

Town of Holliston Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

February 27, 2018

The meeting convened at 7:03pm in Room 105 at Holliston Town Hall. In attendance: Chairperson Ken Szajda, Vice Chairperson Michelle Zeamer, Clerk Benjamin Sparrell, Tim Maxwell, Vincent Murphy and Suzanne Nersessian. Absent: Dan Alfred.

Chief Stone presented the Police budget to the Finance Committee. The budget would be posted online. Mr. Szajda indicated the Police Contract was still under negotiation before beginning the presentation. Chief Stone mentioned the budget was within Finance Committee guidelines with a 1.5% increase. Recently, the police department received accreditation from the state.

The Chief was asked about the driver of maintenance cost increases beyond testing for accreditation. Chief Stone said there were no other factors in the current increase.

There was a question about what causes turnover in the department and the Chief said it was due to retirements. The town has a smaller force than what the FBI statistics have for a town of Holliston's size. Holliston has had 23 officers since the 1970s, and statistics show towns with between 28-32 officers.

Chief Stone discussed synergies on costs, and he called out Chris Meo from technology to praise him for his assistance with cost management.

Further discussion involved a potential motorcycle program and the costs and benefits to the town, Executive Leadership and Supervisory training for officers, managing overtime with hiring additional officers, concerns about health and retirements, EMT stipends, and medical kits on cruisers.

Sean Reese presented the DPW-Highway budget: within the Finance Committee guidelines with a 1.5% increase. Mr. Reese indicated Union employees had a contractual increase of 2%. Some money was added to upbranch and there would be a capital request for a new vehicle in May because of seasonality issues.

Mr. Reese presented the Snow & Ice Budget with level funding over previous years.

Mr. Reese then discussed the water budget, including the recent brown water. The water testing was routine and mandated by the EPA and the state, and the state would force the town to test the water additionally, depending on initial results. It is a mandated process.

The discussion turned to the new water treatment plant and the article to be included in the warrant asking the town to raise and appropriate \$8.375 million for the new plant. The town would apply to the State Revolving Fund (SRF) for a lower-interest loan. This process could take several months. If the town chose to move forward more quickly it could, but it would cost the town money. The plant would take 18-24 months to construct.

There were additional questions about overtime and the availability of home water filters to residents.

After Mr. Reese concluded his presentation, Mr. Szajda told the committee the CPC was not going to present until a future date. There was discussion about the transparency of town union contracts and making those contracts publicly available via the town's website.

Mr. Sparrell made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Nersessian. The motion passed 6-0 and the committee adjourned at 9:17pm.

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