



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

FINANCE COMMITTEE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

TOWN HALL BUILDING
82 PARK STREET

Thursday, April 11, 2024, 6:00 p.m.

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

RECEIVED-POSTED
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TOWN CLERK
ADAMS MASS.

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 Jay Meczywor opened the Meeting for the Finance Committee. Present from the finance committee were Chairperson Jay Meczywor; Vice-Chair Tim Burdick, Members Carol Cushenette; Justin Duval, David Lennon, Bob Murray, Rachel Tomkowicz, Carrie Burnett, Jeff King, and Sarah Kline. *Member Erin Mucci arrived at 6:04pm*

Chairman Christine Hoyt of the Adams Selectboard called the workshop to order simultaneously. Present from the Adams Board of Selectmen were Chairman Christine Hoyt, Vice-chair Howard Rosenberg, and Members Joe Nowak, and John Duval. *Member Rick Blanchard was absent.*

Chairman Hoyt stated that the meeting was not being recorded and iBerkshires indicated that they would be recording.

Also present were Jay Green, Town Administrator; Crystal Adelt, Town Finance Director; Chief Scott Kelley, Corporal Josh Baker, and Officer Kevin Stant, Adams Police Department; Gerry Garner, Building Commissioner; Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary; Ryan Biros and Chief Griffin Willette, Adams Forest Wardens Department; Amalio Jusino, Emergency Management Director; David Rhodes, Board of Health Chairman; Tammy Daniels of iBerkshires, and residents of the Town of Adams.

OLD BUSINERSS:

Clarification on Greylock Glen Outdoor Center Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds Salary: That job description was put together over a year ago. It was graded as a grade 11 and advertised for 35 hours a week. The grade has not changed, but the step changed. We waited until we had onboarded an Executive Director so that they can be involved in that process. The individual that was hired was an internal candidate coming out of the DPW. The budgeted salary is consistent with the collective bargaining agreement for the DPW with a 40-hour workweek rather than 35. Member Nowak stated that he is disappointed with how the hiring has gone so far. He stated that he dislikes the amount of money that the individual makes at the DPW and doesn't like that Chairman Hoyt works at an organization where the wife of the Greylock Glen Executive Director is on the Board.

Council on Aging Overtime Budget

Finance Director Adelt addressed that there was a line that stated there was a typo in the overtime budget. That typo was fixed and it did not affect the bottom line of the budget.

Clarification on Technology Budget

Finance Director Adelt provided a side-by-side comparison of the technology budget from last year compared with this year. Ms. Adelt broke out exactly what was new funds being added, where funding was released, and where funding was added via allocations.

Member Burdick asked if it was unusual for contracts to go up by that much. That includes the permitting system and accounting system for the town. Unfortunately, it is not.

How to Interpret Data on Personnel Services Sheet

Finance Director Adelt gave a step-by-step overview of the factors that contribute to the gross pay for an individual including step raises, collective bargaining agreements, potential overtime, and any extra funding. Member Nowak asked how overtime pay is anticipated for the Police Department and Department of Public Works considering that you cannot necessarily anticipate weather patterns. Town Administrator Green stated that the Town attempts to budget reasonably for that based on averages and historical practice. Any personnel costs that remain unused go back into free cash.

Finance Director Adelt passed around a sheet with a compiled list of budget changes.

Chairman Hoyt excused herself at 6:45pm.

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

Inspectional Services: Gerry Garner, Director of Inspectional Services presented his personnel services budget wherein the main increase is a full-time administrative assistant. That position used to be a shared position with the Assessor's office. This position is only the addition of half of a position on the budget.

Member Kline asked how the permitting system works and if it is all digitized. Additionally, member Kline asked why a COLA was built into the budget for a new position. Finance Director Adelt stated that, as previously explained, it is part of the formula and offered to have Member Kline come into the office to show her.

Mr. Garner explained that his department has a revolving fund which is fed by permitting fees. There was an attempt to put money into the budget for demolition but unfortunately that is not something that we are able to afford that this year.

Town Administrator Green stated that revolving funds are created by Town Meeting for a specific purpose. The funds are listed in Town Meeting books. Town Meeting approves a maximum expenditure that cannot be exceeded.

Weights and Measures: The state of Massachusetts has been doing this work. Otherwise, it would have cost us about \$14,000. The cost through the state is \$5000.

Member Nowak commented on the state of blight in the community. He stated that he joined this board in order to help people and he does not feel that he is being effective in his role and that he feels he shouldn't be on the Board anymore because he can't do anything to help.

Board of Health

Board of Health budget will be level funded. The legal and professional services line items were combined under one line item.

Member Nowak asked if the code enforcement officer can get involved in blighted properties. The code enforcement officer can, but there are minimum standards that a property would have to fall below in order to trigger intervention.

Chairman Hoyt rejoined the meeting at 7:21pm

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.

Due to OSHA standards, the custodians must work together on certain projects. Anything involving a ladder or a lift must be done by two individuals.

The goal is to have Memorial Building available for use soon.

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2024, Town Meeting allocated funds for a Facilities Reserve fund. Funds have been used for work such as masonry repair, electrical work, general repairs to HVAC units, and other repairs. Member Duval inquired where the funds came from. It was clarified that the funding comes from a free cash appropriation.

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.

Member Cushenette asked about the Capital Improvement Plan. Town Administrator Green stated that there is a list of Capital expense requests that the different departments request, but it is hard to have a Capital Improvement Plan in the way that businesses and organizations in the private sector do, because part of that plan is identifying a funding source. The Town does not know what the free cash number will be certified at. The Registry of Deeds building budget saw no increase.

The Town Hall building budget saw no increase. The Adams Memorial building budget saw no increase. Member Duval asked why there was an increase in the heat costs between Fiscal years 2023 and 2024. Mr. Garner explained that it was due to the new HVAC system. The Visitor Center building budget saw no increase. The Police Station budget is increasing by \$60 for additional shredding costs.

Member Kline inquired if the library is managed by Holli Jayko because it is not in facilities budget. Yes, Director Jayko manages the library building.

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. Amalio does a lot of work behind the scenes including a new evacuation tracking software. Funds have also been used to get stop the bleed kits for all the police cruisers with additional kits available for purchase for the Town Hall, DPW, Library, and COA. Additionally, there are additional grants that have been received to help with the establishment of an emergency response center. Mr. Jusino stated that there were also several trainings that we put on here in Adams with no cost. FEMA states that with every dollar that is spent on emergency planning, it saves roughly \$6 in response funds.

Mr. Jusino receives a \$2000 stipend. He additionally stated that he waits until the end of his fiscal year to spend money in case there is an emergency event or a grant over-run. There was an expenditure of a passthrough grant.

Member Nowak asked what "CERT" stands for. It is Community Emergency Response Team.

Member Duval asked what happens in the state of a large emergency. Right now, St. Elizabeth's Church in North Adams is the regional emergency shelter. There is also equipment spread across multiple locations so that things just need to be mobilized.

Forest Wardens

The line item for natural gas has gone up due to the Forest Wardens' station being used as a location for Northern Berkshire EMS. Chief Willette stated that they are attempting to use their funding for upgrading personal protection equipment. They have also actively been applying for grants.

Last year, the Forest Wardens requested \$182,000 for a brush truck. The Town has been working with the Wardens to find a more cost-effective way to provide them with a vehicle that will still provide the towing capacity, brush truck capacity, and will be easier to maintain. The Town is looking at purchasing a new Ford vehicle that will be able to tow the equipment for the Forest Wardens. The Town is exploring a fleet management service through enterprise wherein vehicles will be leased and traded in at a rate that is advantageous to the Town, but that plan is still being explored and not able to be presented yet. Town Administrator Green thanked the Adams Forest Wardens for their willingness to welcome Northern Berkshire EMS into their space.

Police Department

Chief Kelley announced that the Body Worn cameras have finally arrived in Adams. There is technology that automatically turns the camera on when a weapon is drawn. When the grant runs out, Chief Kelley will be seeking addition funds from the grant runs out in future years.

Member Duval asked what the cost is going to be when the grant runs out. The additional funds will be needed for software, software updates, cloud storage, and evidence storage.

Chief Kelley started by noting that an increase is seen in clothing allowance and shift differentials. Member Nowak asked if Overtime has gone down with a full compliment of officers. Chief Kelley stated that this is not a change that will happen overnight. This hasn't changed this year as Officer Derouches just graduated from the academy two weeks ago. The department is finally at full staff. Member Nowak also asked if the schedule has been shifted to a twelve-hour schedule yet. Chief Kelley stated that that is the next step. There has been some work on the building to get it to the place where it is self-sufficient. The next step is a twelve-hour day. This is a healthier schedule for the officers and will give them every other weekend off. There is a great culture at the police department. Adams Police Department doesn't see the same level of turn over that other communities are seeing.

Chairman Hoyt stated that the overtime pay has been coming down and seems to be on a better track than it was last year.

Chief Kelley stated that there were a couple of phones added for staff, which is necessary due to their supervisory rank. The budget line item for tasers and range supplies have gone up because the state has increased the amount of time required for range training. The cost of tasers has also gone up and the police department will need to update that piece of equipment in the future. Chief Kelley also stated that the Animal Control Operating Budget is level funded.

Member Nowak asked what is done with Animal carcasses. Chief Kelley recognized that this question was asked in the past and stated that deceased animals will be buried where it is not near water or other people. There are regulations around that.

Revenue in parking tickets so far this year is about \$4000. Revenue received from parking meters is also \$2000 and then a \$5000 addition from the Adams Housing Authority. Some parking meters need repair or replacement. Vice-chair Burdick asked if the Town has considered to going to an app for parking. Chief Kelley stated that the topic needs to be investigated to see what is cost effective. One of the issues with the matter is folks who are utilizing the COA. The town will be better able to study the matter when the COA eventually moves to the Memorial Building.

Vice-chair Rosenberg made a motion for the Board of Selectmen to adjourn. Member Duval seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously, and the Board of Selectmen workshop was adjourned at 8:39

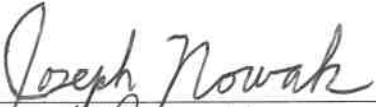
Chairman Meczywor thanked folks for their participation in the process and for their questions and efforts.

Member Tomkowicz made a motion to adjourn. Member Mucci seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Finance Committee workshop was adjourned at 8:41pm.

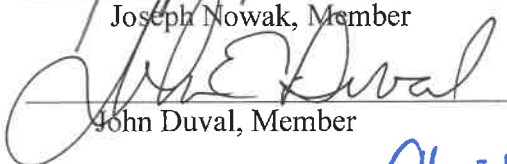
Documents Referenced:

- Proposed Budget

Respectfully Submitted by Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.

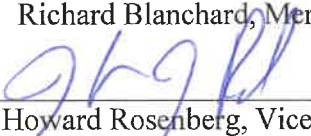


Joseph Nowak, Member




John Duval, Member

Richard Blanchard, Member



Howard Rosenberg, Vice-chair



Christine Hoyt, Chairman