

State of Rhode Island

County of Washington

In Hopkinton on the twenty fourth day of February 2020 A.D. a budget workshop was held in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 1 Town House Road, Hopkinton, RI 02832 beginning at 6:30 P.M to discuss the proposed FY 20/21 budget.

PRESENT: Frank Landolfi, Scott Bill Hirst, Sylvia Thompson, Sharon Davis. Town Manager William McGarry; Town Clerk Elizabeth Cook-Martin. Also present: Finance Director Brian Rosso. Absent: Barbara Capalbo.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (EMA)

EMA Director Ron MacDonald was present. The EMA Budget expenses and revenues were reviewed. Mr. MacDonald confirmed his department receives grants from the State which off-set and reimburses 50% of his salary and he occasionally receives grants from the RI Department of Health for specific purposes. There were no changes made to the EMA Budget.

PUBLIC WELFARE

Councilor Hirst felt that there should be a stipend added for the Public Welfare Director. Councilor Thompson believed this position was not necessary any more since our community had access to the W.A.R.M. Shelter and Johnny Cake Center. There were no changes made to the Public Welfare Budget.

Councilor Capalbo arrived.

EDUCATION

Mr. Rosso stated that there is a number listed in the budget but it will continue to be updated after the school committee meetings. Councilor Thompson advised that the Chariho budget is currently \$20,239,417 and Hopkinton's responsibility is approximately \$15,000,000. Mr. Rosso suggested that the increase to expenses is \$901,552 and currently the increase in tax levy is \$832,842; they have been able to eliminate the impact of all contractual obligations in the budget, departmental increases, and even reduce the impact of the school budget. So, our increase in tax levy is actually less than the impact of just the school.

POLICE/DISPATCHERS/CIP

Chief David Palmer was present. Councilor Hirst asked Chief Palmer how Hopkinton's police wages compared with other cities and towns. Chief Palmer believed Hopkinton was at the lower end of the pay scale due to the fact that they are a small department. Mr. Rosso advised that this was contractual and while in contract negotiations they took into consideration what other towns were paying their police officers. Councilor Capalbo asked Chief Palmer to explain the increase in patrol overtime. Chief Palmer believed that this was proposed last year when they had an officer who left, several surgeries, and some long outages due to personnel issues. Councilor Capalbo asked what the State's percentage was regarding the pension and Mr. Rosso advised that the MERS contribution went from 29.47% to 32.18%. Councilor Thompson asked if this was a blanket percent for the whole State or was it determined by town and Mr. Rosso suggested that it was per town. Councilor Davis asked why the revenue had increased. Chief Palmer responded that most of the revenue was from officers working traffic details; they receive a certain amount per hour for use of the vehicle and a certain amount in administrative costs. Also, the officer is paid by the vendor. The Council asked to have the detail revenue increased and Mr. Rosso felt that could increase that slightly to \$120,000.

DISPATCHERS BUDGET

Chief Palmer was present. Mr. Rosso advised that the increases in this budget were due to contracted increases in wages and State mandated pension increases. He also indicated that the increase for cell phone and cleaning stipends were also contractual expenses. Mr. Rosso felt that the overtime amount should be increased. The Council agreed to increase overtime for dispatchers to \$28,000.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

It was noted that the Police Department wished to obtain a new Ford Interceptor.

ANIMAL CONTROL

ACO Samantha Bowen was present. The Animal Control Budget was reviewed. It was noted that there was a large increase in part time wages. Mr. Rosso advised that because that person works a half day on Sunday, they were paid time and a half. The revenue was noted as being from fines and donations. There were no changes made to this budget.

RECREATION/CIP

Recreation Director Mary Sawyer was present. Contract services were discussed and Mr. Rosso advised that they had obtained a new merchant with a better rate. Ms. Sawyer advised that they have a new toddler program and they will be increasing tuition for the summer camp program. There were no changes made to this budget.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Recreation Department has one CIP Project, the Crandall Field playground. A grant application has been submitted to fund the playground.

TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager William McGarry was present. The Town Manager Budget was reviewed. There were no changes made to this budget.

FINANCE/DEBT SERVICE/CIP

There was nothing discussed under this category.

FINANCE BUDGET

Finance Director Brian Rosso was present. The Finance Director Budget was reviewed. No changes were made.

DEBT SERVICE

There will be debt service amounts that will be due on the two bonds of the Land Trust.

OTHER DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

Town Council budget will be placed on the next budget workshop which is scheduled for March 5, 2020.

The workshop was closed at 7:55 PM.

Elizabeth J. Cook-Martin

Town Clerk

Marita D. Murray

Deputy Town Clerk