

Finance Committee  
Minutes  
Zoom Number 820 0838 8066

2023 SEP 28 AM 9:20

Date: June 22, 2023

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Present: Wells, O'Connor, Kuphal, O'Connell, Pratt, Cooper

Absent: Cooney

Meeting called to order at 6:42 p.m.

Motioned by Wells, seconded by Cooper to accept the minutes of May 2, 2023 as written.  
Unanimous.

Jennifer Barrett, Finance Director, was present at the meeting.

Jen O'Connell: We have a bill from Gatehouse Media in the amount of \$20.10. This is for the posting in the paper for the public hearing.

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Wells to authorize payment of \$20.10 to Gatehouse Media, for the posting of the Public Hearing, from the Finance Committee Expenses account.  
Unanimous.

#### Re-Organization

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Wells to nominate Jennifer O'Connell for Chairman. There were no other nominations. Vote: Unanimous.

Motioned by O'Connor, seconded by O'Connell to nominate Charles Cooper for Vice-Chairman. There were no other nominations. Vote: Unanimous.

Motioned by O'Connor, seconded by O'Connell to nominate Kevin Kuphal for Clerk. There were no other nominations. Vote: Unanimous.

Jennifer Barrett: We have some Reserve Fund Transfers and some 33b transfers that need to be voted on this evening.

William Pratt: I took a quick look through these this evening and it looks like there is a theme that there are decisions being made that have budget impact when there is insufficient budget to carry out the decision and that you are looking at the Reserve Fund to correct these decisions.

Jen O'Connell: I have typically asked departments that come to us early in the season, to hold off putting their transfers through to us until the end of the budget and to see if they can get through with what they have.

## Reserve Fund Transfers

\$3,700.00 MOB Hourly

Jennifer Barrett: We discussed this last fall about changing the custodian from part time to full time to cover extra hours at the MOB, ASA Waters and other buildings. The ASA Waters Task Force approved \$5,000 to help achieve this. This position is full time in the FY24 Budget.

William Pratt: Did someone already know that this budget was going to have a shortfall?

Jennifer Barrett: We knew that it was going to be potentially short. We had originally asked the Task Force for \$10,000 and they came back with \$5,000.

William Pratt: If they only put in \$5,000, instead of the \$10,000, then did we track the hours to keep within that amount?

Jennifer Barrett: We do track them on the computer. They need to clock in and out at each location. Once they clock in, a pin shows up letting us know where he is located.

Judith O'Connor: Where does the Task Force get their money from?

Jennifer Barrett: They get it from the Revolving Fund.

Charles Cooper: We did take a vote on this in the fall and the approval did not pass. If we approve this transfer, then we are contradicting what we voted for.

Jen O'Connell: If we say no, then it will go on the Warrant next year and it will be voted on at Town Meeting to pay a prior year bill.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Pratt to transfer \$3,700 from the Reserve Fund to Account 001-192-5115-000000, MOB Hourly. All members were opposed. Motion is defeated.

Electrical Inspector/Assistant Electrical Inspector \$12,400

William Pratt: I can expect that the increase is due to added inspections. I don't understand how we are that far off on our figures. Why aren't they paid through the inspection fee?

Jennifer Barrett: The fees are sitting in the General Fund. Starting July 1, 2023, the money will be coming out of the Revolving Fund. This is to pay them for the inspections for the rest of the Fiscal Year. We calculated the budget based on the past few fiscal years.

• Russell Wells: So, this situation will end with this fiscal year?

Jennifer Barrett: Yes, that is correct.

Jen O'Connell: They were being paid a salary through the Town. Will this salary continue?

Jennifer Barrett: They are part time. They are paid for each inspection they go on.

Russell Wells: Are they paid each time they have to go out to re-inspect also?

Jennifer Barrett: I believe so. It depends on the inspection.

Jen O'Connell: I see an opportunity for abusing this type of payment.

Jennifer Barrett: All fee schedules will be looked at in the fall to make sure that we are in line. We are taking in more money from the inspections than what we are paying out. This will be looked at closely.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Pratt to transfer \$12,400 from the Reserve Fund to Account Number 001-243-5112-000000 and 001-243-5116-000000. Unanimous.

Gas/Plumbing Inspector/Assistant Gas/Plumbing Inspector \$15,050

Jen O'Connell: This is the same as the Electrical Inspectors and the Assistant Building Inspector.

William Pratt: Does every unit in a multi-unit inspected or is it one inspection for the entire building?

Russell Wells: Every unit would have to be inspected.

William Pratt: I can see where all these inspections come in, if it is for each individual unit.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Pratt to transfer \$15,050 from the Reserve Fund to Account Numbers 01-243-5112-000000, and 01-243-5116-000000. Unanimous.

Assistant Building Inspector-\$21,000

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Pratt to transfer \$21,000 from the Reserve Fund to account number 001-241-5116-000000. Unanimous.

### **33B Transfers**

Snow and Ice-\$4,205.87

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Wells to recommend that \$4,205.87 be transferred from account number 001-423-5130-000000 Snow and Ice Overtime to account number 001-423-5400-000000 Snow and Ice Supplies. Unanimous.

Board of Health-\$16,100

Jen O'Connell: I have had issues with this position from the beginning. I thought that this role was not going to start until July 1, 2023.

Judith O'Connor: The Town Manager said that he was going to use OPIOID money to fund her position. She was paid for 19 hours a week through a grant through the City of Worcester. She was hired by the Town. Inspections haven't changed. We used to pay a person per inspection in the past.

Jennifer Barrett: She does more than the inspections. She has other duties.

Judith O'Connor: My concern is that the taxes are going up. We may, at some point, have to ask the Town Manager to reduce staff. I have been approached by many of the citizens of the Town about the fact that the taxes continue to go up and that they are finding it hard to keep up. We have to really think things through for the next budget.

Russell Wells: We also do a lot of training and seminars through this person.

Jen O'Connell: We need to be more careful about hiring part way through a fiscal year.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Wells to transfer \$16,100 from account number 001-510-5300-000000 Board of Health Professional to account number 001-510-5112-000000. Unanimous.

Judith O'Connor: What is the balance in the OPIOID account?

Jennifer Barrett: Within the next 5-10 years, it will be about \$500,000. This is money taken in from OPIOD settlements.

Street Lights-\$30,000

Jen O'Connell: I know that we have taken on many new street lights over the past few years. Every time we accept a road, we have the responsibility of the lights on that road.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Wells to transfer \$17,000 from account number 001-151-5300-000000 Legal Services to account number 001-424-5200-000000 Street Lighting and to transfer from account number 001-151-5300-000000 Legal Services to account number 001-424-5300-000000 Lighting Professional Services. Unanimous.

Judith O'Connor: I would like to ask a question. This has nothing to do with any of the transfers that we made this evening. I would like to know what Sandie makes per hour.

Jennifer Barrett: Right now she is making \$21.43 per hour. Her rate will go up to \$21.85 on July 1st.

Judith O'Connor: What do the other secretaries get?

Jennifer Barrett: The other committees are supported by their staff. She is in her own category.

Judith O'Connor: At what rate are the other staff being paid?

Jennifer Barrett: They are being paid at union rate. This would be between \$21.89-\$25.39.

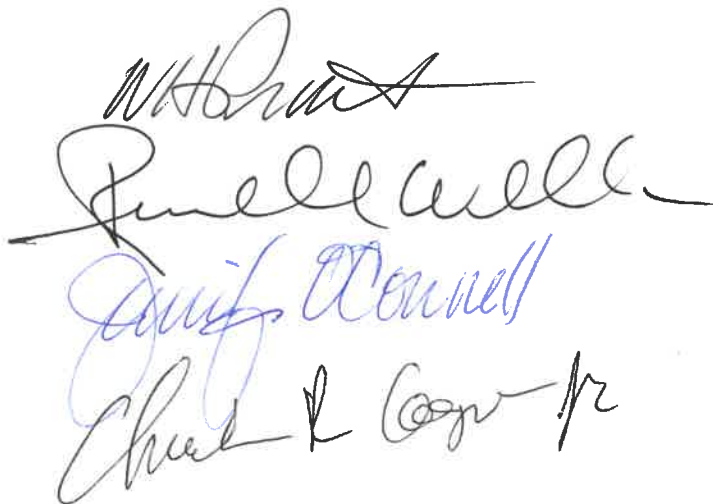
Judith O'Connor: I would like to see her get more money for the work that she does.

Jen O'Connell: We can table this until our next meeting.

Judith O'Connor: She is doing the meetings plus getting us the minutes and doing work from home. She has sent us emails updating us on what is going on. I think she should make more money.

Jen O'Connell: We will discuss this at our next meeting.

Motioned by O'Connell, seconded by Pratt to adjourn at 8:08 p.m. Unanimous



The block contains four handwritten signatures. From top to bottom: a signature in black ink that appears to be 'W. H. Pratt'; a signature in black ink that appears to be 'Jennifer Barrett'; a signature in blue ink that appears to be 'Jen O'Connell'; and a signature in black ink that appears to be 'Judith O'Connor'.