

Budget & Finance Committee
Thursday, March 19, 2015 – 5:00 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Committee Rm. – City Hall
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Melissa Cox; Vice Chair, Councilor Bill Fonvielle; Councilor Paul McGeary
Absent: None,
Also Present: Kenny Costa; Jim Destino; John Dunn; Assistant Police Chief John McCarthy; Bill Dugan

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. Agenda items were taken out of order.

1. Police Department:

A) Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2015-SBT-36)

Assistant Chief John McCarthy explained that this transfer of \$1,891.05 from Police-Uniform Capital Expenses to Police Uniform Safety Supply/Equipment is due to the fact that a police radio was supposed to be included in the new Animal Control van quote but had been left off in error. The Department now has to purchase a radio for the van from All-Communications to finish outfitting the new Animal Control van. The old van was thought to be gotten rid of, and that the department added another Animal Control Officer and so the need for the second van.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor McGeary, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2015-SBT-36 in the amount of \$1,891.05 from Account #101000.10.211.58720.0000.00.000.00.058, Police-Uniform, Capital Expense, to Account #101000.10.211.55010.0000.00.000.00.054, Police-Uniform, Safety Supplies/Equipment for the purpose of purchasing portable radios for the Police Department.

B) Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2015-SBT-39)

Assistant Chief McCarthy said that funds for this transfer are coming from the Animal Control, Salary/Wages-Permanent Position account because the second Animal Control officer, funded for a full year, wasn't hired until October 2014 and so there are still lag funds available. This will be fully funding the Police-Parking, Sick Incentive Pay account for parking personnel because historically it had been paid from the Personnel budget and so wasn't included in the Police Department's FY15 budget.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor Fonvielle, seconded by Councilor McGeary, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2015-SBT-39 in the amount of \$471.42 from Account #101000.10.292.51100.0000.00.000.00.051, Animal Control, Salary/Wages-Permanent Position, to Account #101000.10.218.51944.0000.00.000.00.051, Police-Parking, Sick Incentive Pay for the purpose of fully funding the Sick Incentive Pay.

2. Purchasing Department:

Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2015-SBT-37)

Jim Destino, Chief Administrative Officer conveyed that the transfer is taking funds from the Purchasing Department's Telephone Services account that has no excess funds and putting it into the Management Information Systems Telephone Services account to pay for the Mayor's cell phone as the IT Department is able to obtain a better rate for the cell phone service.

Mr. Destino said this transfer will cover the cost of the cell phone and service (hardware and minutes) for the rest of the fiscal year. He indicated had Purchasing contracted for the cell phone service, it would have cost more. Just because a service is on the state bid list doesn't always mean it is more cost effective, **John Dunn**, CFO, added. He said as this was a new cell phone contract, the IT Director was able to find a better pricing situation.

Councilor Cox expressed her opinion that a better situation would be to aim for consolidation of leases and purchases of common office goods such as copier toner should be handled out of one department. **Mr. Dunn** said they are headed in that direction but it takes time because of existing office machine leases.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor McGeary seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2015-SBT-37 in the amount of \$1,000 from Account #101000.10.138.5340.0000.00.000.00.052, Purchasing-Telephone Services, to Account #101000.10.155.53410.0000.00.000.00.052, Management Information Systems, Telephone Service in order to purchase cell phone service for the Mayor.

3. *Community Development Department:*

Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2015-SBT-38)

This matter has been withdrawn by the Community Development Director and on the advice of the City Auditor, and therefore the transfer is rendered moot.

4. *Licensing Board:*

Special Budgetary Transfer Request (2015-SBT-40)

Mr. Destino reviewed that the Clerk of the Boards position previously included taking and producing the minutes for the Planning, Licensing Board and Conservation Commission. Now the position has been split into two positions. As a result, the Licensing Board Clerk is now working fewer hours than was originally budgeted. As a result, the funds are being transferred to the Community Development Department's Salary/Wages, Part-Time Position account to fund the stipend paid to the Recording Clerk for the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor Fonvielle, seconded by Councilor McGeary, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2015-SBT-40 in the amount of \$2,400 from Account #101000.10.165.51250.0000.00.000.00.051, Licensing Board, Salary/Wages, Part-time Position, to Account #101000.10.181.51250.0000.00.000.00.051, Community Development, Salary/Wages, Part-Time Position for the purpose of funding the position of Recording Clerk to the Conservation Commission and Planning Board for the remainder of FY15.

5. *Grant Application and Checklist from Council on Aging re: City Council acceptance of a Title III B Older Americans Grant for \$15,156.00*

Lucy Sheehan, Senior Center Director informed the Committee of SeniorCare's awarding a \$15,156 grant to the Council on Aging for the purpose of supplementing the salary for a part-time outreach worker to work out of the Rose Baker Senior Center. There is no match. The Older Americans Act, 50 years old today, provides support of the community service based programs for older people. That contract has been reduced each year, and is currently \$7,090.08. This contract has been extended to FFY2016, she said. The Council on Aging receives \$590.84 a month towards the part-time outreach worker's salary.

Responding to questions by **Councilor Cox**, **Ms. Sheehan** said that the outreach program is supported from three sources -- in part by city, by this grant and from the Friends of the Council on Aging. The outreach coordinator works 30 hours per week, she indicated. If the Older Americans Act funding was greatly reduced, the outreach work's hours would have to be cut, or, **Ms. Sheehan** suggested, the city would have to pick up more of her hours in part because this is such an important support program for the city's older population, she said. She contended that the role of the outreach worker should be full time. She informed the Committee that the Rose Baker Senior Center is open five days a week, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There was a brief discussion about the Center formerly opening on Saturday mornings and Ms. Sheehan advocated this would be a good thing to do again. Councilor Cox suggested that since it hadn't been done in some time, and there was a question as to what it would cost to staff the Center as well as how actively the center would be used during those, that it may be something to work towards in the future. There was also a discussion of the effective date of the provider agreement between **Councilor McGeary** and **Mr. Costa**.

Councilor McGeary acknowledged the 50th anniversary of the Older American's Act and its importance to the city's older population.

MOTION: On motion by Councilor McGeary, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept under M.G.L. c. 44, §53A

a federal grant passed through the Mass. Executive Office of Elder Affairs through SeniorCare, Inc., for a Title III-B Older Americans Act Grant for \$15,156 for FFY2014 and FFY2015. Funds are to be used to supplement the hours and part-time salary for an Outreach Community Education Worker at the Rose Baker Senior Center.

6. *Memorandum from Community Development Director re: off-cycle recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee for Preservation of the Annisquam Woods Project*

William Dugan, Co-Chair of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) conveyed the following information: The CPC recommended and the Council approved in the last round of Community Preservation Act funding a \$50,000 award to the Essex County Greenbelt Association (ECGA) for the purchase of the Annisquam Woods for the preservation and accessibility to open space. The CPC then had received an off-cycle application for funding to further support the Annisquam Woods acquisition and preservation project which is partnered with the city's Conservation Commission (ConCom). This application was reviewed as an off-cycle application due to the goal of the completion project deadline of April 30, 2015 to close on the land purchase. He said the CPC is always happy to work with the ECGA not only for their resources and grant matches but for their stewardship of properties they take control of. There was a need to close a further funding gap of \$50,000, and the CPC has endorsed the additional funding and asked that the Council vote to approve the distribution of CPA funds.

Edward Becker, Executive Director, Essex County Greenbelt Association (ECGA) reviewed for the Committee that this off-cycle application for funding to support the Annisquam Woods acquisition which is about 27 acres being purchased for the public domain. For the duration of his presentation he displayed an aerial map of the property and surrounding area to highlight different aspects of the purchase and ECGA stewardship properties and city land in the immediate area. If successful the ECGA would own the property and manage the property which would be open to the public. A small parking area would be built, and maintain the trail system that is on the property. The city would have an interest in the property because of the CPA funds as a perpetual conservation restriction. He reminded the Committee that this property has an already approved 27 unit development. He explained that with this acquisition, it would retire all the four of the units off Hutchins Court as single family homes.

The property's purchase price is \$800,000 with a closing date of April 30, and **Mr. Becker** expressed the ECGA's gratitude for the city's support of the purchase with the previous round's infusion of \$50,000 and to consider adding another \$50,000 in this off-cycle CPA funding. He said the ECGA has been working in earnest to raise private funds. In conjunction with the city, ECGA applied for a state Land Acquisition for Natural Diversity (LAND) grant for \$280,000 and said to their disappointment that grant didn't come through. Because of the loss of the grant, ECGA had to step up their fundraising effort. To date, ECGA has raised about \$650,000 in private donations and grants which includes infusion the \$50,000 from the city's last round of CPA awards of \$50,000. The total funds in hand including that \$50,000 comes to \$700,000. The off-cycle funding would bring the total in hand to \$750,000, and the ECGA would have a remaining \$50,000 gap which **Mr. Becker** indicated the ECBA was confident an additional gap in funds can be raised, he said. With the commitment of the ECGA board, any remaining funding gap will be from their own funds.

Mr. Becker expressed that the property's acquisition is strategically situated and described its purchase as a great opportunity as a linkage piece adjoining property already under the stewardship of the ECGA that will link to the Norton Tree Farm and further links to city land, ensuring public access and preservation of that swath of North Gloucester.

Responding to a series of questions from **Councilor McGeary**, **Mr. Becker** informed the Committee that the Natti property is further up from Annisquam Woods, around Quarry Street in the same neighborhood and links up in a roundabout way through the other stewarded and city owned parcels. The ECGA is working to create greater access to the Dogtown area, he said. He noted there are existing trails on the Annisquam Woods property, but the ECGA will create new trail linkage and install kiosk which will recognize the city's participation and show the marked trails, along with creating a parking area.

Councilor Cox recalled that she and Councilor McGeary had visited an ECGA property on a site visit had had been impressed with the maintenance of the property and the informative signage marking the trails. She added her approbation of the project as did **Councilor McGeary** who noted this property's purchase fits in with the entire North Gloucester Woods Project, and is part of reserving that space and a good use of CPA funds.

Councilor Fonvielle and **Mr. Becker** discussed the oddly shaped formation of the properties with **Mr. Becker** adding that the ECGA is speaking with other property owners of wooded lots in the area and remain hopeful for future property acquisitions.

Councilor McGeary asked if this off-cycle funding exhausts the current reserves in the Open Space sector of the CPA funds. **Mr. Costa** said there will be remaining about \$400 left and the Council is essentially spending the FY16 allocation of CPA funds. He indicated that the \$400 is what will remain in the CPA's Unrestricted Reserved Funds account. The general amount annually allocated for Open Space CPA funding will be available, he added. **Councilor Fonvielle** asked if fundraising goes better than expected, would the ECGA consider returning CPA funds to the city. **Mr. Becker** said it would be unlikely as the ECBA is stretching as far as they can now to fund this purchase, but would return the CPA funds to whatever level they could should their fundraising exceed the needed funding. He said they expect a gap which the ECGA will have to fund from their own monies as well.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Fonvielle, seconded by Councilor McGeary, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council to appropriate up to \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand Dollars) from the Community Preservation Act funds as recommended by the Community Preservation Committee for the purpose of the Essex County Greenbelt Association (ECGA) purchase of the 27.4 acre property known as the Annisquam Woods parcel in Gloucester, Massachusetts upon the condition that the ECGA conveys a conservation restriction to the City of Gloucester or its designee. The appropriation will be allocated to the Open Space category and funded by \$50,000 from Open Space Reserves in Fund #270100 and funded by \$35,000 from Unrestricted Reserves in Fund #270000. The project will be tracked in the Community Preservation Fund – Open Space Projects Fund #271006.

This matter will be advertised for public hearing.

7. *Memo from City Auditor regarding accounts having expenditures which exceed their authorization & Auditor's Report*

Mr. Costa advised the Committee that after consulting with Mark Cole, Assistant DPW Director, it is appropriate and his recommendation at this time that the Council votes to expand the ceiling for Snow and Ice Removal, Emergency Expenditures to not exceed \$3.5 million. He said it's not expected that the city would hit that increased ceiling, but he and Mr. Cole felt rising it to \$3.5 million was more of a precaution at this time as it anticipates the total Snow and Ice Removal costs to come in at around \$3.0 million. This is not funding the deficit, he said. The increase of the expenditure authority is \$2,850,000 added to the current appropriation budget of \$650,000.

Mr. Destino said the city is still waiting but remained hopeful for the awarding of disaster funding from FEMA for the first snow event of 2015 to be reimbursed for 75 percent of the \$430,000 claimed for damages. He explained that the second submission to the state for disaster relief from the quick series of snowstorms that followed is less sure as the majority of the expense to the city during that series of storms was mostly related to snow removal rather than damage to municipal infrastructure.

He also announced that the city just received \$100,000 in "pothole" funds from the state.

MOTION: On a motion by Councilor McGeary, seconded by Councilor Fonvielle, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept the provisions of MGL c. 44, §31D Snow and Ice Removal, Emergency Expenditures not to exceed \$3,500,000. The increase of emergency expenditure authority is \$2,850,000 added to the current FY2015 DPW Snow and Ice Removal appropriation budget of \$650,000.

Mr. Costa then reviewed the rest of his documentation (on file) with the Committee with additional input from **Mr. Dunn** and **Mr. Destino**.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgensson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING: None.