

Town of Ayer

Executive Bi-Board

Meeting Minutes for March 7, 2023

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**TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK**

Attendance: Scott Houde (Chair); Barbara Tierney (Finance Manager); Kerry Cooper (Town Accountant); 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 March 7, 2023 meeting of the Ayer Executive Bi-Board 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 (February 21, 2023):

The Bi-Board reviewed the DRAFT Meeting Minutes from February 21 2023.

Motion: A motion was made by C. Antonellis and seconded by B. Tierney to approve the November 15, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. **Motion Passed (5-0) by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; B. Tierney, Y; K. Cooper, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.**

Town Finances and Budget Status Update:

R. Pontbriand advised that the Second Public Budget Forum will take place on March 8 at 6pm and that the FY 2024 Water and Sewer Rate Public Hearing will take place on March 27 at 6pm as part of the Select Board Meeting.

B. Tierney advised that collections and all budgetary matters for FY 2023 remain on target.

FY 2024 Budget Process Update:

R. Pontbriand advised that DRAFT #3 of the Budget was transmitted to the Select Board and Fin Com on March 3, 2023 and will be used for the basis of the Second Public Budget Presentation on March 8.

Discussion on Proposed Uses of Free Cash for the FY 2024 Budget:

R. Pontbriand provided a brief presentation on the proposed uses of Free Cash for the FY 2024 Budget as developed by him and B. Tierney. (See presentation attached to minutes). R. Pontbriand further advised that this is the proposed recommendation from the financial professionals but is subject to changes and choices by the Bi-Board and Select Board, especially in terms of the amounts to be put into Stabilization and Capital Stabilization.

R. Pontbriand went through the presentation.

B. Tierney provided an overview of her proposal to use a portion of Free Cash totaling \$322,565 to pay down a BAN which would result in an estimated savings of \$89,128 over the life of the BAN (by Year 2036).

R. Pontbriand pointed out that \$300,000 of the proposal for Stabilization represents the amount recommended to be set aside at this time for the purposes of absorbing the cost impacts for when the SAFER Grant for the Firefighters expires. Last year the amount was \$400,000. This year would be \$300,000 and next year would be \$200,000.

Discussion on the Second Public FY 2024 Budget Forum Presentation Content:

R. Pontbriand advised that he was planning to use a similar format at last year's second presentation as follows: Overview of major changes from DRAFT 2 to DRAFT 3 of the Budget; a slide on the Reserve Fund recommendation; an overview of the major budget drivers; an overview of the FY 2024 Capital; an overview on the recommended uses for Free Cash and an overview of an Raise and Appropriate Articles.

S. Houde stated that he would volunteer to develop the FY 2024 Capital Slides for the presentation and offered to assist with that portion of the presentation.

There were no other questions or suggestions regarding the presentation content and there was consensus on this approach.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Scheduling of Next Meeting:

The Bi-Board scheduled its next meeting for Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at 2pm on Zoom.

Adjournment:

Motion: A motion was made by B. Tierney and seconded by C. Antonellis to adjourn the meeting at 2:46pm. **Motion Passed (5-0) by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; B. Tierney, Y; C. Antonellis, Y; K. Cooper, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:46pm.

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

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Executive Bi-Board on March 28, 2023.

Signed: 
Robert A. Pontbriand, Town Manager

Attachment: Presentation on the Proposed/Recommended Uses of Free Cash for FY 2024

Recommended Uses for FY 2024 Free Cash

Executive Bi-Board Meeting: March 7, 2022

- Stabilization Balance (as of Dec. 2022): \$2,697,165
- Capital Stabilization Balance (as of Dec. 2022): \$3,466,657
- Certified Free Cash (as of June 30, 2022): \$1,936,459

Recommended Uses for Free Cash

• **Free Cash Certified as of June 30, 2022:** **\$1,936,459**

UDAG Replenishment – Park Street Study	(\$14,185)
Library HVAC replenish Library special fund	(\$35,000)
GASB 45 – OPEB	(\$145,636)
Forward Funding of Pension Proposal	(\$300,000)
Compensated Absences Special Revenue Fund	(\$10,000)
Capital Stabilization	(\$750,000)
Stabilization	(\$359,073)
Bond Anticipation Note Payment	(\$322,565)

Recommended Uses for FY 2022 Free Cash

FY 2024 Omnibus Budget (as of DRAFT #3): **\$18,012,857**

- Per policy, Stabilization should strive to be a minimum of 7% of the operating revenue which would be a balance of \$1,260,899 for FY 2024.
- The Town has achieved and continues to maintain its Stabilization Balance.
- The last several years, the Town has been increasing Capital Stabilization in preparation for any significant capital emergencies and/or future capital needs. The amount recommended for stabilization includes \$300,000 to ease the impact of the end of the Safer grant.

Potential FY 2024 Stabilization Scenarios:

Scenario #1:

Capital (\$750,000)
Stabilization (\$359,073)

Scenario #2:

Capital (\$700,000)
Stabilization (\$409,073)

Scenario #3: (Any combination of \$1,109,073)

Capital: ?
Stabilization: ?

