

Budget & Finance Standing Committee
Thursday, November 19, 2020 – 5:30 p.m.
REMOTE MEETING
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Melissa Cox; Vice Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard; Councilor John McCarthy; Council President, Steve LeBlanc; Councilor James O’Hara

Also Present: Acting CAO, Vanessa Krawczyk; City Clerk, Joanne M. Senos; Police Chief, Ed Conley; Auditor, Kenny Costa; Community Development Director, Jill Cahill; CFO, John Dunn

Absent: None.

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

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

Chairperson Cox announced, “This meeting is recorded by video and audio in accordance with state open meeting law. Consistent with the Governor’s orders, suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law and banning gatherings of more than 10 people, 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. Persons who wish to do so are invited to view the meeting and you have the information that was on the posting. If you are calling in on a phone, you can press *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 these options to be recognized to speak.”

The following items were taken out of order:

6. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Community Development Director requesting acceptance of \$170,000 from the MA Seaport Economic Council

Summary of Discussion: Community Development Director Jill Cahill explained that this opportunity was presented by Seaport Economic Council (SEC) Fishing Partnership Support Services, who contacted the City regarding this grant application, and asked Gloucester to be the municipal partner. While this was a statewide project, as the oldest fishing port, Gloucester was excited to be the lead and city sponsor on this. She explained that the grant match was coming from a federal grant that the SEC applied for. She mentioned that she would have Heidi Bruggink Sulman from SEC Fishing Partnership Support Services talk about the actual application and the project. The match would not run through the City at all, instead, it would be administered by the SEC, and Gloucester would administer the SEC grant. Al Cottone, Executive Director of the Gloucester Fisheries Commission would be working closely with the SEC on this grant. She noted that some City administrative fees had been recaptured through the grant as well. She stated that she would be happy to answer any questions.

Ms. Bruggink Sulman shared that the SEC Fishing Partnership Support Services expressed excitement to partner with the City of Gloucester on this project. She explained that this project was called the 21st Century Fishing Resiliency Project, and the goal was to develop a healthy, safe, and economically-resilient fishing workforce. She stated that fishing is a vital part of the local and state economy, but that the industry really needs some support to reach its full potential. Fisherman are at center of that, and need support because it is a really hard job with a high risk of injury or death (due to job hazards, suicide, or opioid overdose). They have little job security, few benefits (no health insurance, or paid

sick or vacation leave), variable and unpredictable incomes, and an aging fleet with few new entrants. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated these challenges for everyone, including fishermen. Seafood demand drastically declined along with catch prices, and a lot of fisherman did not even fish this year.

This plan is being developed to provide them some relief. Fishing Partnership Support Services and the City of Gloucester will develop and test a multi-year plan to explore the collective advantages of fishing communities in the state, realize their full potential, grow jobs, and maximize the maritime economy. About 5 years ago, the fishing community came together for some collaborative research during a 3-day seminar where people shared what they thought really needed to happen to create this vision and make it a reality. For decades, fisherman have asked to have healthy fishing families, they need full access to appropriate care and safe operations.

A culture change would be necessary among fishermen and regulators so the risk of injury and death would be minimized in this inherently dangerous profession, economic security would enable to make enough profit to live a dignified life as stewards of their own economic future. Professional development would be provided to recruit, train, and support the next generation of fishermen through apprenticeship and other programs. Civic engagement would also be part of it, so fishermen would be encouraged to engage in the civic life of their communities, and enabled to speak collectively on issues that really matter.

Adaptive science and management would be utilized to ensure that the fisheries were as dynamic as the Ecosystem, working waters and coastlines would protect access to infrastructure and seascapes, and public relations would help people understand how important fishermen are, and help maximize appreciation for what they do (which would hopefully result in consumers being willing to pay more for the quality seafood that was harvested). Innovation and effective enforcement would allow fair fisheries regulations to be enacted. Fishing Partnership Support Services would take the lead in their primary areas (health, safety, and economic security), and there are a lot of groups and advocates who continue to do amazing work for the fishing industry that the organization would partner with when appropriate.

The project overview was that the basic research of new quantitative and qualitative data would be combined. It would start with an email survey of at least 1,000 Massachusetts members. The survey would be shaped by Ms. Bruggink Sulman, as well as consultation provided by fishing industry leaders and the City administration. Qualitative data would include focus groups that spoke to stakeholders, fishermen, and fishing industry leaders. Existing public data would be examined to identify assets and best practices, and would also support arguments for this plan. She explained that this project was the start of this plan, and then in the next couple of years, the plan will be implemented, and findings would be translated into products that result in a feasibility study that can be used to grow the economy in the commercial fishing industry and coastal communities. She also expressed willingness to answer any questions regarding the project.

Councilor Memhard said the project sounded great. **Councilor McCarthy** stated that he had read the information submitted in the packet, and that it sounded good. **Chairperson Cox** stated that it sounded very interesting, and the committee looked forward to providing support in any way possible.

It was decided that since it was the week of Thanksgiving, Ms. Bruggink Sulman would not be asked to appear at the City Council meeting on **November 24, 2020**. **Chairperson Cox** expressed appreciation for Ms. Bruggink Sulman's attendance at tonight's meeting. She noted that the packet was extremely thorough. She shared that once the minutes for this meeting were released, she would request that the Councilors contact her as soon as possible if they had any questions so that they could be answered prior to the meeting. **Ms. Cahill** would be present at the meeting, and project updates would routinely be provided by the Fisheries Commission to keep everyone informed of developments that occurred.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, 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 state grant from the MA Seaport Economic Council (SEC) in the amount of \$170,000. The purpose of this grant is to create a plan to develop a healthy, safe, and economically resilient fishing workforce. The grant period is from October 2, 2020 through June 30, 2022. There is a 20% match for this grant.

5. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Community Development Director requesting acceptance of \$240,000 from the MA Seaport Economic Council

Ms. Cahill stated that although it had already been approved and awarded in February 2020 to fund the City's harbor plan, this grant acceptance had been delayed due to the pandemic. The local match was comprised of a \$15,000 award from the Gloucester Economic Development and Industrial Corporation and \$45,000 from the City of Gloucester. It had previously been submitted to this committee as a supplemental appropriation prior to the grant application being submitted, since the SEC preferred to have the local match secured before their portion of the money was awarded.

The last harbor plan was created in 2014. Another plan is not required until 2030, however, since there had been so many changes in the last year, and successes created by changes in the last plan that it seemed like timely moment, probably even more so in light of the pandemic. She explained that so many developments have occurred since the application had been submitted, such as Gloucester being chosen by MA Office of Coastal Zone Management (CZM) as one of the ports to examine, an infrastructure study will be conducted that would complement the infrastructure included in the City harbor plan proposal, since it was one of the largest challenges to the harbor right now, and then the fishing partnership grant was proposed. The committee appointees are listed in the most recent Mayor's Report.

The committee would be a scope of services being developed, and then a consultant will be contacted.

Ms. Cahill stated that the project was ready to progress now that the grant had been accepted. She thanked **Mayor Romeo Theken** for her leadership, and for having participated in committee appointee selection. She said that she believed it was a great, diverse committee, and she would be happy to answer any questions.

Councilor Memhard expressed being glad that the project was being moved forward, since it was an important, necessary process to keep up with harborfront developments.

Ms. Cahill shared that Planning Director Gregg Cademartori was the assigned project leader. He was unable to attend tonight's meeting because he was a current panelist in the Planning Board meeting. She shared that this was the first harbor plan she had been involved with.

Councilor McCarthy expressed happiness that the project had come to fruition and was progressing. He looked forward to working with **Ms. Cahill** on it.

Ms. Cahill informed the meeting attendees that the committee would be comprised of herself, Mr. Cademartori, Economic Development Director Sal DiStefano, Mr. Cottone, Harbormaster T.J. Ciarametaro, as well as the Department of Public Works Director Mike Hale (since some City parcels were involved), Councilor McCarthy, Fishing Commission Representative Mark Green, Waterways Representative Tony Gross, EDIC Representative Tom Bell, harbor business owners Vito Giacalone and

Tessa Brown, Katie Cole from UMASS Amherst (who is involved with resiliency), and Planning Board Member Rick Noonan.

Mayor Romeo Theken said she had recommended Brenda Malloy, however she had respectfully declined. She had encouraged Executive Director of the Gloucester Fisherman's Wives Association, Angela Sanfilippo, to attend the meetings, along with other fishing industry representatives. She wanted to ensure that there was as much diversity represented in the committee as possible, and that it included education. The public was encouraged to attend as well.

Ms. Cahill reiterated that **Mayor Romeo Theken** had made it very clear that she wanted everyone on those particular boards and commissions, and also the public, to feel engaged and involved. All the meetings will be public at her request.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, 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 state grant from the MA Seaport Economic Council (SEC) in the amount of \$240,000. The purpose of this grant is to support the City's next generation of the Harbor/Designated Port Area (DPA) Master Plan. The grant period is through June 30, 2022. There is a 20% local match for this grant.

Summary of Discussion: **Ms. Cahill** thanked the Councilors and **Mayor Romeo Theken** for their support.

1. Memorandum from Principal Assessor re: FY21 Tax Classification (Cont. from 11/5/2020)

This matter has been continued until **December 3, 2020**.

2. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Public Health Director requesting acceptance of an award from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council for 2020 flu season support, in the amount of \$3,090.10

Public Health Director Karin Carroll informed the meeting attendees that she was before the committee this evening requesting that approval be granted for a MAPC grant that had been received for for flu vaccination clinics this fall. She explained that there were 3 nurses who had worked with the department to provide a very successful door-to-door flu vaccination for the first time in senior housing units. The nurses felt that the process was very efficient since people felt more relaxed, and the nurses were able to navigate safely. School clinics were also conducted as well to meet the new MA requirement for flu vaccinations.

3. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from the Police Chief requesting acceptance of an FY21 State 911 Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant in the amount of \$45,149.79

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, 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 state grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety And Security, State 911 Department, a FY21 State 911 Department Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant Program for \$45,149.79. The grant period is from October 27, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and there is no local match for this grant.

Summary of Discussion: Police Chief Ed Conley stated that it was an annual grant provided by the state based on a predesignated formula of city population. It is utilized to increase emergency medical dispatch trainings, and to conduct quality assurance on all calls.

Councilor Cox expressed gratitude that the state provided this annual grant.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, 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 state grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety And Security, State 911 Department, a FY21 State 911 Department Emergency Medical Dispatch Grant Program for \$45,149.79. The grant period is from October 27, 2020 through June 30, 2021 and there is no local match for this grant.

Summary of Discussion: Chairperson Cox announced that Councilor O’Hara had joined the meeting at 5:58 p.m.

4. Memorandum from Police Chief requesting acceptance of \$16,000 from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism

Summary of Discussion: Police Chief Ed Conley shared that this was a great opportunity here for Gloucester to do something that only a few other police departments, such as Walpole and Sharon, are doing. The Doug Flutie Foundation was working with another organization that trained service dogs. The dog would not be a K-9 police dog, but rather a community resource dog, so they would have no police responsibilities. Instead it would be a dog trained to work with and be assigned to School Resource Officer Sutera at O’Malley School as part of the Kops N’Kids Program to develop relationships with students, break down barriers between police officers and children, and de-escolate situations mainly in schools, but in other community situations as well. For example, the dog would assist with a child who experienced an anxiety attack or other type of emotional disturbance.

The dog named Ace is a fully-trained one-year-old English Golden retriever. The Flutie Foundation would provide \$16,000 up front, and \$8,000 needs to be repaid by August 2021. A number of funding sources have already stepped forward to do cover that expense, and there is also a line item in the police department budget that could cover it as well.

Superintendent Ben Lummis and all school principals had expressed excitement and support of the project.

Chief Conley discussed with Councilor Cox the fact that Mako was currently the only K-9 dog currently on the force. Police-related canines usually have a budgetary line item for food and care. This will not be required for Ace since commitments for food and care from local businesses and a veterinarian to provide food for the life of the dog have already been made, and pet health insurance will also be provided by a donor. He encouraged anyone interested to donate to the Gloucester Fund. The Flutie Foundation also allowed donors to specifically donate to cover the cost of the \$8,000 for ACE as well, so the total amount owed would be reduced.

He explained that there would be a pending authorization. A press release and media events would be held next week. Ace should be delivered to the police department tomorrow. Councilor Cox requested that if possible, Officer Sutera and Ace attend the City Council meeting on November 24th.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Cox, seconded by Councilor Memhard, 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 ½, a gift of tangible goods with an

estimated value of \$16,000 from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism to purchase a trained comfort/support dog through Golden Opportunities for Independence (GOFI).

Councilor McCarthy thanked **Police Chief Conley** and his officers for their Community Impact Unit work. **Chief Conley** specifically recognized Jeremiah Nicaastro Lieutenant and Officer Mike Scola.

Councilor O'Hara acknowledged the unbelievable job that Officer Sutera does at O'Maley, so it would be even better to have a canine to diffuse situations, and thanked Chief Conley for making that possible.

Chairperson Cox thanked the entire team involved.

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

Summary of Discussion: **Councilor Cox** referred to the City Auditor's report that had been emailed to the Councilors, and noted that there were a lot of overages.

Auditor Kenny Costa explained that about 25 overdrawn accounts were involved. He had wanted to send the committee the report at least one more time before the calendar year ended, and stated that would be done on a more regular basis next year. Some were due to retirements, and some others were due to the pandemic. He explained that those expenses would be transferred over to the COVID grant. The rest would need to be addressed. He believed some accounts here listed were due to encumbrances that he was working with the payroll department to correct.

Councilor McCarthy asked for clarification on a couple of the accounts. **Mr. Costa** explained that there was a promotion in the Legal Department from part-time to full-time. **CFO John Dunn** answered that some funding from Legal Department account would be covered by Human Resources to cover expenses related to current issues that have occurred. He explained that some credits would be coming back to the City. He mentioned that there would probably be an issue with the DPW maintaining the Talbot Rink since there would probably not be a lot of revenue received this year. There would be some free cash available that could be applied to that expense, but the matter may need to be addressed in the coming fiscal and calendar year.

Acting CAO Vanessa Krawczyk gave a community COVID-19 update. She stated that the confirmed cases were still climbing, currently 48 active cases, and more probable ones would follow. The city would be moved into the yellow area on the map. She stated that the City was trying to provide messaging that encouraged people to limit gatherings next week, and provided guidance about college students returning home. She emphasized that social distance needs to be maintained, masks need to be worn.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor McCarthy, the Budget and Finance Committee voted by ROLL CALL 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to adjourn the meeting at 6:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Brianna Komi
Administrative Support
City Clerk's Office

