



## **TOWN OF WOODBURY**

### **BOARD OF FINANCE**

281 Main Street South

Woodbury, CT 06798-0369

203-263-2141 • [www.woodburyct.org](http://www.woodburyct.org)

### **JOINT SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

#### **Board of Selectman/Board of Finance**

#### **Budget Workshop**

**Saturday, March 2, 2024 – 9:00 A.M.**

**Senior/Community Center Community Room**

#### **BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Karen McWhirt, Chairman

Richard Coates

Andrew Sherman

Paul Zulpa, Vice Chairman

Mike Cunningham

#### **BOARD OF FINANCE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Steve Tranguich

#### **ALSO PRESENT:**

Barbara Perkinson, First Selectman

Karen Reddington-Hughes, Selectman

William Agresta, Town Planner

Sgt. Matt Costella, Police Department

Rosalie Manzi-Platt, Registrar of Voters

Loryn Ray, Director of Senior Services

Heather Zuckerman, Director of Social Services/Municipal Agent

George Hale, Selectman

Manuel Gomes, Fiscal Officer

Lisa Amatruda, Registrar of Voters

Rich Lamothe, Public Works Director

Susan Mutschler, Library Director

Margaret Warner, Public Works Administrative Assistant

#### **MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

Kathy Doyle

Unidentified Others

Francine McDougall

#### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was convened at 9:03 AM.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Kathy Doyle

- Spoke in support of a Program Assistant for the Senior Center;
- The Police Department did not request additional personnel. Would like to know whether adding staff is possible to address speeding issues;
- Would like to know how Early Voting impacts the town with regard to Board of Education elections;
- Is the Library using the credit card system that was used for the Gala to track day-to-day transactions and why is there no increase in the book purchase line;
- Spoke in favor of an increase in the Town Planner's budget to increase financial support of the Pomperaug Watershed Coalition;

- Is the Town Planner's office using their software tools to their full capacity, what is their role in the information flow of and are they cataloging and making accessible road "as-builts," and what is the status of the MS-4 project;
- What is being done to assess the current state of roads and road infrastructure as it relates to the MS-4 project and development of a long-term road maintenance plan.

Francine McDougall

- Spoke in support of funding replacement of the audio and visual systems at the Senior Center.

## **PRESENTATIONS BY MUNICIPAL DEPARTMENT HEADS ON DRAFT FY 2024-2025 BUDGET SUBMISSIONS, WITH OPPORTUNITY FOR QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARDS OF SELECTMEN AND FINANCE**

### **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

There is a decrease in the Communications budget: AT+T FirstNet costs less than the prior provider. Gas and Oil is based on the same consumption as last year. The Equipment line increase is due to the requirement to replace an approximately \$1200 vest. Training costs are increased because some officers are scheduled for periodic re-certification this year, and in part due to new requirements related to the Police Accountability Act, which includes Mental Health assessments every five years. The Department currently maintains a 14-vehicle fleet, which includes School Resource Officers' vehicles. Sgt. Costella will provide an inventory with vehicle specifics for future planning purposes. The new vehicle capital budget increase is due to cost escalation on vehicles currently awaiting order. The dehumidifier is the department's first priority for capital expenditures. The value of the request to fund painting the building is not yet determined as it may be part of a package including other buildings.

### **REGISTRARS OF VOTERS**

Early Voting is the cost driver. The impact to the budget request is 70 percent, or \$50,000. There remain unknowns that may be addressed at a seminar hosted by the Secretary of the State's office on March 8. The Secretary of the State ruled Region 14 votes are not subject to early voting demands. The matter is before the town attorneys. The Registrars feel the integrity of the votes may be at risk if not run under the early voting rules and would like to move the vote date to coincide with an election subject to early voting requirements in order to reduce costs.

### **LIBRARY**

The primary budget increase drivers are the remote access items. The increase is not due to cost, but to popularity of the programming. At inception, customers were able to download ten items per month; access was high, usage was low. Currently customers are limited to three downloads per month because usage is high and the library can't fund a greater number without a dollar increase. The Library Director was requested to consider whether a partial fee-based system was possible. The number of print-magazine subscriptions has been reduced, yet the budgeted amount proves inadequate due to increased print-format costs. The children's program budget should be double what it is based upon demand. The programs are immensely popular and well supported. Capital items include the need to replace the skylight; a cost proposal was provided. The other capital expense is painting the building which may ultimately be combined with other buildings. Addressing the public comment asking about the dollars devoted to print volumes the Director explained that the library currently houses in excess of 107,000 volumes, far exceeding the anticipated number per square foot. There is no room to house more print volumes. Regarding credit card system usage, the process needs development; the benefits are recognized and implementation is being considered.

### **TOWN PLANNER**

Revenue numbers were requested of the Town Planner; he will provide amounts. Sources are permits and fees associated with development. Credit card usage is limited to permits issued through the on-line system; face-to-

face transactions are not payable by credit card. Responding to a question about fees and increases, the Planner explained the Commissions are responsible for the schedule. Fees have not increased in three or four years. The total Land Use budget remains approximately the same. Costs associated with the MS-4 project are likely to increase in the next fiscal year. Pomperaug Watershed Coalition support is the largest single increase. The Town Planner explained the Coalition brings tremendous value to the town because of the technical support they provide, using as examples guidance related to the MS-4 project and channel stabilization at Three Rivers Park. The capital item requested is a truck to visit locations for enforcement and permit compliance inspections. The recently retired truck is no longer serviceable. The Town Planner supports funding the audio/visual upgrade at the Senior Center. Commissions using the facility rely on the equipment for Commission and public presentations.

#### SENIOR SERVICES/SOCIAL SERVICES

The Gas and Oil line is increased. Woodbury will be running two vehicles during the coming year; the promised second vehicle will be delivered in the Spring. The Other Supplies line is increased by \$1500 due to the loss of supplemental funding. A nominal increase in funding for programs is requested: the number of people being served is growing. There is also a request to fund an increase in the number of weekly hours for the programs assistant, increasing the number from thirty to thirty-five. Social Services requests an increase to cover overtime costs associated with administering the fuel assistance program. The audio/visual equipment is more than 17 years old and no longer serviceable; just one example is the fact that no projector bulb is available if there is a failure. They are no longer manufactured. While both systems need replacing, if necessary they could be replaced separately, but it is more efficient to do both systems at the same time due to software integration.

#### DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The \$2000 Verizon GPS vehicle tracking system for nine Public Works trucks was added to the Public Works telephone line; it may be moved to another account as a result of the consolidation of various department telephone budgets. The Other Supplies line increase is due to general increases in tools, supplies, welding gasses, etc. The Improved Road Maintenance line will be examined to determine whether needed improvements can be funded by current bond dollars. The basic budget increased by \$100,000 due to the increased cost of catch-basin cleaning. The Unimproved Roads budget request is not increased, despite running a deficit this year as a result of heavy rains and washouts. The Yard Improvements line request is to repaint the roof and exterior of the Public Works building. The Board of Finance Chair requested a breakdown of the Sanitation/Waste Removal Contracted Services line. Capital expenditure requests are for the replacement of truck number ten, according to the 8-10 year replacement schedule. The 20 year old fuel distribution/usage tracking software requires an upgrade. The John Deere 6200 over-the-fence mower should be replaced. Anticipated cost is \$98,000 for a specialized machine. Three 40-yard containers are needed, replacing three that are at the end of their useful life. The First Selectman requested a second trash compactor be funded during the 2024-2025 budget cycle.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 12:08 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Edward S. De Cortin*

Clerk, Board of Finance

RECEIVED & FILED  
IN WOODBURY, CT

this 12<sup>th</sup> day of Mar 2024  
at 8:32 A.M.  
*Maria M. Mancini*  
Town Clerk