Board of Selectmen
Municipal Office Complex
Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
February 16, 2022
Special Meeting Minutes

Selectmen Present: I. Haines; E. Dill; T. Govert
Also Present: D. Angersola; Fire Chief B. Auld; E. Blaschik; W. Brady; C. Brownell; J. Cotter; R. Dill; R. Funk; M. Kolek; Captain C. Leidemer; A. Lord; L. Pszczolkowski; T. Reynolds; J. Ventres; G. Wilson; L. Zemienieski; and other members of the public

1. First Selectman Haines called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. and the attendees said the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. 2023-2024 General Budget Review Workshop

   A. **Fire Department Operating/Capital:** There was a $26,277.00 (4.7%) increase in the Fire Department's operating budget. Chief Auld provided an overview of the department's responsibilities, staff, and apparatus. He reviewed their FY2022-2023 accomplishments and FY2023-2024 major service level goals. Chief Auld reported the that department had responded to 623 calls in FY2022, 417 of which were R1 medical calls, as compared to 507/337 in FY2021. He reviewed the department's goals for FY2023-2024.

   Ms. Haines advised that, as a result of the Ambulance Association's contract being in flux, she and the Fire Department had negotiated a 2.5% Wages & Salary increase and agreed to push out contract negotiations to the next fiscal year. She noted that overtime is a significant part of the Salaries & Wages expense; however, OT is difficult to manage due to the unpredictable timing of fire and medical emergency calls.

   Chief Auld reviewed capital requests for FY2023-2024 and responded to questions from the Board.

Mr. Funk distributed a document listing the LRCIC prioritized project rankings. There was a general discussion regarding the use of ARPA funds to pay for some of the one-time capital requests.

   B. **Economic Development Commission:** There was a decrease in the Economic Development Commission operating budget of $1,638.00 (4%). It was noted that the Economic Development Commission proposed budget is not yet complete. Economic Development Administrator Pszczolkowski confirmed that the $12,000 in the budget requested for professional services is for the proposed bike/walking path but it was unclear whether the Commission is asking for an additional $12,000 for FY2023-2024. Mr. Funk agreed to clarify the request with Economic Development Commission Chairman Casner. Ms. Zemienieski stated that Chairman Casner will need to update the narrative for this project in ClearGov.

The Board took a short recess at 6:15p.m. The meeting reconvened at 6:25p.m.

   C. **Redevelopment Agency:** There was an increase in the Redevelopment Agency's operating budget of $18,200.00 (66.2%). Chairman Kolek provided an overview of the Redevelopment

Agency and its charge. She advised that the Agency would like to hire an environmental consultant to review the condition of the property at 7 Main Street and write grant applications for the remediation work. She noted that the Agency is in its "infancy" and she expects it will come back to the Town and Board of Finance to request additional funding for its next steps. Ms. Kolek responded to questions from the Board and confirmed that the Agency is researching the need to retain the services of a Tax Increment Financing (TIF) consultant.

The Board reviewed the past four years' motions that moved the Town's operating and capital budgets to the Board of Finance. There was a general discussion regarding reserves and the long-range capital plan and how the Board of Selectmen could structure its motion/recommendation to the Board of Finance to achieve a fair and proportionate distribution of Town funds. Ms. Haines presented her proposal for using ARPA funds for non-repeating capital items.

D. **Conservation Commission:** There was an increase of $2,200.00 (7.4%) in the Conservation Commission's budget. Mr. Wilson reviewed the Commission's FY2023 accomplishments and its FY2024 goals. He advised that the $2,000.00 increase in the Printing & Binding budget line is because the Commission would like to produce and print a brochure on how the public can help achieve climate sustainability. Mr. Wilson responded to several questions from the Board.

E. **Land Use Officer Operating/Capital (PZC, IWWC, WPCA, ZBA, HDC, OPS)**: There was an increase of $30,369.00 (16.9%) in the Land Use Department's budget. Land Use Administrator Ventres provided an overview of the department's responsibilities and there was a general discussion regarding the requested increase to Purchased Professional Services. Mr. Ventres responded to questions from the Board.

Mr. Ventres and others commented on the following budgets:

- PZC – The Planning & Zoning Commission's budget Mr. Dill questioned the breakdown for commissions under the purchased professional services lines for engineering under the FY2022 actual column. Mr. Ventres noted what the expenses were for and Mr. Funk noted that was how that years actuals loaded into Cleargov. Future years will show a breakdown.

- IWWC – The Inland Wetlands and Watercourses budget Mr. Dill advised that IWWC also has a revenue component.

- WPCA – Mr. Ventres reviewed the financial challenges of the Water Pollution Control Authority. In response to a question from Mr. Dill, he advised that the request to increase the transfer from the Land Use Department's operating budget to the WPCA by an additional $25k is in recognition of the accelerating need for repairs to the aging system.

- ZBA – There is a slight ($55.00 - 2.9%) increase in this budget. The Board noted that there is a vacancy on the Zoning Board of Appeals.

- HDC – Chairman Brady stated that the operating budget for the Historic District Commission remained flat for FY2024. He provided an overview of the Commission's activities.

- OPS – Mr. Ventres acknowledged the $3,250.00 (100%) increase in this budget and stated it is the result of the escalating cost of property appraisals. He advised that

appraisals are needed to apply for Connecticut open space grants and noted that the budget is challenging to prepare because of the inconsistency of open space opportunities. He responded to several questions from the Board.

F. **General Overall Operating/Capital Budget Review:** Mr. Brownell discussed the Land Use/EDC capital request for engineering services to execute a conceptual design study for Moodus center. He stated that he believed a vision plan, which would be needed to apply for grants to implement improvements to the area, could be developed for approximately $75k. Ms. Haines acknowledged the need for the Town to tap into its economic drivers and reviewed several steps she has taken regarding Moodus center, including applying for a CT THRIVE grant that would provide technical expertise for the development of a plan for the business area. Ms. Govert stated that the CT Department of Economic Community Development also offers challenge grants for these type projects.

3. Public Comment: There were no public comments discussed at the meeting.

4. Adjournment: There being no additional business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Govert, seconded by Mr. Dill, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm.

Recorded

Respectfully submitted,
Erik Dill, Secretary