

**Town of Ayer**  
**Executive Bi-Board Meeting Minutes For**  
**Wednesday, June 29, 2022, 2pm**



**Attendance:** Scott Houde (Chair); Fred Aponte (Finance Manager); Barbara Tierney (Treasurer/Tax Collector); Robert Pontbriand (Town Manager)

**Absent:** Carly Antonellis (Assistant Town Manager)

**Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 2pm on Zoom by S. Houde.

S. Houde read the following statement into the record:

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, in accordance with Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law (ONL), public bodies otherwise governed by the OML are temporarily relieved from the requirement that meetings be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means." This meeting will be live on Zoom. The public may participate remotely by joining Zoom (Meeting ID# 854 0032 4335) or by calling 929-205-6099. For additional information about remote participation, please contact Carly Antonellis, Assistant town Manager at [atm@ayer.ma.us](mailto:atm@ayer.ma.us) or 978-772-8220 ext. 100 prior to the meeting.

**Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (April 12, 2022):**

The Bi-Board reviewed the DRAFT Meeting Minutes from the April 12, 2022, meeting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by B. Tierney and seconded by S. Houde to approve the April 12, 2022, meeting minutes. **Motion passed (3-1 abstention)** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; B. Tierney, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y; F. Aponte (Abstained)

**FY 2022 and FY 2023 Budget Updates:**

R. Pontbriand provided a brief update on the status of the FY 2022 Budget and the FY 2023 Budget. In terms of FY 2022, the Town is in the process of closing out the fiscal year and preparing for the implementation of the FY 2023 Budget. R. Pontbriand also advised that the Town Moderator has made three appointments to the Finance Committee which now has a quorum and can meet. He and F. Aponte will plan to meet with the Finance Committee shortly to discuss general budgetary and financial matters.

F. Aponte stated that he is working on the year end closing for FY 2022.

B. Tierney advised that revenue collection rates are at 98% and that demands will be going out the beginning of July. There are currently no issues or concerns with collections or revenues from her Office.

B. Tierney also updated the Bi-Board on her recent land of low value tax title auction which took place on June 21, 2022 and all three parcels sold: one for \$9,500; one for \$900; and one for \$1,600.

[Sara Withee, Resident joins the meeting by Zoom]

**Discussion on Development of Plan for Use of ARPA Funds:**

R. Pontbriand stated that the Town needs to develop a plan and policy for the use of the Town's remaining ARPA Funds. This plan and policy should ultimately be approved and voted by the Select Board with input from the Finance Committee and Executive Bi-Board.

S. Houde asked what items the funds could be used for.

F. Aponte stated that they can be used for a wide array of items.

B. Tierney stated that it would be beneficial to have the Town's ARPA Consultant from CLA come to a future meeting to discuss what the funds can and cannot be used for as well as provide some examples of potential ARPA spending plans.

There was consensus among the Bi-Board to have CLA attend a future meeting to discuss the ARPA funds and the development of a plan for the Town.

**Discussion on Review and Update of the Town's Financial Policies:**

R. Pontbriand stated that one of the goals for the Town is to complete the review and update of the Town's Financial Policies by the end of the calendar year. B. Tierney had previously sent the current version to the Bi-Board for review and is collecting the input/comments.

S. Houde stated that in addition to the Bi-Board's review, the Finance Committee should review and provide input. Additionally, they should be sent to all Town Departments with a due date in September for feedback, this would give Departments a couple of months to review.

B. Tierney stated that the Investment Policy should be removed from the Financial Policies as it is required to be reviewed annually. Perhaps reference to this and where to find it could be made in the Financial Policies. She also stated that the Town should look to develop a policy regarding the Town's Cannabis funds.

F. Aponte stated that cannabis funds must go into the General Fund.

S. Houde concurred but advised that the Town has developed its own internal policy which Town Meeting has to act on. For example, the Town's policy for funding OPEB has been to use the Local Meals Tax amount supplemented by Free Cash to get to the annual contribution of \$300,000.

F. Aponte advised that currently the Town's balance for cannabis funds for FY 2022 is \$1,153,544.

S. Houde stated that he would like the Bi-Board to look at the Town's current Reserve Fund Transfer Policy to see if the guidelines can be further clarified and strengthened. He would be interested in other examples of an RFT Policy.

S. Houde also stated that he would be interested in potential policies for long range planning and debt planning.

The Bi-Board agreed to keep the discussion on the review and update of the Town's Financial Policies as a standing item on future meeting agendas.

**Discussion on Goals and Objectives of the Executive Bi-Board for the Year Ahead:**

The Bi-Board had a general discussion about the goals and objectives for the Bi-Board for the year ahead. Some of the goals and objectives for the year ahead include:

- Review and update of the Financial Policies.
- Development and implementation of an ARPA Spending Policy and Plan
- Development of the FY 2024 Budget Calendar
- Implementation of the Clear Gov Budget Online Budget Platform/Budget Book
- Development of Long-Range Capital and Debt Planning
- Working with the ASRSD regarding the Process for a New Elementary School
- Working with the newly formed Finance Committee
- Review and analysis of the Town's Emergency Mutual Aid Agreements

**New Business:**

There was no New Business.

**Scheduling of Next Meeting:**

The Executive Bi-Board scheduled the next meeting for Tuesday, July 26, 2022 at 2pm on Zoom.


**Adjournment:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by F. Aponte and seconded by B. Tierney to adjourn the Executive Bi-Board at 2:56pm. **Motion passed 4-0** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; F. Aponte, Y; B. Tierney, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

The meeting adjourned at 2:56pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by R. Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Executive Bi-Board on July 26, 2022.

Signed:  7/26/2022  
Robert A. Pontbriand  
Town Manager