



# Town of Georgetown

# MINUTES

Committee: Finance and Advisory Committee

Date: March 16, 2022

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: Town Hall Second Floor Meeting Room

Members & Staff present: Ed Dobie (Chair), Steve Epstein (Vice Chair), Alicia Raspa (Clerk), Michael Kelley, Daryle LaMonica, Orlando Pacheco (Town Administrator), Mary McMenemy (Town Accountant) Gary Fowler (Selectman), Kerri McManus (Town Clerk), Police Chief Donald Cudmore, Acting Fire Chief Chuck Savage, Deputy Fire Chief Matt McKay, Brian Coolidge (Fire Dept. Administrator). Quorum obtained.

Members not present: Nichole Coscia, Dave Harris

The meeting was called to order at: 7:00pm

**Motion to approve minutes from the March 9, 2022 meeting was made by Daryle LaMonica,** Second Steven Epstein.  
All in favor: Steven Epstein, Alicia Raspa, Daryle LaMonica, Ed Dobie, Michael Kelley.

## MEETING MOTIONS / ACTIONS AND SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS:

### **OLD BUSINESS**

- The projected budget deficit decreased to \$1,126,064 due to the updated debt service numbers and includes an expected \$500,000 from the host agreement with Mission based on historical trends.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **FY 2023 Budget Discussions**

- Town Clerk with Kerri McManus
  - Town meeting expenses are level funded
  - Salaries increased 2%
  - In-state travel increased slightly to cover 3 conferences for the clerk and assistant clerk.
  - Elections will increase in FY 2023 due to the state primaries, gubernatorial race, midterm elections.
- Fire Department with Acting Chief Chuck Savage, Deputy Chief Matt McKay, and Administrator Brian Coolidge
  - Discussion of the challenges of staffing the department 24/7.
  - There are 4 full time employees and 27 part-time employees. A study completed previously noted that the department should ideally have 8 full-time employees. National Fire Protection Association standards are 3 minimum on an engine so there are added costs to cover shifts with overtime for full-time employees and part-time employees are expensive to train and have high turnover.
  - Mr. LaMonica inquired about current overtime expenses for FY 2022, approximately \$50,000.
  - The department would like to add incentives for per diem employees and increase the full-time employees to 8 by adding 2 in FY 2023 and 2 more in a future year.
  - Mr. Epstein inquired about the number of calls last year, which were 1200.

- Mr. Dobie inquired about the assumptions for the first phase of the staffing projection, which includes converting 80 existing part-time hours per week to full-time which would cost an additional \$30k due to savings of \$50k in existing overtime and per-diem costs.
- Discussion of various topics ensued, including the possibility of adding one full-time firefighter for FY 2023, benefits costs, insurance effects, legal ramifications of fewer than 3 people on an engine, collaboration with the police department, and the possibility of grants to cover expenses in the future.
- Discussion of turnout gear, which is due to be replaced in 2026 (after 10 years) and the department is looking to begin replacing gear earlier in order to avoid all the costs hitting at once. Mr. Dobie inquired about whether we would essentially lose years of life on the existing equipment.
- Discussion of salaries, which increased 2% and includes an additional \$30k to convert 2 full-time positions. There is an additional \$14k budgeted for per diem incentives and an additional \$16k for long term per diem employees.
- Discussion of the Fire Chief salary which is projected to be filled by January 1, 2023.
- Discussion about the ambulance enterprise fund, which has a balance of \$353k. Discussion of collections from insurance companies and residents. Chief Cudmore noted that ambulance costs have additional costs for the police department as ambulance calls require additional training for 911 operators. Chief Cudmore applies for a state grant every year in the amount of \$75k.
- Police department with Chief Donald Cudmore
  - Discussion of staffing. COVID has decimated department as officers are taking early retirement and the town has lost dispatchers. Police reform bills have increased training costs.
  - Discussion of the police fleet, which has been made more fuel efficient. The lease is for 2 cars, which are purchased at the end and sold, the proceeds of which are added to the general fund.
  - The department is requesting 2 more full-time officers, for a total of 15. The standard for a town our size is 18. Overtime costs would be reduced, in addition to retention, recruitment, and training.
  - Discussion of the communications budget, which includes a contractual raise for the dispatch supervisor.
  - Mr. Epstein inquired about the public safety building utilities, which are included in the select board's budget.
  - Discussion of the sick bank, which has not been fully funded and may need used for family leave in the future.

**Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting:**

- Orlando Pacheco requested agenda item for the next meeting to authorize deficit spending for the highway department for the purpose of snow removal.
- Ed Dobie will contact David Surface about the two members who have not regularly attended meetings.

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND OTHER EXHIBITS USED AT MEETING:**

- DRAFT FY 2023 Budget (via ClearGov)
- Fire Department Staffing Projection
- Police Department sample schedule

Documents and Other Exhibits used at meeting will be available for review at: Town Accountant's Office  
(Office)

Meeting was adjourned at: 9:08 pm ***Motion to adjourn made by Daryle LaMonica.*** Second: Michael Kelley. All in favor: Ed Dobie, Steven Epstein, Alicia Raspa, Michael Kelley, Daryle LaMonica

**NEXT MEETING:**

Date: March 23, 2022  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Town Hall, Second Floor Meeting Room

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

Minutes approved by Committee on: March 30, 2022  
(Date)