

**Budget & Finance Standing Committee**  
**Thursday, September 9, 2021 – 5:30 p.m.**  
**REMOTE MEETING**  
**-Minutes-**

**Present:** Vice Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor John McCarthy; Councilor Steve LeBlanc

**Absent:** Chair, Councilor Melissa Cox

**Also Present:** Auditor, Kenny Costa; CFO, John Dunn; Fire Chief, Eric Smith; Council on Aging Director, Elise Sinagra; Economic Development Director, Sal DiStefano; Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center Director, Carol Mondello; Clerk of Committees, Sherry Karvelas

This meeting was conducted remotely through ZOOM. All votes were by ROLL CALL.

**Meeting called to order at 5:31 p.m.**

**Councilor Memhard** announced, “Consistent with chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, this meeting will be conducted by remote participation. The public may not physically attend this meeting but every effort will be made to allow the public to view and listen to the meeting in real-time and participate when necessary. If you are calling in on a phone, you can press Star 9 to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or a device, there is a raised hand button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options to be recognized to speak.”

*1. Memorandum from CFO and Supplemental Appropriation-Budgetary Request (#2022-SA-4) in the amount of \$120,000*

**Summary of Discussion:** CFO, John Dunn stated this was an appropriation within the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund for \$120,000 for the purchase of two vehicles for use within the Fire Department. Fire Chief, Eric Smith stated the Fire Department needed to replace two vehicles including a 2004 pickup truck and a 2009 reserve administrative vehicle, which also acted as the backup command vehicle. He stated both vehicles were at end-of-life and not worth the investment to fix and further explained that the life of the administrative cars were approximately ten years, with about fifteen years for the utility pickups, and added that both vehicles had met and exceeded their life expectancy.

**Councilor McCarthy** asked the CFO why the funds being appropriated were coming out of a stabilization fund versus budgeting through the Fire Department’s budget. The CFO explained the City had three main stabilization funds. He stated if the asset purchased had an asset life of greater than 7-½ years, then the purchase would be charged to the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund. If the asset life was less than 7-½ years, he explained, then the purchase would try to be inserted within the operating budget. By example, he explained that a police vehicle had an average life of 3 years and those vehicles were purchased within the operating budget of the Police Department.

**Councilor Memhard** asked if purchases such as these were eligible for grants or other state or federal assistance versus paying for these types of purchases directly through the City’s budget. The Fire Chief explained that the City had previously been successful receiving an award for greater than \$250,000 for replacement of a rescue vehicle approximately two years ago. He further stated that service vehicles, pickup trucks and command vehicles were not on the list currently of replaceable vehicles through grants and awards. He stated the City’s overall fleet age of fire vehicles was much younger than other cities and towns so it essentially took the City out of the running to receive federal

awards. The **Fire Chief** stated he was currently looking at a grant for replacement of the City's aged forestry vehicle. He added that he had been in contact with the City's FEMA representative who stated the vehicle did have a high likelihood of being replaced through a grant or an award.

**Councilor Memhard** inquired about the future of the vehicles being replaced. The **Fire Chief** stated both the vehicles would be traded in. The **CFO** added if the vehicles did not get traded in, then the vehicles could be sold as-is through the Purchasing Department. **Councilor McCarthy** inquired about the status of a grant for pumpers that had been previously applied for this past February. The **Fire Chief** explained the City did get an award for equipment, but not for the pumpers, for approximately \$102,000 which would be used for the purchase of LUCAS Compression Devices, as well as escape ropes that needed to be replaced.

The **Fire Chief** wished to inform the Committee that the Fire Department had received over \$2.5 million in federal and state grants and awards and added that EMS revenue had stabilized and leveled-out after the decrease from COVID.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Supplemental Appropriation 2022-SA-4 in the amount of \$120,000 (One Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars) from the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund – Undesignated Fund Balance, Account #7600-359000 to the Capital Projects Stabilization Fund - Fire Vehicles, Account #760030-585001 to fund the cost of a command vehicle, a departmental pickup truck and including costs incidental or related thereto.

2. *Memorandum from CFO re: Loan Authorization Request in the amount of \$410,000 for a Harbormaster Patrol Boat (Cont. to 9/23/21)*

**Summary of Discussion:** Councilor McCarthy suggested, per the ordinance, that this matter be brought before the Capital Improvements Advisory Board. He suggested convening a meeting before this was brought back before B&F. He further stated that this matter had not gone before the Waterways Board subcommittee, in which the next meeting was not until October. He also asked if the Administration could look into the Port Security Grant to help fund this purchase. Councilor Memhard agreed. The CFO stated he would bring this matter up to the Administration.

This matter has been continued until September 23, 2021.

3. *Memorandum from Economic Development Director requesting acceptance of Gloucester's Essex National Heritage Commission Grant for the Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center in the amount of \$2,500*

**Summary of Discussion:** The Economic Development Director, Sal DiStefano stated the City had received a grant from the Essex National Heritage Commission for \$2,500 for the Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center. Stage Fort Park Welcoming Center Director, Carol Mondello stated the grantor requested that the funds be used for printing materials and explained that last year the grant had been used to reprint the popular lighthouse-shaped brochures, along with new maps to be placed on the walls of the Welcoming Center. Ms. Mondello stated last month the Welcoming Center had 2,100 visitors come through, which was approximately 800 less visitors for the same period in 2019; she added she was satisfied with that number as there had not been any international visitors this year. She stated there were 1,950 visitors in July. Ms. Mondello stated she had named this summer the "Summer of Meandering".

Members of the B&F Committee thanked Ms. Mondello for her dedication to the City.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c.44, §53A, a federal grant from the National Park Service passed through the Essex National Heritage Commission, a 2021 Essex Heritage Visitor Center Grant for a total of \$2,500 for the purpose of supporting activities of the City's Visitor Welcome Center at Stage Fort Park. The grant period is from July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. There is no local match for this grant.

4. *Memorandum from Director of Elder Services requesting acceptance of donations in the amount of \$361*

**Summary of Discussion:** Council on Aging Director, Elise Sinagra stated she had been working with the Auditor to set up a donations account as the friends support organization had been experiencing mission creep and had expressed a desire to reign back on the types of offerings they had been funding. She stated she realized that another mechanism was needed to fund the items that the seniors were used to receiving and also added that recently the Council on Aging Board voted to keep the senior center a fee-free environment. In working with the Auditor, she stated he suggested this account be modeled after the way the Veterans Services donations were handled. Ms. Sinagra further explained these donations would in part fund exercise instruction, special entertainment, holiday parties and supplies for the art room and other incidentals.

Members of the B&F Committee thanked Ms. Sinagra for her work and dedication as Director of the Council on Aging.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget & Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to accept various cash donations under MGL c.44, §53A, to support the Council on Aging/Rose Baker Senior Center in the amount of \$361 from the following members and business partners within our community:

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Grace V. Simpson & Vincie Woodhams     | \$20 |
| Norma C. Silva                         | \$20 |
| Marilynn Grant                         | \$10 |
| Frederick A. Cowan                     | \$50 |
| Valerie Hanson Gilman & Paul E. Gilman | \$50 |
| Andrea M. Burnham                      | \$30 |
| Jolene A. Erickson & Emily G. Erickson | \$25 |
| Mary J. Contri                         | \$15 |
| Christopher Clark                      | \$15 |
| Doris F. Cole                          | \$10 |
| Marilyn Grant                          | \$20 |
| Cash (various donors)                  | \$96 |

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Total: \$361

5. *Review of Debt Service by CFO*

**Summary of Discussion:** This matter was continued to a future meeting.

6. *Memorandum from City Auditor regarding accounts having expenditures which exceed their authorization & Auditor's Report and other related business*

**Summary of Discussion:** There were no matters under this heading for the Committee's consideration.

**MOTION:** On a motion by Councilor McCarthy, seconded by Councilor Memhard, the Budget and Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Sherry Karvelas, Clerk of Committees

**Documents submitted at the meeting:** None.

**Meeting Recording:** <http://gloucester-ma.gov/1097/Past-Remote-Public-Meetings>