



Town of Ayer

Executive Bi-Board

Meeting Minutes from November 15, 2022 at 2pm

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

Absent: Kurt Fraczkowski (Fin Com, Chair); Sebastian Cordoba (Fin Com, Vice-Chair)

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 or 978-772-8220 ext. 100 prior to the meeting.

Review/Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (October 25, 2022):

The DRAFT October 25, 2022 meeting minutes were not complete for review and approval. The Bi-Board deferred to the next meeting for review and approval.

Town Finances and Budget Status Update:

F. Aponte advised that he is working on completing the Town's balance sheet; recap sheet; and Schedule A for submission to the Department of Revenue.

B. Tierney advised that collections remain on target and revenues remain on target.

Review of Financial Policies Proposed Revisions/Updates and Next Steps to Completion:

R. Pontbriand provided an overview of the ongoing review and update of the Financial Policies by the Bi-Board. He stated that once the Bi-Board completes its review and update, the document should then be transmitted to all Town Departments, the Fin Com, and Select Board for their review and input. Once that final review is completed then the Fin Com and Select Board would need to vote to approve the updated/revised Financial Policies.

R. Pontbriand stated that under the Capital Finance Policy, the Town may want to consider increase the \$10,000 threshold for the criteria for what constitutes a one-time capital expenditure. This dollar threshold has not been reviewed or updated in at least thirteen years and we may want to review to see if it needs to be increased.

S. Houde stated that at initial glance it should probably be increased to \$20,000 taking into account inflation and other cost factors over the last decade.

F. Aponte stated that perhaps \$25,000 would be a sufficient update.

R. Pontbriand asked if the 8% threshold under Section 2.1 of the Capital Stabilization section should be kept.

S. Houde stated we should keep it at 8%.

S. Houde further stated that he would be interested in what DOR recommendations there are in terms of a debt threshold amount for the purposes of debt and capital exclusions. Should we consider increasing this?

B. Tierney stated that she would research this matter.

S. Houde also stated some other areas in the Financial Policies we should look at are the Stabilization and Capital Stabilization policies as a whole; a Cannabis Policy; and with respect to the COLA recommendation do we want to consider a cap? All things for us to consider during the review.

S. Houde also stated that in terms of Stabilization we want to be forward thinking but also mindful of growth and the limits of growth.

Discussion on the FY 2023 Budget Preparation Directive:

R. Pontbriand stated that per the FY 2024 Budget Calendar, the FY 2024 Budget Directive is scheduled to be issued on December 2, 2022. He is planning on a similar directive to recent years asking Departments to prepare a level services budget based off of the FY 2023 Budget with any new items or significant increases identified by a separate memo. He asked if the Bi-Board had any input or suggestions for the FY 2024 Budget Preparation Directive.

S. Houde stated that using the previous Directive model should be sufficient.

There was no other input from the Bi-Board with respect to the Budget Directive.

New Business:

R. Pontbriand brought up the future item of the development of an ARPA Spending Policy for the Town subject to approval by the Select Board.

Scheduling of Next Meeting(s):

The Bi-Board scheduled the next meeting for December 13, 2022 at 2pm on Zoom.

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by C. Antonellis and seconded by B. Tierney to adjourn the meeting at 2:35pm. **Motion passed (5-0) by Roll Call Vote:** S. Houde, Y; B. Tierney, Y; F. Aponte, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

The meeting adjourned at 2:35pm.

Minutes recorded and submitted by Robert Pontbriand, Town Manager.

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Executive Bi-Board on January 31, 2023

Signed: 
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager