

2023 AUG 21 P 3 26

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND TAXATION

WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023 7:00 PM

Yaitanes Room, 3rd Floor, Town Hall

10 Pearl Street, Stoughton, MA 02072

Agenda items may be taken out of order at Chairman's Discretion

1. Mr. Vaughan Enokian, Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM .
2. Mr. Enokian asked all to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Anzivino made the motion to open the meeting, seconded by Mr. Lurie. The motion passed.
Present: Vaughan Enokian Chair, John Anzivino Vice Chair, Dianne Dolan (arrived at 7:17pm), Secretary, Eric Anderson, Chet Collins, Elliot Hansen, Adam Iacobucci, David Lurie, Joel Wolk
Absent: Laura Gunn, Dr. Jess Miner, Mark Struck, John Walsh, Kerry Marrocco

3. Request for Inter-departmental Transfer for Town Manager (Salaries) in the amount of \$9,500 from Civilian Dispatch Salaries to Town Manager Salaries (votes may be taken).

Mr. Rowe, town accountant explained the request would fund a change in personnel, recruitment of a new secretary hired at a higher amount. Mr. Lurie made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Wolk. The motion carried 8 yes to 1 no. (Mr. Collins)

4. Request for Inter-Departmental Transfer for Town Counsel in the amount of \$72,756 from Police Salaries to Town Counsel Expenses (votes may be taken)

Mr. Lurie requested recusal from this discussion as he is a member of the SMAC Board. Mr. Rowe explained that a new system is in progress to avoid this kind of transfer by requesting the Attorneys to submit invoices monthly and to require change orders in the event there is a need for additional funds. Mr. Rowe said attorneys have been asked to consolidate invoices. Mr. Wolk asked how the police could give up \$72,756. Mr. Anzivino explained that the department still had vacancies. Mr. Wolk made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Hansen. The motion carried 9 yes 0 no.

5. Request for Inter-departmental Transfer for Facilities (Expenses) in the amount of \$48,501 from Civilian Dispatch Salaries to Facilities Expenses. (votes may be taken)

This request is for the purchase of an electronic sign, and Christmas lighting.

Mr. Rowe said the sign had been ordered subject to appropriations.

Mr. Collins questioned the request referring to a town meeting article for new landscaping for the town hall. He asked if consideration had been given to the location of the sign.

Mr. Lurie said there was precedent, as there had been a town meeting article asking for the sign to be placed in front of the Historical Society Building. Mr. Lurie said town meeting had rejected this article.

Mr. Hansen asked what had happened to a request to place a sign in the square, six years ago.

Mr. Anzivino responded that town meeting had refused funding. Mr. Anzivino objected to this request, pointing out that this request should go before town meeting. He said this request circumvents the town meeting.

Ms. Dolan objected to the request, stating in her opinion the sign would be too short and difficult to see.

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Mr. Lurie asked why this needed to be addressed now. He said he didn't understand the urgency, and why not wait until the fall town meeting.

Mr. Rowe reminded the committee that by-laws permit department heads to spend up to \$50,000 on capital projects at the end of the fiscal year. He offered a breakdown of \$31,807 for the electronic sign and the balance designated for the purchase of Christmas lights.

Mr. Lurie commented that someone should have come to the committee to speak in favor of this request and to explain the rationale.

Ms. Dolan remarked that there will be additional expenses such as excavation costs, electrical fees.

Mr. Calter entered the discussion and stated if the committee would prefer to delay the decision until the fall town meeting, it could do so.

It was also pointed out that the request was for rental of the Christmas lights for the first year, giving the town time to assess its satisfaction with the company.

Mr. Wolk made the motion to approve the request to transfer \$48,501 from Civilian Dispatch Salaries to Facilities Expenses for the purchase of an electronic sign and Christmas lights.

Mr. Anderson seconded the motion. On the motion, the committee voted 1 yes 8 no. Motion Failed

6. Any matters relating to FY24 or FY23 Budget and Town Meeting Warrant Articles (votes may be taken)

Mr. Lurie suggested that the Finance Committee offer to vet proposals from the town manager regarding the proposed increases in water, sewer, and trash rates.

Mr. Enokian stated that the committee was not consulted at the beginning of the discussions.

Mr. Anzivino said this is the responsibility of the Select Board.

Mr. Lurie said the committee could offer to help as a gesture of goodwill.

Mr. Anderson objected to being involved with the proposals to increase rates.

Mr. Anzivino commented that for this year the budget is balanced, there is no deficit. Mr.

Anzivino commented also that the public hearing has been closed.

Mr. Wolk commented that his family in New Hampshire have the pay as you throw program, and they love it.

Mr. Anzivino reminded committee members of a coming financial summit scheduled for September 23.

The motion was made by Mr. Wolk and seconded by Mr. Anzivino to adjourn. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned at 8:11 PM.