

**Town of Ayer**

**Executive Bi-Board Meeting Minutes For**

**Tuesday, March 8, 2022, 2pm**

**Attendance:** Scott Houde (Chair); Pat Diamond (Fin Com Chair); Mark Smith (Fin Com Vice Chair); Lisa Gabree (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 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 (February 8, 2022):**

The Bi-Board reviewed the DRAFT Meeting Minutes from the February 8, 2022, meeting.

**Motion:** A motion was made by P. Diamond and seconded by M. Smith to approve the February 8, 2022, meeting minutes. **Motion passed (6-0)** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; P. Diamond, Y; M. Smith, Y; L. Gabree, Y; B. Tierney, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

**FY 2023 Budget Update: Review and Discussion of DRAFT #2 of the FY 2023 Budget:**

R. Pontbriand presented an overview of DRAFT #2 of the FY 2023 Budget which was released on February 24, 2022. DRAFT #2 represents a \$500,488 increase over the FY 2022 Budget or a 3.07% increase. The major changes from DRAFT #1 to DRAFT #2 were a (\$157,654) decrease in the Police wages budget as a budget correction from an additional Officer position still being in the Budget; a (\$77,830) decrease in Debt; \$10,000 was added by the Conservation Commission for consultant work; \$9,712 was added for the Facilities Director and Building Commissioner's personal service contracts; \$19,931 was added to the Police Department Budget for overtime and other expenses.

There were no questions from the Bi-Board on DRAFT #2 of the FY 2023 Budget.

**Review/Discussion on Recommendations for Proposed Uses of Free Cash:**

R. Pontbriand provided a revised update on the recommendations on the Proposed Uses of Free Cash to include the suggestion from the previous Bi-Board Meeting to use \$65,000 from Free Cash to replenish the UDAG Fund for the completion of the Final Phase of the Depot Square Project.

There were no further proposed changes to the recommendations for Proposed Uses of Free Cash as presented at the February 8, 2022, Bi-Board Meeting.

S. Houde asked about an update on the status of the Town's OPEB Fund goals.

L. Gabree advised that the OPEB funding schedules were recently updated, and we remain on target for full funding.

B. Tierney advised that other than fully funding early, the proposed \$300,000 contribution for this year as recommended by the OPEB Board of Trustees is giving us the full discount.

L. Gabree suggested that for a future meeting, the Town's consultant, Mr. Parker Elmore.

P. Diamond stated that he likes the Town's plan and approach to the OPEB financing.

**Discussion on the Topics for the March 16 Public Budget Forum:**

R. Pontbriand asked for input on the topics to be covered at the March 16 Public Budget Forum.

P. Diamond stated that you could discussed COVID impacts to the budget and Town.

S. Houde stated that there should be a focus on the new personnel positions.

L. Gabree stated that she would complete the budget tie-in and an overview of the Raise and Appropriate Articles.

S. Houde recognized Jim O'Connor, Town Moderator.

J. O'Connor stated that you could discuss budget issues with respect to increased costs for fuel and inflation and the impacts.

L. Gabree stated that is why we are keeping the Reserve Fund at \$300,000 for this year.

R. Pontbriand stated that he would incorporate these suggestions into the presentation.

**Discussion on the FY 2023 Budget Book:**

S. Houde asked about the timeline for Clear Gov.

L. Gabree stated that she is now going to focus on this as the budget preparations were the focus as well as Town Meeting preparations.

S. Houde stated that we should keep the same format of the Budget Book for this year and just update. There could be a page about COVID budgetary/financial impacts?

**New Business:**

R. Pontbriand suggested two items: 1.) The preparation of a list of all the New Business Items before the Executive Bi-Board for the purposes of developing a plan after Town Meeting; and 2.) The Town will need to look at updating the Non-Union Classification/Compensation Plan in the year ahead as the current one is eight years old.

**Scheduling of Next Meeting:**

The Bi-Board agreed to continue to have the meetings by Zoom at this time. The next meeting will be on April 12, 2022, at 2pm on Zoom.

**Adjournment:**

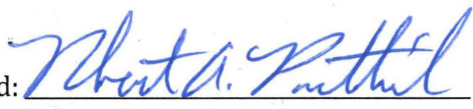
**Motion:** A motion was made by P. Diamond and seconded by M. Smith to adjourn the Executive Bi-Board at 2:23pm. **Motion passed 6-0** by Roll Call Vote: S. Houde, Y; P. Diamond, Y; M. Smith, Y; L. Gabree, Y; B. Tierney, Y; R. Pontbriand, Y.

The meeting adjourned at 2:23pm.

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

Minutes reviewed and approved by the Executive Bi-Board on April 12, 2022

Signed:

 4/12/2022

Robert A. Pontbriand  
Town Manager