

FinCom 2023-March-15

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Members Present:

Chair: Kurt Fraczkowski

Clerk: Andrew Sealey

Member: Jin Hong

Extra:

Town manager – Robert Pontbriand



Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:03PM.

MOTION:

Sealey to Approve March 01 minutes.

Hong 2nd

Unanimous approval

Presentation by DPW – Dan Van Schalkwyk

Dan – Assets maintained by DPW transfer station, treatment plants, pipe distribution for water, wastewater plant and collection, municipal and sludge landfill, cemetery, public tree, streetlights.

6 divisions – Admin, Engineering, highway, water, wastewater, solid waste

Assets - 2 highway garages, Grove pond water treatment, spec pond WTP, storage, tanks, Wastewater treatment plant, 19 pumping stations, flow to Devens or our own plant, Transfer station

Large list of vehicles – highway is largest single owner of vehicles.

Org. structure is branching, but report to Director (Dan) and he reports to town manager who reports to Select board.

Admin – Customer service, billing, stickers, permits, payroll, day-to-day functions – 4 Employees

DPW reviews Engineering expertise to review outside proposals – Nasoya is an example, review permits, submit grant applications, regulatory reporting.

Chair – Commercial on Nemco Way are under our review and planning

Dan – Yes, we review things such as storm water run-off and site plan review.

Highway division – 45 miles of roadway and storm water assets. Primary division for snow removal. 6 – employees and are on call for emergencies, town trash, street sweeping, street lights, crosswalk painting, mowing, flags on main street.

Water quality – 3 times a year that the ponds and waterways are tested for any level of restriction.

Highway budget –

Sealey – overtime is driven by snow and on call?

Dan – Snow is its only category, so this is on-call overtime.

Snow removal – overtime is captured here, some outside contractors are called in to help which is reflected here. All Fuel used in the winter comes from this budget irrespective of use.

Storm water – Follow good procurement practice and send items to bid when available. Storm drain upgrades is pipe or structure replacements, try to do all road utilities at once if under a road.

Street lighting – 4-5years ago the town took over the street lights from national grid. Broken out to its own budget. Tries to fulfil new streetlight requests with any leftover money.

Fuel budget – services all town vehicles

Chair – one provider?

Tillotson – Gas and Diesel?

Dan- We switch providers when possible in a state bid and we provide both gas and diesel

Cemetery – Town took over last April, budget is adjusted a bit since it was an unknown. Part time cemetery person that helped with transition. Looks to be accurate now.

Tree warden – mostly contractors that remove or work on trees. There is a 10 year tree management plan that is being followed

Enterprise funds:

Water: metered at user site and sewer is counted the same usage unless there is a separate irrigation meter. Minimum 3 licensed water operations personnel, 5 current employees. See water map.

Budget – Services covers many devices and testing for leaks, chlorine etc.

Utilities is mostly pumping electricity.

5 public water supplies wells, every year we clean a number of wells to maintain capacity, chemicals are hugely expensive now, water meter replacement – big new construction requires many

Hong: some cells aren't filled

Dan – The finance manager covers those lines such as debt.

Wastewater: min 3 licensed personnel, currently there are 6

See wastewater map.

Groton connection is sewer only. Groton water dept. tells us the meter readings and we bill accordingly, and we also get connection fees

Devens services covers the flow to Devens and capital costs for their facility all based on an agreement. Must send 50k gallons minimum, that is driven by flushing the whole line main once a day. Sludge removal is driven by need to haul out and incinerate.

Solid waste: 2 employees, stickers, bags, bulk items are main revenue, currently subsidized through tax base.

Other things: Assist other departments with engineering and physical services. Youthworks program, up to date with other towns and professional societies.

Public input: 6:56pm open to the public

Hong: The enterprise funds are self-sufficient.

Dan: Yes, all but solid waste and the rate review committee is looking to bring that down.

Tierney: The Capital stuff is worked out already.

Town Manager: 4 enterprise funds each have their own warrant article at town meeting.

Chair: Any open questions?

Chair: seeing none, moving on.

Thanks the three largest departments for their presentations. Going forward we will review revenue in next meeting. Next meeting to be Wednesday March 29th to complete final budget review with revenues.

Wednesday March 29th at 6pm

Sealey: Can we write other text on the warrant articles?

Town Manager: I will check, historically, fincom puts recommends, does not recommend, report at town meeting. The report at town meeting we speak at town meeting after the moderator approves. The moderator will go through the budget line by line and some items have a presentation. The fincom can have a report or presentation for the town meeting. Fincom will get draft warrant articles on 24th of March. Currently 25 warrants, average is 36, Fincom is only voting on financial articles.

Chair: One more call for public comment.

Motion: To adjourn by Kurt

So moved by Sealey

2nd by Hong

unanimous approval

7:07pm

Adjourned.



KURT FRACZKOWSKI
CHAIR