



Town of Medway

FINANCE COMMITTEE

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Wednesday, February 8, 2023 – 7:00 PM
Town Hall, Sanford Hall
155 Village Street

Joint Meeting with the Select Board

Present: Brian Cowan, Vice Chair; Ellen Hillery, Clerk; Bruce Carbone; Will Lane; Jeff O’Neill; Sue Segarra.

Absent: Jim Sullivan, Chair; Chris Lagan; Michael Schrader.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

Others Present: Select Board: Dennis Crowley, Chair; Todd Alessandri, Frank Rossi, Maryjane White and Glenn Trindade; Cindy Sullivan, School Committee liaison to Finance Committee; Tim Harris, Chair; Facilities Review Committee.

Call to Order

In the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair Cowan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with six members present.

At 7:00 PM Mr. Dennis Crowley, Chair, Select Board called the meeting of the Select Board to order.

At this time, Vice Chair Cowan reported that he has been serving on the Facilities Review Committee along with Select Board Member Glenn Trindade.

1.0 Joint Meeting with the Select Board – Presentation from Facilities Review Committee:

The following information was reviewed: PowerPoint presentation available at the following link:
https://www.townofmedway.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf8006/f/uploads/phase-i-presentation_2-8-23.pdf

Present: Tim Harris, Chair, Facility Review Committee; Mark Robinson, Facilities Review Committee; Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Select Board Members: Dennis Crowley, Todd Alessandri, Frank Rossi, Glenn Trindade and Maryjane White.

Mr. Tim Harris, Chair, Facilities Review Committee, briefly explained what the committee has been working on. Utilizing a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Harris shared the results of the study, explaining that the report will be split into two reports, Phase 1 and Phase 2, with this report focusing on Phase 1.

The overall mission of the committee included:

- Analyze all Town of Medway Facilities to determine their current condition to determine short-term and long-term needs;
- Consider current & future staffing requirements
- Account for updated and projected operational requirements
- Prioritize needs of facilities as well as Town priorities
- Provide Facility Recommendations
- Provide Preventative Maintenance Recommendations

The committee examined Current Challenges for the Fire Station, Police Station, and Town Hall, followed by the Committee Findings & Recommendations for each building.

It was noted that a Police Reform Bill currently being considered at the state level will provide standards but those are not yet known. Police officers are not necessarily concerned with being centrally located as they are always on patrol and moving around the community whereas the fire stations needs to be as equidistant from all parts of the community as possible. The fire station located behind Town Hall is not feasible for repair or improvements due to its current conditions and limited size. If an addition to the current Police Station were constructed, there is concern that there may not be adequate parking, especially since police vehicles are often sitting out and kept running while in colder weather so they can be ready in case of emergency. No matter what the standards might require, something needs to be done now to accommodate current staffing in areas that would not be covered by standards. Mr. Alessandri added that there was nothing in the proposed standards regarding construction and asked if there could be confirmation on this omission.

During the discussion on the Town Hall, it was suggested that interested parties do a walk-around to view the condition of the building exterior, in particular a close look at the bricks, the pitting, and window seals.

Vice Chair Cowan encouraged people to participate in any of the Open Houses that will be scheduled in the coming months in order to better understand the needs of various staffing groups.

Discussion followed on the projections outlined in the Executive Summary. Mr. Robinson explained that the committee decided early on not to necessarily ignore the financial piece, but to first address the needs. Now they have to weigh the priorities against the cost. They are probably a couple of months away from beginning on Phase 2.

Mr. Charlie Meyers, 9 Curtis Lane, asked if the presentation will be posted online; it will. He noted that he attended the Select Board meeting where the School Committee from the Tri-County Regional Vocational High School talked about their building and the costs associated with construction vs. renovation. He suggested that it would be in the best interests of this committee that the same sequence of questions be utilized when reviewing municipal buildings.

Mr. Boynton spoke briefly on the work the committee has done, noting that the members did an amazing job with such an enormous task. Their approach was well done and well thought out. Continuing, he emphasized that there are very different uses for Police and Fire. The question is whether the resources currently available meet the needs of those unique personnel. At least 12K square feet is needed just for fire apparatus. The physical location of these stations is crucial to the wellbeing of residents. He reported that construction costs are rising at an alarming rate; the longer we wait to renovate or build, the higher the costs will be. New revenue from utility companies locating here may make a dent in those costs, but not enough to cover it completely. How would we pay for the cost of work done at Tri-County? The cost of our building needs is not contained within the tax levy. Every construction project is broken into phases beginning with design, and the cost of the total project could conceivably double by the time the project is completed years later. Discussion followed. Mr. Crowley cautioned that tonight's discussions are just that: discussions. He was adamant that residents not view the meeting broadcast and reinterpret discussion as an action plan. Vice Chair Cowan added that it is a plan to start gathering information.

At 8:23 PM Mr. Glenn Trindade made a motion to adjourn the Select Board Meeting; Mr. Frank Rossi seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-0.

The Finance Committee continued with its meeting agenda.

2.0 Discussion of Debt Schedule and Annual Town Meeting Calendar Review

The committee reviewed the following information: (1) Town of Medway Debt Service – FY24; and (2) FY24 Budget and 2023 Annual Town Meeting Calendar.

Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director.

Mr. Boynton provided a quick update on FY24, noting that things are in something of a holding pattern as the Town is still waiting for the state aid numbers. The Governor has until March 1 to submit her recommendations. Mr. Boynton cautioned that, while the Town will receive some aid, it may not be equal to the same amounts as previously received. He proposes to “close the budget gap” with revenue from cherry sheet projections which is hopefully offset with new revenue. Health insurance premiums are projected at a 3% increase now, and that figure could come down. During the budget process, administration built debt capacity into the budget.

Ms. Pratt reported that municipal debt has an upper limit [cap] per state laws. For the Town of Medway, it is \$140M; the Town is well below that figure. There are two types of debt, non-excluded debt and projected debt. The outstanding debt is currently \$46M. Mr. Boynton added that excluded debt encompasses the projects that the residents voted on.

Responding to a question from Vice Chair Cowan relative to Tri-County and whether those costs are included in either of these categories, Mr. Boynton stated that they are not. The Town instead receives an assessment for associated costs based on the number of students attending.

Ms. Pratt reported that the Town is currently making payments on the non-excluded debt. Directing attention to page 2 of the handout to the Years column relative to Authorized Debt, the Town has not yet borrowed money on that. Discussion followed.

3.0 Miscellaneous:

Chairman's Report – Due to the absence of the Chair, his report will be postponed.

Clerk's Report -- Ms. Hillery reported that there was an invoice of \$223.00 for advertising the Fall Town Meeting public hearing, paid out of the Finance Committee budget. The Finance Committee Reserve Fund is intact at \$100,000 with no disbursements thus far.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Segarra reported that she and Mr. Cowan met with the School Budget Committee. There are discussions between the committee and the Select Board on how to present this information to the general public.

4.0 Other Business

a. Review /Approval of meeting minutes

The committee reviewed the following information: Draft meeting minutes from January 11, 2023.

Mr. Carbone made a motion to approve the January 11, 2023 minutes, as amended; Ms. Hillery seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 5-0-1 (O'Neill, abstain).

b. Determine other meeting dates in March

The Finance Committee typically holds additional meetings in March in order to have sufficient time to meet with department heads, review the warrant, hold public hearing and other things. These dates are often selected on the ability to secure a quorum of members able to attend. Ms. Galliardt will send out a note with proposed meeting dates to poll members on their availability.

5. Upcoming Meetings

As just discussed, the Finance Committee will be meeting on two additional dates in March: March 22 and March 29. The public hearing will be held on April 12 which allows time to get the Warrant submitted to the publisher and to be posted in accordance with Town Bylaws. April 12 is also the date of the regular April meeting; Annual Town Meeting is on May 8.

6.0 Adjourn

At 9:09 PM Ms. Segarra made a motion to adjourn; Mr. O'Neill seconded. No discussion. VOTE: 6-0-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeanette Galliardt
Night Board Secretary*