

Call to Order

Roll Call

Chair Moffitt called the meeting to order at 7:00p.m and initiated roll call. Through video conferencing mode, present were Chairperson Eugenie Moffitt-Y, Andrew Betts-Y, Linn Anderson-Y, Mary Ellen Logee-Y, Paul Monticciolo-Y, Kevin O’Handley-Y, Spiro Christopoulos-Y and Paul Russo-Y. Absent was John Barry. Also present were Town Manager, Finance Director Donna Walsh and Assistant Town Manager Patrick Lawlor. The meeting was videotaped and live cablecast.

Public Safety – Presentation on FY22 Budget – Chief Keefe

Mr. Monticciolo introduced Chief Keefe who gave his presentation on his department’s FY22 budget (see attached PowerPoint presentation.)

Chief Keefe reviewed the Police Department’s mission and FY22 goals, followed by the organizational chart. Operational services is under the supervision of Executive Officer Lt. Guy and support services under the supervision of Lt. Frank Fitzpatrick. He noted that the Town Manager’s recommendation for ‘other’ expenses line was cut from the requested amount, which totals a decrease of \$11K from FY21 partly due to COVID. No change in FTE’s. However, since March 2020 there have been seven retirements of officers with 24-37 years of service including two patrolmen resignations due to duty-related injuries. One of those positions, the animal control officer, is currently being filled. Chief noted that the 5220 telephone line item was cut to \$30K but it is anticipated that ongoing phone issues will be resolved.

Discussion ensued on the process of replacing three patrolmen vacancies. Chief reported that recruitment involves hiring reserve officers from a list, and he anticipated that the current mood of the country will not affect the strong recruitment response that Andover has enjoyed in the past.

Chief Keefe outlined the two CIP items, which includes vehicle replacement and a camera system. Two hybrid patrol cars were purchased and put into use in the fall. A fuel cost savings of approximately 50% is anticipated and over \$12K savings over the life of the vehicles (3 years). A good price is received for trade-ins. The portable camera trailer system will replace an old system with better technology, easily moved to different locations.

Discussion ensued on any “unmet needs” or a ‘wish list.’ A drone originally requested was funded by grant. The police reform bill will require more intensive training and updating of policies, and a replacement is needed for the services of the long-time mechanic, who did an excellent job of keeping the fleet in tip-top shape. No cuts in the budget affect the safety of the community. Offset revenues in the budget represent detail fees and parking fees. Cleaning of vehicles is done at the wash bay behind the police station. It is anticipated that all staff in public safety will have been vaccinated by mid-February.

Integrated Financial Plan and Pension Obligation Bonds – Subcommittee Betts and Russo

Mr. Russo reported that several public information sessions will be key to educating the taxpayer on the entire proposed plan. Mr. Betts felt it was a complex topic and he anticipated many questions. He suggested putting together an FAQ at the conclusion of each session and updating it at the conclusion of each community session.

Discussion ensued on the tax implications in level debt and level principal over a twenty-year period and it was suggested that adding the Andover High project to that calculation, even though it is 5-6 years away from commencement, and any other major projects in the future that would require a debt exclusion would be helpful to incorporate into the presentation. Can the \$10M annual mitigation factor be revised annually rather than staying constant? The Town Manager said \$10M is fixed for annual debt service payment, but he will look at the suggested model.

It was agreed that this is a complex topic to be brought to as broad an audience as possible and explained as concisely and comprehensively as possible. The presentation will be geared to “building the blocks” of understanding by delineating not only the pro’s and con’s of the plan, but the necessity of addressing the problem and doing nothing not being an option. Social media will be used extensively in reaching out to taxpayers and dealing with misinformation on a proactive level. A compilation of FAQ’s is an important educational tool as well. A page on the website will be devoted to all aspects of this plan. It was suggested a glossary of terms would also be helpful. Not being able to meet in person is anticipated to present challenges and preparation is key to effectively handling this virtual platform as well as those who do not have computer access.

Vote on the Integrated Financial Plan and Pension Obligation Bond

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Russo and seconded by Mr. Betts, it was unanimously voted to support the Town Manager’s concept of the Integrated Financial Plan and Pension Obligation Bond, which is still evolving and not in its final form. Chairperson Eugenie Moffitt-Y, Andrew Betts-Y, Linn Anderson-Y, Mary Ellen Logee-Y, Paul Monticciolo-Y, Kevin O’Handley-Y, Spiro Christopoulos-Y and Paul Russo-Y. Motion passed 8-0.

The Town Manager will return to a Finance Committee meeting to update the committee on the plan.

Finance Committee Report Subcommittee

Mr. Monticciolo updated the committee. He suggested that a) Messrs. Betts and Russo write a synopsis of the integrated financial plan; b) Ms. Moffitt and Mr. Barry cover the West El project; and c) Mr. Lawlor and Ms. Walsh cover the pro forma material in conjunction with Ms. Logee and Mr. O’Handley. The Town Manager noted that the all department budget review would be pushed back possibly to April 10th.

Liaison Updates

School Committee

Mr. Russo stated the School Committee met on February 4th and is in the process of forming the subcommittee for the new superintendent search. The preliminary budget is \$92.5M, which reflects a 3.75% increase, and Chapter 70 funds at \$168K, which is an increase of 1.5%. Quarterly district meeting will be scheduled.

Retirement Board

Retirement Board is discussing the formation of the investment advisory committee. The Town Manager created an investment advisory committee and is in collaboration with the Retirement Board on selections. Hayley Green and Elena Kothman have been chosen as representatives. The Retirement Board was unable to come to a decision on the fifth member, and consequently the

Select Board makes the decision on the two candidates within 30 days from the time vacancy occurred on February 23rd.

Discussion ensued with regard to the legislative act that indicates that, with respect to the contributions the town makes toward debt service, the percentage of the whole that applies to school will count toward net school spending. The Town Manager will take a look at the formula.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, February 24th @ 6:00PM (note earlier starting time)
Fire Department and IT Budget Presentations

Minutes of January 27th

Ms. Anderson asked Ms. Walsh about the re-appropriation of funds voted for Bancroft to fund a similar project, which is the current school project. At the conclusion of the project, the MSBA does its required audit and at that time the town consequently recovered \$1.2M, the amount being re-appropriated. Ms. Anderson asked that approval of the minutes be deferred to the next meeting.

Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Mr. O’Handley and seconded by Mr. Monticciolo, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Chair Eugenie (Janie) Moffitt-Y, Linn Anderson-Y, Andrew Betts-Y, Mary Ellen Logee-Y, Paul Monticciolo-Y, Paul Russo-Y, Kevin O’Handley-Y and Mr. Christopulos-Y. Motion passed 8-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:07PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

Public Safety FY22 Budget Presentation – Chief Keefe