Representative Barrett to secure a \$30,000 earmark to create an accessible bathroom in the registry.

The Town Hall building is in the process of having keycodes up and running that will include codes that allow folks to access the building and lock the doors. It will also include an arming system and a motion sensing system.

Community Center: The Community Center no longer belongs to the Town of Adams so that line item is now 0.

Memorial Building: The Town of Adams has selected a developer to take on the classroom wing. The developer is about 75% done securing the funding to acquire the building. Once that is achieved, the Town will enter into a development agreement with the Developer that will include milestones. The developer has stated that they anticipated that it would take roughly 18 months to acquire their funding.

The development of the community side of the building is currently being held up by the fact that the Town is struggling to find the funding to renovate the bathrooms which would allow for occupancy.

The auditorium space has no roof top unit at this time, so there is no heating or cooling in the space.

Emergency Management

Jay Green introduced Amalio Jusino to the room. Amalio works on a stipend. Amalio has a lot of grant experience and will be bringing assets to the Town further down the road.

Chairman Duval asked if the generator at the middle school would be a viable emergency shelter in the case of a multi-day event. The generator that is there will power every other lighting unit as well as the doors. It will not provide heat, which is why there is an outside generator that would power the rooftop units.

Amalio secured the Emergency Planning and Management Grant this year as well as 10,000 dollars for an Emergency Response Training Grant that will allow people to train in how to support emergency responders so as not to overtax first responders. Amalio stated that the secondary emergency sheltering locations for communities should be schools. One of the major factors is in returning communities to normalcy after an event is getting them back to school. Emergency management is an ongoing process.

John Duval stated that he was thankful to Amalio for the fact that he received during the last event.

Rachel Tomkowicz asked what the protocol is for notification of citizens of an emergency. The Town of Adams uses reverse 9-1-1 through the Sheriff's office in order to notify people. There are press releases, Facebook posts, and even door knocks done by first responders.

Forest Wardens

The Forest Wardens Department came in with some very specific requests for needs. Chief Griffin Willette stated that they need more hand tools and pagers for folks joining the department.

Griffin made a request on behalf of the Forest Wardens for \$182,000 in order to purchase a new truck. This would be the first compliant apparatus in the Forest Wardens Department.

This would be considered a capital item that would be taken from Free Cash. This is not an item that is on the agenda for the evening. This will be discussed further at the next meeting when the Free cash certification is discussed.

Police Department

The Police department has one open position at this point in time. Interviews have been conducted and the position will be filled soon. The Police Union negotiations are going well and the all of the financial packages have been agreed to. All that is left is some language changes, but the budget accurately reflects the numbers as have been agreed on by the union.

You will likely receive a bylaw change request at Town Meeting regarding the removal of the bylaw that requires an on-duty officer be present in the police station 24/7. There are also some conversations around shift structure.

While both of these shifts would be significant for the community, it is important that the Town of Adams be able to try new things. These shifts would put one more Sergeant out on the street rather than sitting at a desk. Regarding the 12-hour shift, officers would actually have more time off in a month than they work, they would have every other weekend off, and the 12-hour shifts is shown to be better for officers' health, sleep schedule, and mental health.

Member Nowak asked when the signed Police Union Agreement will be seen. Jay stated that it would likely be May or possibly earlier. Member Nowak also asked about some of the percentage increases that were listed and Corporal Baker stated that the percentage increases reflect payment to three officers who are grandfathered in by the Quinn Bill.

Member Nowak stated that the Town of Dalton only had four police officers and a population that was similar to Adams. Both of these statements were shown to be untrue in that they will be at roughly 12 officers once they are done with hiring and their population is about 2000 people less than Adams, so proportionally, the officer to citizen ratio of Adams is roughly the same as that of Dalton.

With a 12-hour shift, there would be four officers on. Code states that there must be at least three people on so there would be less of a need to overtime fill-ins if one of the fourth officers calls out.

Member Rosenberg asked if the Police Department feels adequately resourced to handle crime, particularly drug related crimes, in the community. Chief Kelley stated that one of the strengths of the department is having the right people in the right spots.

Member Murray asked if training is done during an officer's 40-hour shift or if it is done outside of that. Chief Kelley and Corporal Baker clarified that a lot of training cannot be done on shift due to safety concerns, so most large trainings are done on overtime, which is what the line item is for.

The Adams Police Department has capital needs for the equipment. The Police department will be asking for a new vehicle, which is roughly \$65,000 completely upfitted as well as roughly \$13,000 for interior and exterior surveillance.

Chief Kelley stated that the State of Massachusetts is starting to roll out a push for body-worn cameras. In 2015, the state of South Carolina stated that by 2017, officers need to have body worn cameras. This was a state funded grant. Massachusetts seems to be trending in a similar direction, so Chief Kelley intends to put in for that grant in the next round of funding. The cost comes more from the storage of the footage because it is considered to be evidence. As such, it needs to be stored separately.

Animal Control has gone up slightly. Member Tomkowicz asked what the hours are of the

Animal Control officer. Chief Kelley stated that the Animal Control Officer has a schedule that shifts to a certain degree.

Parking Control Budget: This is split with Animal Control as they are performed by the same individual.

Member Rosenberg asked if the funds coming in from parking meters justifies the cost of maintaining the meters. Jay Green stated that no, the numbers don't sustain it, but one of the purposes is to encourage turn over in parking in our commercial district.

Vice-Chair Hoyt stated that there are grants that the Town has received that require a parking control program.

Vice-Chair Meczywor departed the meeting at 8:27pm.

Member Nowak asked when the parking kiosks in the Visitor Center Parking Lot will be utilized? Jay Green stated while the Council on Aging is housed there, it does not make sense to enforce.

Member Blanchard made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Vice-chair Hoyt. The motion passed unanimously. The Board of Selectmen meeting was adjourned at 8:34.

Member Kline made a motion to adjourn. Member Tomkowicz seconded the motion. seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Finance Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.



Carrie Burnett, Chairperson