

Select Board Special Meeting
Monday, March 9, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
Longmeadow High School, Room A15, 535 Bliss Road, Longmeadow, MA

Present: Chair Marie Angelides, Marc Strange, and Tom Lachiusa (arrived at 6:05 p.m.)

Absent: Mark Gold and Richard Foster

Also Present: Town Manager Lyn Simmons, Paul Pasterczyk, Debbie House, James Leyden, Bari Jarvis, Mario Mazza, Fire Chief John Dearborn, Deputy Fire Chief Gerald Macsata, Fire Captain John Rigney, and (Interim Police Chief) Captain Gary Fontaine

Open Session – Ms. Angelides called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ms. Angelides announced that the adoption of remote participation by the Select Board will be on the agenda for the March 11 special meeting/Budget Forum.

Some department heads were asked to attend tonight's meeting to answer questions and explain their requested FY21 budgets.

Announcements – none

Resident Comments – none

Select Board Comments - none

Adult Center/COA – Director Jim Leyden was present to answer questions. He kept his requested FY21 budget level-funded and is planning on “business as usual” when the new building opens. Mr. Leyden will adjust his FY21 budget as needed and increase next year's budget request if warranted. New programming will evolve along with possible additional hours and additional staff. One grounds person and one custodian have been requested for FY21, this is in the DPW budget. Mr. Leyden anticipates the new indoor walking track and indoor pickle ball courts will be popular.

Parks and Recreation – Director Bari Jarvis was present. A part time Therapeutic Recreation Specialist will be hired and funded through the revolving fund. This person will help to incorporate special populations into existing programs i.e. children with autism...and add some new programs. Most programs are funded through the recreation revolving fund. Passports continue to be a steady income to the revolving fund. The Open Space and Recreation Plan survey is still out online for residents to participate. An Open Space and Recreation Public Forum will be held on Tuesday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m. at the high school. The Park Board is working on redefining their strategic plan.

Department of Public Works – Director Mario Mazza was present. Requested increases to the FY21 DPW budget include: two new grounds employees for Williams Middle School and Glenbrook Middle School field maintenance, increase in the MS4 stormwater, recycling costs have increased greatly, and the water/sewer account has increased.

Mr. Lachiusa asked about the possibility of free composting bins to cut down on the amount of trash.

Composting bins are available for purchase at the DPW. The middle schools do composting. Mr. Strange asked about outsourcing grounds work. Mr. Mazza did look into outsourcing for the high school and received quotes but it was extremely expensive.

Mr. Gold was absent but submitted his budget questions to Chair Angelides. Mr. Mazza addressed Mr. Gold's concerns: only \$10,000 for natural gas heating requested because the DPW staff may only be in the building for 6 months of the fiscal year. Quotes were received and showed that outsourcing is more expensive than hiring DPW employees. We have not had good experiences with several janitorial services, we have better experiences with employees vs. janitorial services. The increased water costs are due to the cost of doing business, also notices had to be printed and mailed out each time there were exceedances. This situation should be getting better as Springfield is updating their systems. Ms. Simmons noted that the last quarter water testing showed no

contaminants at notification levels. Vehicle maintenance increases are due to increased rates. The MS4 stormwater utility charges are MS4 requirements. Mr. Mazza believes that this is only going to get bigger and we should continue to fund in this way, rates will have to increase. The snow and ice deficit represents \$100,000 in salt costs. Even though we had a very mild winter, there were still many times that the roads had to be treated (not plowed).

Fire Department – Chief Dearborn, Deputy Chief Macsata, and Captain Rigney were present. Chief Dearborn is requesting 2 additional employees. The call volume has gone up over 30% in the last few years. The overtime budget is high. If the call volume continues to rise, the Chief will be back asking for another 1-2 EMS employees. The replacement of ambulances is set up the same way as the replacement of fire trucks. EMS equipment is scheduled out, revenues are applied and some set aside for future purchases just like the fire trucks. When Medic 2 was replaced, a third ambulance was kept as a mechanical backup. The old ambulance is equipped and paid for and is deployed when several calls came in at once. Mutual aid is used, when available when receiving several calls at once, private ambulances (AMR ...) are almost never available. In this year's capital plan, the Chief has requested a new ambulance. The old "3rd" ambulance will be sold. The Chief has applied for a \$125,000 federal grant to equip this new ambulance with ALS level equipment. If the grant is not awarded to LFD, the Chief will rescind his request for the new ambulance and request it on next year's capital plan.

The LFD only does priority 1 calls for the nursing homes. Westcomm dispatch is funded through the Police Department budget. Last year the Assistance to Firefighters grants were delayed 6 months, right now the grants are on time. Car 2, a 2006 utility vehicle will be replaced with a F-150 pickup truck for utility purposes. After responding to calls, firefighters now take off their turnout gear at the scene to minimize exposure to cancer causing pollutants. The gear is put in the back of a pickup truck and returned to the station for cleaning. Right now the LFD borrows vehicles from the DPW to carry their gear back to the station after fire calls.

Police Department – Interim Police Chief, Captain Fontaine was present for some questions. Ms. Simmons and Mr. Pasterczyk answered budget questions as retired Chief Stankiewicz submitted the budget before he left. The Westcomm regional dispatch is progressing nicely. Fore FY21 the training budget increased \$6,000. There are 4 new recruits in the Police Academy now. The department is budgeted for 19 patrol officers; there are currently 15. There will be 3 more retirements later this year. The replacement of 2-3 vehicles per year is in the operating budget. The dispatchers line is now out of the budget (was \$200,000+) and a new line item for Westcomm Assessment is in (\$155,000). The Police Department has about 10 vehicles now, older ones are used for transportation to trainings and as backups.

Mr. Lachiusa asked Ms. Jarvis about the Lacrosse Jamboree to be held at Russell Field. This will be discussed on March 16 along with approval of the street closure for the event. Mr. Lachiusa also questioned the opening of the clay tennis courts. It costs about \$7-8,000 to condition the clay. We have to wait for a contractor to open the courts, possibly in June/July.

Mr. Lachiusa made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 p.m. Mr. Strange seconded the motion. The vote was 3 in favor and 0 opposed.

Respectfully submitted,
Debbie House

Documents:

Agenda

FY21 Budget line detail

Handout from Chair – Mark Gold's submitted questions/comments regarding the FY21 Budget