

DPW Subcommittee Meeting – March 1st, 2024

Attendees:

- Joseph Conway – DPW Director
- Ann Waitt – DPW Business Manager
- Stefan Chase, Dennis Hogan, Jim Sullivan, Ellie Zuccaro – Finance Subcommittee Members

Warrant Articles

- Refuse collection – 3.83% increase. Contracted through 2027. Future recycling contract will likely be by the ton
- \$1 easement
- Water main replacement - \$5M (borrowing)
- Fuel Island design - \$150K – Engineering costs and geotechnical engineering

DPW Budget Discussion

- **Overall increase 4.038%**
 - One staff addition, DPW personal services increased 4.95%. Mostly contractual obligations. Several large increases, for staff getting additional certification adding value. See Director explanation on the next page
 - Overtime - Department overtime and Police details increased due to amount of work underway throughout the town
 - Purchase of Services – Engineering, fleet maintenance and Park Forestry largest increases

Snow & Ice

- Return to the Town could be substantial, little spent to date

Sewer Enterprise

- Overall increase of 0.24%. MWRA sewer assessment lower than last year. \$54K increase in personal services

Water Enterprise

- Overall increase of 3.33%. MWRA assessment lower than last year. \$65K increase in personal services and maturing debt increase

Director's explanation of large salary increases, provided by Joe Conway:

LINE 294

Admin Salary- Hunt, C- Chris was successful in attaining two certifications that were benchmark/conditions to his original promotion unlocking new salary levels.

- 1) This first one is long but the context is important to show the value gained here. If you remember the Federal regulations changed requiring all new, or upgrading, CDL drivers to attend Federally Approved driver training courses, an effect that severely impacted our ability to hire last year. Even someone like myself, should I change the grade of my license, I would have been required to go to one of these courses, even being a commercial driver for just about 20 years! The rules set these courses to require a minimum set of hours where it would take **a minimum of eight weeks** to complete, M-Thurs 7am-4pm, and cost between 8-10k per student. We initially had negotiated CBA language for employee paybacks similar to the PD and new hire academy costs, in short, we were prepared to front the tuition and the employee had a payroll deduction for a 5 year period to recoup the costs, if the employee stayed with us longer than the 5 years we would have returned the tuition to the employee. This practice was never needed and will not ever be in the future now

Chris had developed, and submitted for Govt. approval, a curriculum to get himself and the DPW credentialed as certified CDL training facility. When we set the budget he had not gotten approval and the information passed to us is that it would take well over six months to receive approval. Fortunately, that was not the case for us and we did get approved much faster than we were told, unfortunately that occurred after the budget was set and his salary was hire for FY24 than we had appropriated.

In combination with that he needed to attain is MCPPO (Certified Purchasing Official Status) as a condition of his promotion to Operations Manager, I believe up until this point I was the sole one in Town. Generally this took almost a year to do, the Inspector General's Office changed course this winter and started the "IG Academy" that expedited the time on this significantly. He was successful over the winter unlocking another payment condition to his employment

FY24 should have been budgeted during the spring at 118k if these timed out correctly for this year.

Interestingly, Since getting the ability to now train for CDL's in house we have had 11 employees either need to get a CDL, or, upgrade a CDL. And all of them are trained on the job in house for \$0 dollars. We have eliminated losing the employee for 8 weeks and can be much more effective in time management. This has saved approximately 88k in tuitions. Most importantly it opens up a whole new class of candidates, we don't need to seek CDL applicants only, someone with the right attitude and desire to learn can get taught by us and be successful. This is also a condition of every new hires employment.

LINE 352

Buildings Salary- Okeefe, M- Similar to the example above, MacKenzie ended up getting selected to assume weights and measures for the Town when the state opted out of aiding us with this service. To do this it was negotiated with the Labor Union and his position was reclassified as it was to assume new duties, unfortunately for budget timeline this occurred after we had appropriated FY24 budget.

LINE 308

Engineering Salary- Wilson, T- This year we will have two employees testing for their PE. Tim Wilson being one of them. Tim is a strong engineer and the clear number two in the office. He presently reviews his peers work for completeness and accuracy already. There is little doubt in anyone's mind he will not be successful and get his PE, unlocking a promotion. Learning from the first two examples we are planning for that to happen within the FY25 budget and are budgeted appropriately.