

FinCom 2022-12-14

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Members Present:

Chair: Kurt Fraczkowski

Vice-Chair: Sebastian Cordoba

Clerk: Andrew Sealey

Member: Jin Hong

Extra: Carly Antonellis – Asst. Town Manager

Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM.

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TOWN OF AYER
TOWN CLERK



Public input:

Dennis Curran – Pleasant Street, Ayer

Expressing concerns over the expanding fire department as the department has added several members. Asks three public safety components be addressed separately, in the warrant articles. Enterprise funds cannot be used for public safety? Separate them out in fincom business as to better represent the views of the fincom and better represent the budgets in material prepared for town meeting.

Ambulance enterprise fund, "since 2019 they have requested money from the general fund". Steps to bring the fund into balance.

Provision of mutual aid: Clarified to be when Ayer provides public safety aid to adjoining towns. Ayer provides more aid out than it receives in.

Staffing Ratio of the fire department vs the general population. 19 full time fire fighters after the federal grant expires and how that compares to other towns of a similar size.

Chairman: Work on the best way to convey these details to the board and

Curran:

Suggests we hire a third party to essentially audit the fire department in terms of how everything is handled as far as scheduling, on-call staffing, procedures, etc. and make a recommendation as to how could handle it better, particularly in relation to looking at other towns

Chairman: In interest of time, cut short, previous five points noted and will be pursued

Carolyn McCreary – Wachusett ave

Second what Mr. Curran was saying. Concern about costs of things, specifically fire, could take away from other important things like teachers' salaries.

Enterprise fund: Was intended to fund ambulance, no longer works, asks to pursue

Request to look into the "over budgeted" police department. "\$415 cost per resident, \$218 avg. cost for other towns" given overseeing Devens it was likely that the town had to invest heavily in services to compensate so we may no longer need them.

Susan Tordella – 5 edgeway

Echo what previous two speakers had to say.

Committee Discussion:

Link to Ayer town site, Budget.

Asst. Town Mgr. Work in ~6 month blocks to reflect town meeting schedules. Aug. -> oct. meeting etc.

walking through budget calendar: available on the town website

Two enterprise funds that pay for themselves: water and sewer

Transfer Station was never self-sufficient: tax payers cover from general fund

Ambulance rates: ~75% of users are Medicare/Medicaid patients which is a lower rate than private insurance

January 13th, Fincom gets first revision of budget, Available on website at the same time

Chairman: Suggestion of meeting week after budget release

Asst. Town Mgr.

Proceeds with budget schedule, large items include School assessments and health insurance rates. Every month the website department/townmanager/accounting is updated with percent spend YTD.

The budgets are bottom-line budgets which allows some level of wiggle room should the total value not be exceeded.

Reserve fund transfers are required should the bottom-line budget be violated or something like the town hall boiler breaks, select board and FinCom must approve to transfer.

Scheduling of attending town board meetings:

Chairman: Three main boards that require a FinCom member: Capital planning, bi-board, rate review

Asst. Town Mgr. - Bi-Board: talk about budget decisions, 2nd Tuesday of the month, Jan. 10th

Asst. Town Mgr. – Rate review board Tuesday @ 4pm, next meeting 20th

Chairman: summary,

Bi-board Sebastian is rep., Capital Kurt is rep., Andrew is Rate review rep. Will be flexible with what members attend which committee and Chairman will attend select meetings as possible and other will attend via Zoom as available.


Looking to Schedule next meeting for Jan. 11th, Busy room that day. Jan. 12th at 5:30 is set. A Thursday, meeting is to address how to work public concerns into the process and cover the previous years budget.

Asst. Town Mgr. Previous minutes are available online in

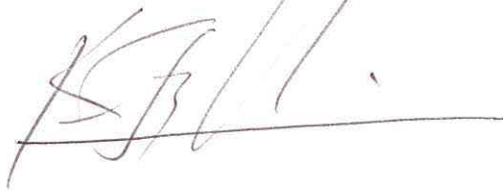
Andrew- motion to adjourn. 2nd by member, passed by unanimous consent.

Adjourned. 6:48pm

Clerk:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. J. G.', written over a horizontal line.

Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. B.', written over a horizontal line.