

Budget Forum 7:00 pm
Special Select Board Regular Meeting 7:30 pm
Thursday March 14, 2019

Longmeadow High School, Room A15, 535 Bliss Road, Longmeadow, MA

The **budget forum** began at 7:00pm.

Stephen Crane and Paul Pasterczyk presented the FY2020 Budget and gave a Power Point presentation. Stephen Crane thanked the Select Board for putting together the forum, he also thanked the Department Heads for attending tonight to answer any questions that come up about the budget. Stephen Crane also thanked Paul Pasterczyk for his outstanding work on the budget. Stephen Crane stated that the goal was to only increase the taxes by 2 percent as opposed to the traditional 2 ½ %, the reason that was a strong goal for them is because of the tax ceiling that is approaching. Stephen Crane is pleased to say they have achieved that goal of a 2% levy increase. The fiscal year 2020 budget is balanced without the use of reserves. They are maintaining mostly level services, and they do fully fund the School Committee's request. They fully fund the Town Manager's recommended Capital Plan and it also increases the Storm Water fee to offset increased costs. This budget includes a second annual mitigation payment from MGM. There is nearly a 6.2 % increase in State Aid, which is not as large as last year but is still pretty good. They do project a 5% increase in local receipts, a lot of that is tied to the Ambulance revenue.

Stephen Crane stated that the schools have the largest share in the budget at 51%. He feels that over the last four years that percentage has gone down, and that is a credit to the schools and their conservative budgeting and enrollment. The second largest category is Employee Benefits. Public Works is the third largest category, then Public Safety, and Debit Services. Community Services, General Government and Planning and Community Development coming in at the end.

Stephen Crane noted that Storrs Library goes up about 4 ½ % , they were able to increase the hours of operation for a minimal increase in cost. The increased hours help with their formulas for achieving Municipal Appropriations Requirements from the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners. They did increase the book and periodicals line items and the technology line items to fund the MBLC's formula targets. The Library Board of Trustees continues to supplement those expenses with generous contributions to the Library. Another change that was made to the Library is the utilities maintenance costs, they were in the DPW budget under a library line item, they moved that line item into the Library's budget for clarity.

Mr. Crane announced that this is the second year of the surrounding community agreement with MGM payments, this year the payment is \$281,875. In year one they used the payment to offset debit service for Engine 2. Year 2 some of the money will be used to sustain pavement preservation as well as fund a stipend for a crime analyst and the remaining debt on Engine 2.

Select Board Chair Mark Gold called the Special Select Board Meeting to order at 7:15 pm.

The Pledge of allegiance was recited.

Present: Richard Foster, Marie Angelides, Mark Gold, William Low, and Tom Lachiusa

Also Present: Town Manager Stephen Crane, Paul Pasterczyk, Bari Jarvis, Jim Leydon, Paul Healy, Beverly Hirschhorn, Mario Mazza, Police Chief John Stankiewicz, Fire Chief John Dearborn, Jean Maziarz, and Jackie Sullivan.

1. DPW Project Change Order: Mark Gold explained why the change order was needed, the change order request is to have a temporary cap put on the landfill where the material from the new DPW facility has been disposed of. Bill Low asked if this a new change order. Mark Gold stated that it was. Mark Gold and Stephen Crane have been working with the Governor's office and they are pursuing the permanent cap funding. Stephen Crane also noted they are still going to be on time with the DEP to perform the permanent capping.

Richard Foster made a motion to approve the change order as written. William Low seconded the motion.

The vote was 4 in favor 0 opposed 1 member was absent at the time of vote.

2. Discuss and Possible Vote on FY20 Budget:

Revenue and Revenue Assumptions: Mark Gold stated that the total operating revenue is about \$73,790,000 give or take, which is up about \$1.2 million. Mr. Gold asked if anyone had any questions about the numbers.

Marie Angelides asked about the revenues that go into the budget, it does not show MGM money. Paul Pasterczyk informed her that the MGM money is part of the local receipt line item. Marie Angelides also asked about Stormwater last year this was about \$200,000 and this year we are asking for \$292,000, is this being driven by the projects? Paul Pasterczyk said it is mainly being driven by the overall budget of the stormwater fund itself. Ms. Angelides stated that one of her concerns was when we first did stormwater it was to cover the cost and the testing that MS4 was going to require, and to put stormwater projects through that fund. Ms. Angelides feels that the whole point of a Stormwater fund was not to build up a second revenue, because all of this used to run through general funds it should be decreasing the taxes on the alternate side. Paul Pasterczyk explained how they have come up with the figures.

Richard Foster is concerned that even though there is no increase in the taxes, people will receive their water bills and see an extra charge. Marie Angelides stated she is cautionary that they are level service funding but for more money. Stephen Crane indicated his directive was to fund a level service budget and to stay at 2% which is what he is presenting.

Total Legal Services: Mark Gold stated there was an increase of about 5%. Mr. Gold stated he feels that this number is not high enough. Marie Angelides would like to keep it as is.

Department of Administration and Finance: Mark Gold asked about a line item under Westcomm phones. Paul Pasterczyk informed him that once Westcomm pays for phones the line item would be reduced. Mark Gold asked about the increase under the Assessors Department, are they going up in hours? Paul Pasterczyk stated there was a request for the Assistant Assessor to go up in hours, but it was denied, however there is a stipend in there for one of the clerical staff. Mark Gold asked about the reserve fund under the Finance Committee, there was a reduction from 40,000 to 20,000. Mr. Gold feels this is short sighted. Stephen Crane explained they often make reductions according to trends. Paul Pasterczyk stated the Finance Committee is aware of this.

Public Safety: Mr. Gold stated the increase in this budget is 2.89%. Marie Angelides asked about the Crossing Guards, have we increased the number of crossing guards or have we increased the pay? Chief Stankiewicz informed her there was an increase in pay. Mark Gold asked Chief Stankiewicz to explain the vehicle replacement line item. Chief Stankiewicz explained the cost differences. Marie Angelides asked why they did not go up in the police training, Chief Stankiewicz explained they are having a difficult time with retention this year, there are a few officers who are retiring, and they probably will not be hiring until next year. Mark Gold noted that the salary line items have gone up dramatically. Mark Gold asked Chief Dearborn about the repairs of vehicle maintenance that have gone up. Chief Dearborn stated they have 12 vehicles and the repair services even for regular maintenance is extremely expensive.

Chief Dearborn informed them that their vehicle maintenance budget is very detailed also they are 16% up in run volume this year.

Chief Stankiewicz took a moment to recognize the retirement of Officer Jeffrey Myers who is retiring tomorrow (3/15/2019) after 13 years with the Longmeadow Police Department.

Planning and Community Development: Mark Gold stated this budget decreased, it went from \$194,077 to \$192,780. Marie Angelides noted that Paul Healy has done a lot with organizing the fees, are we doing everything that other towns are doing or is there some other area that we should be looking at for inspections and fees? Paul Healy stated that our fees are pretty standard with other communities, the rental properties have helped out. Mark Gold asked about Bylaw enforcement and what kind of additional resources would it take? Stephen Crane stated that they would probably have to hire two full time employees it would be a significant increase in resources.

DPW: Marie Angelides asked about the decrease in traffic control, Mario Mazza stated that was mostly due to a lot of the accidents they have seen over the past few years and the replacements of those cabinets and equipment, so they have experienced a decrease of calls to the vendor. Mark Gold asked about the salary line item for the newly created Office Manager position, it is about an 8 ½% increase, is it a change in responsibility? Stephen Crane stated it is a significant change in responsibility. Marie Angelides asked why were they cutting the tree planting? Mario Mazza stated they will be coming to Town Meeting to fund the forestry line item. Mark Gold asked if the warrant article for the purchase of the street lights is approved would that impact the budget? Stephen Crane stated they would have to get a sense of the projection of the timeline.

Community Services: Marie Angelides asked about the increase in the Day Care fees, is the revenue covering its costs? Bari Jarvis stated it is covering its costs and the small increase is due to step increases, not addition to staff. Marie Angelides asked if their budget would go up once they get the whole building? Bari Jarvis stated that as far as the general fund, no it would not. Bari Jarvis noted that their primary source of revenue is within the recreational revolving fund. Marie Angelides asked Jeanne Maziarz about the CW MARS costs. Jeanne Maziarz stated that this budget represents half

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of the costs of the CW MARS network, and the other half was paid for with State Aid funds. Jean Maziarz thanked Stephen Crane and Paul Pasterczyk for working with her on building the library budget back up.

Debit Services: Mark Gold stated that debit services are decreasing about 6 ½ %. Mr. Gold also noted that employee and retiree benefits are going up 7 ½ %.

Enterprise Funds: Mark Gold asked about the allocations of the salaries, the storm water fund is getting more than the water and sewer which seems high. Mark Gold stated there was a study done a few years ago. Paul Pasterczyk stated they would have to do that same study over again in order to reflect the actual history. Mario Mazza stated they took half of the general fund highway and allocated it to storm water. Stephen Crane stated that number comes from an analysis not a time study.

Mark Gold stated he would like to wait and vote on the budget as there were only three of the five Board members left (Richard Foster and Tom Lachiusa left). Mark Gold thanked the Department Heads for being here tonight. Stephen Crane commended all the Department Heads and thanked Paul Pasterczyk for all his work on the budget.

3. Discuss Annual Town Meeting Warrant: Postponed until next meeting.

Marie Angelides made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by William Low. The vote was 3 in favor 0 opposed. Richard Foster and Tom Lachiusa absent at time of this vote.

There will be a Special Select Board Meeting on Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 6:30 p.m. at the Longmeadow High School Room A15.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jackie Sullivan

Documents: Agenda, School Presentation March 5, 2019, TM FY 2020 Budget presentation, Budget message TM to SB, FY20 budget worksheet master, FY2020 Budget SC 2-28-2019, PCO #037 final grading and capping and 2019 Warrant ATM.