



**THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE
JOINT BOARD OF FINANCE / BOARD OF
SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022
6:00 PM**

A Joint Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge was via Webex on Thursday, January 27, 2022 at 6:00 pm

Link to YouTube broadcast: <https://youtu.be/INb7DEFoh7w>

BOF PRESENT: Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Vice Chairman; Susan Jacobs Tom Handler; Donavon Lofters; Dwight Rowland; Ellen Scalettar

BOS PRESENT: First Selectman, Beth Heller; Sheila McCreven; Joseph Crisco; David Lober; David Vogel

ALSO PRESENT: Administrative Officer/Director of Finance, Anthony Genovese; Budget Analyst/Payroll & Benefits Administrator, Karen Crosby

OPERATING BUDGET PRESENTATIONS

Parks Department

Adam Parsons presented the Parks Department budget request of \$275,454 which is an increase of 1.08%. Adam reviewed the items to address in order to get the budget under a 0% increase (remove a port-a-potty at the tennis courts and to reduce one week on seasonal employee).

Beth thanked Adam for his work on the budget and the skating rink that is up and running.

Dwight thanked Adam for all his hard work on the fields to keep the ballfields in great shape. They have been working together for years and they work together well.

Building Maintenance

Brad Parsons presented a budget request of \$455,068 which represents an increase of 2.34%. He reduced the General Professional Services by 3.24%. The Repair and Maintenance line increased by 8%, that line has not been increased in many years. The number of buildings and maintenance has increased over the years and the department needs additional funds to take care of all the repairs. There are multiple minor repairs that Brad puts off due to lack of funds. He wouldn't ask for funds if he didn't need it. He pays close attention to his budget he uses the funds as wisely as he can. Maintenance Supplies increased by \$1,000 due to increase cost in cleaning supplies.

Capital Item – Removal of underground storage tanks. It has been determined, due to new DEEP regulations and recent inspections, that three tanks need to be removed. The tank at the country club can be removed, the tank at the fire station should stay in place and be abandoned on-site, the tank at Beecher Road

School should be added to their capital budget. Brad wrote a proposal for them to remove the tank with Brad's assistance. Beecher had gotten a quote and Brad was able to reduce the cost for Beecher by having the Town crew remove the tank.

Pool & Gym

Brad presented a budget request of \$95,871 which is an increase of 13.86%. The maintenance budget line has increased for Brad to repair tile work and lighting at the pool. Emergency lights are inspected every year and if there is more than one emergency light out, the Fire Marshal insists that they be replaced and the rental of a lift is required. There are a number of repairs that need to be done that have been put off.

Tony stated that the Part Time Maintenance has increased due to COVID. That line had been reduced due to reduced programming.

Brad reported that there has been a small leak detected and he doesn't know how serious it is. The Town is hiring a professional to determine how serious the leak is. The inspection is taking place this week and he will know more after a meeting with the engineer and will report at the next Selectmen's meeting. The pool is closing and the last day is this Friday.

Conservation Commission

Tim Austin presented a budget request of \$3,450 which represent an increase of 245% or \$2,450.

The commission is looking to fund four initiatives – Trail Challenge, Boot Brush Pilot (prevent spread of invasive plants and soil destroying jumping worms, Signage, and Open Space Map Duplication.

Tony stated that the commission has requested that they get someone to take minutes and if it would be a staff member it would require overtime for that person.

Economic Development

Shawn Flynn presented a budget request of \$3,450 which is a 0% increase.

The commission is engaging with the local business community and the funds help them with that.

Police Commission

Chief Frank Cappiello and Deputy Chief Ron Smith presented a budget request of \$3,464,991 which is an increase of 8.98%. They are proposing the promotion of one existing patrol officer to sergeant, additional patrol officer and an additional dispatcher.

The staffing level is well below what has been recommended in past studies. Deputy Chief Ron Smith presented 2021 statistics:

32,435 the Department generated Case Numbers a 10% increase over 2020 numbers

2,982 incidents in which a 2 officer minimum requirement – 9.91% of call volume

There are 1,095 shifts in 2021 with 329 shifts (30%) with only 2 officers

When there are 2 officers responding to a call, it makes the rest of the Town being unprotected. It is not only a danger to the officers, but also a danger to our community. The addition of one officer would greatly enhance their ability to provide more efficient police service to the community and to provide a better quality of life to the residents.

Violence in America is skyrocketing especially against police There have been 13 officers shot in the United States in the last week and it can happen anywhere. The addition of one officer would be much appreciated.

Proposing the promotion of an additional sergeant. That would be from current staffing. This would help in the supervision of patrol. This would not increase staffing levels.

Proposing to hire an additional dispatcher to increase from 6 to 7 dispatchers. The current staffing level provides 9 shifts of 21 shifts with 2 dispatchers on duty. When a major incident occurs one dispatcher has to handle all the incoming calls as best as they can. Multiple calls at once, radio calls from police and fire coming in at the same time. The dispatch study that was recently completed recommended the additional dispatcher as well as the recommendation of the dispatch committee.

David Lover asked the Chief about the regionalization of dispatching. He said that as far as he has heard, this has not been considered by the department. Chief Cappiello stated that they have had discussions regarding this. He stated that it is an option for the future but he feels that the department needs to become the best the department can be.

Data Processing increasing due to the contractual maintenance of network and related support, equipment, supplies, anti-virus, and service contracts.

Increase in computers line to replace or upgrade old computers and to maintain security compliance for State/Federal audit.

Increase in Tires, Oil and Gas line due to recent bid on gasoline for FY23.

David Lober asked about switching over to hybrid vehicles and alternative fuels. Other cities have switched to them and have had savings. There is also idle monitors that could be installed on vehicles that would be a cost savings.

Matt stated that the Chief told us that one more officer could alleviate the problems of the police department and it is upsetting t Matt. There is a highly-qualified police officer who spends his day at Beecher Road School. The ongoing trend in other towns is to hire a security guard. They did a survey at Beecher Road school of parents, teachers and staff. The staff responded that they did not think that there should be a full time SRO at Beecher Road School.

Sandy Hook does not have a full time Resource Officer, they have a security guard. If Beecher Road School want a Resource Officer and the Police Department doesn't have the staff to spare, you shouldn't have to provide the officer.

Town Plan & Zoning

Chairman Rob Klee and Land Use Analyst Kristine Sullivan presented a budget request of \$52,480 which represents an increase of 26.11%. The increase is basically due to the request to hire an outside expert to cleanup the regulations that were updated in 2019. This is beyond the scope of the members of the board to take care of. There are a number of things that have to be addressed.

Zoning Board of Appeals

Kristine presented a budget request of \$2,650 which is a 0% increase over FY22. During COVID legal notices were allowed to be posted on Town websites. That has now expired and legal notices have to be advertised in the newspapers.

Inland Wetlands

Kristine presented a budget in the amount of \$55,139 and 1.57% increase. The only increase is related to salary.

Building Department

Tony introduced Bob Dillon as the new Building Official. He is working part time for Woodbridge. Bob reported that they are fine-tuning the on-line permitting program so they can share information with other Town departments. The budget decreased \$11,000 over last year. Since July they have processed over 300 permits. There is a large project (\$6M project) on Litchfield Turnpike being done by Regional Water Authority. Tony stated that this is one of the departments that creates a significant amount of revenue.

Recreation Department

John Adamovich and Jim Franco presented a budget request of \$555,060 which represents an increase of 5.54% over FY22.

Tony stated that this is another department with significant revenue and if you consider the revenue with the expenses, this budget request is actually less than last year.

In this budget, minimum wage is increasing by \$1 an hour. There are 98 employees that fall under the minimum wage. There is an increase in banking fees. Due to the increase in revenue, and most people pay by credit card, the banking fees have increased.

Participation has increased, they are right back up to pre-pandemic numbers.

Beth stated that the outdoor skating rink is a big hit and is being used all the time. John suggested that maybe down the road we can have a permanent ice rink that can be used year-round.

Government Access Television

Pua Ford presented a budget request of \$26,648 which has no increase.

Sheila McCreven thanked Pua for her work during the pandemic with covering the meetings. Pua submitted statistics to Tony regarding what transpired during the pandemic.

Library

Eric Werthmann and Commission Chair James Moriarty presented a budget request of \$845,529 which represents a 7.37% increase over FY22. As of January 2022, the Library is finally open 54 hours per week which is the same number of hours for at least the last twenty years. 73% of their budget is salary related. If the budget is cut, staffing hours would need be reduced.

Jim Moriarty stated that last year they put together a four-part plan of the re-opening of the library coming out of COVID. In order to implement that phased re-opening, there were a number of staff additions of staff that needed to be made. Eric did a great job of hiring qualified employees. Most of the increases are wages. If the library gets a cut, then staffing would be affected. The commission has discussed late fees and fines. Currently, they normally generate approximately \$5,000 in fines and late fees. They may just have fines on things other than books, which would reduce that revenue to \$2,500.

Capital Item – Eric presented a carpeting project it the amount Of \$30,000 in FY23. This is to replace the carpeting that hasn't been replaced since the renovation in 2000.

Eric explained the staffing of Head of Circulation, Head of Children's', Head of Adult Services. They purchase all the books and materials for those department, they also plan programming, and helps with the running of the website. Head of Technical Services does all the behind the scenes work with books and materials.

The Center

Tony presented a budget request of \$80,950 which is a 5.82% decrease over FY22. The decrease is basically due to changing out the lighting to LED through the program with UI.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Crosby

Karen Crosby
Budget Analyst
Payroll & Benefits Administrator