

Budget & Finance Committee
Thursday, February 18, 2016 – 5:30 p.m.
1st Fl. Council Committee Room – City Hall
-Minutes-

Present: Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard; Vice Chair, Councilor Joseph Orlando, Jr.; Councilor Joseph Ciolino

Absent: None.

Also Present: Councilor O’Hara; Councilor Gilman; Kenny Costa; Jim Destino; John Dunn; Assistant Police Chief John McCarthy; Fire Chief Eric Smith; Tom LaFleur; Stephen Winslow;

The meeting convened at 5:34 p.m. There was a quorum of the City Council.

1. *Special Budgetary Transfer Requests from the Police Department: 2016-SBT-7, 2016-SBT-8 and 2016-SBT-9*

Assistant Police Chief John McCarthy explained that the three Special Budgetary Transfers are for the purpose of taking the sick incentive pay account out of deficit which was under budgeted for FY16. He briefly explained that money to remedy the deficits in Police Uniform, Police Parking is because the Sick Incentive account for Police-Admin, -Parking and -Animal Control has not been utilized from these three specified accounts and so those accounts are available to fund these transfers.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Ciolino, seconded by Councilor Orlando, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2016-SBT-7 in the amount of \$2,300 from Account #101000.10.210.51944.0000.00.000.00.051, Police-Admin., Sick Incentive Pay to Account #101000.10.211.51944.0000.00.000.00.051 Police-Uniform, Sick Incentive Pay, for the purpose of funding Sick Incentive Pay for the Police Department-Uniform.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Ciolino, seconded by Councilor Orlando, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2016-SBT-8 in the amount of \$275.28 from Account #101000.10.218.51944.0000.00.000.00.051, Police-Parking, Sick Incentive Pay to Account #101000.10.211.51944.0000.00.000.00.051 Police-Uniform, Sick Incentive Pay, for the purpose of funding Sick Incentive Pay for the Police Department-Uniform.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Ciolino, seconded by Councilor Orlando, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend that the City Council approve Special Budgetary Transfer 2016-SBT-9 in the amount of \$600 from Account #101000.10.292.51944.0000.00.000.00.051, Police-Animal Control, Sick Incentive Pay to Account #101000.10.211.51944.0000.00.000.00.051 Police-Uniform, Sick Incentive Pay, for the purpose of funding Sick Incentive Pay for the Police Department-Uniform.

2. *Memorandum from Fire Chief re: request permission to correct payroll error in FY15 with FY16 funds*

Fire Chief Eric Smith said that a payroll error was found in a Lieutenant’s step 3 pay scale which only affects one firefighter, Lt. Dominic Barbagallo. Due to the payroll error occurring in FY15 for \$943.10, the Fire Department is requesting authorization to correct this FY15 payroll error with FY16 funds. He noted the error was found by the department’s financial coordinator in her preparation to begin work on the FY17 department budget.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Orlando, seconded by Councilor Ciolino, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council in accordance with MGL c. 44, §64 approve payment of a prior year(s) salary/wages in the form of a step pay scale increase to a Gloucester Fire Department employee from FY15 to be paid with current FY16 Fire Department accounts for a total of \$943.10.

3. Memorandum from School Director of Finance & Operations re: request increase in Preschool Revolving Fund from \$45,000 to \$75,000

Tom LaFleur, the School Department's Director of Finance & Operations, explained that he is asking permission to have the City Council increase the annual spending limit for the Preschool Revolving Fund from its current \$45,000 cap, which was reached in November 2015, to \$75,000. He referred to an aggregate fee compendium showing preschool fee totals from 2010 to 2016 (placed on file) and described the need to increase the Preschool Revolving Fund expenditure limit is a direct result of the district's program success as attested by an increase in preschool revenue. Revenue for 2016 is projected to total \$76,000 (versus \$59,920 in 2015). Until the cap is increased, the Preschool Revolving Fund is unable to be spent over that \$45,000 cap, he pointed out.

Kenny Costa, City Auditor, advised that this cap is only good through June 30. As part of the FY17 budget process another increase can be looked at during the budget review. Revolving funds, he said, are annually authorized by vote of the City Council.

Mr. LaFleur, responding to an inquiry by **Councilor Orlando**, said this fund was used to add a classroom in January and outfit it. **Councilor Memhard** asked about the number of pupils enrolled in the preschool program. He said that while he didn't have that number at hand, he advised that preschool enrollment is picking up quickly because the program is works very well, especially given the in-house special needs pupil assistance.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On motion by Councilor Orlando, seconded by Councilor Ciolino, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed to recommend that the City Council accept under MGL c. 44, Sec. 53E-1/2 an amendment of the expenditure limit of the Preschool Revolving Fund from \$45,000 to \$75,000 in Fund #283012, the use of the fund is for Salary/Expenses. The authorized officer of the Fund is the School Department (School Department Director of Finance & Operations). The fund is credited from fees/charges; the expenditure limit is \$75,000; the fund balance is the available balance, and there are no restrictions to the Fund.

4. Memorandum, Grant Application & Checklist from Community Development Director re: Stage Fort Park Beautification Project, Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant Application for \$250,000

The grant application for Stage Fort Park Beautification Project, Land & Water Conservation Fund* Grant Application for \$250,000 was presented by **Stephen Winslow**, Senior Project Manager who made the following presentation:

With an eye to the city's 400th anniversary and celebrating the country's the first fishing community, the Stage Fort Park Advisory Committee came up with ideas for the improvement of the park, and this is the next step to assist in making major improvements to Stage Fort Park which hasn't occurred since the 1980's. The park is loved by so many but it is aging rapidly. The DPW is working on major improvements to the Visitors Center now, he noted.

This is a pass through grant from the National Parks Service from its Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) through the State of Massachusetts. The city will seek \$250,000 in funding for the Stage Fort Park Beautification Project. This will be a 50 percent match. In the past this grant was received for St. Peter's Park. The city has successfully applied for the Mass. P.A.R.C. (Parkland Acquisitions & Renovations for Communities) grants which are difficult to obtain for Gloucester because the grant parameters lean towards urban settings and the demographics that accompany such settings. That grant funding source helped to rehabilitate Newell Stadium but the grant application was rejected for Mattos Field. The LWCF grant is more focused on the project than necessarily the neighborhood. Stage Fort Park has many elements to make the city's application more competitive for the LWCF grant. He suggested there is a 20 percent chance the city could be awarded the grant which would fund a higher level of rehabilitation of the park. Municipalities apply in the conceptual stage and then firm plans up once the grant is awarded. He said they will seek out community input to finalize Stage Fort Park rehabilitation plans, and this is early in the process.

He reviewed briefly the history of the park and that the grant would fund: 1) improvements for the comfort and accessibility of the bandstand viewing area by installing a new lawn, reconfigure pathways and a gateway to the Visitors Center, 2) modifying a portion of the parking area of the park to create an "Events Plaza" and "Quadricentennial Terrace," 3) creation of a new trail connection in Stage Fort Park leading towards Ravenswood Park, and 4) adding a kayak storage facility. He reviewed a document entitled, "Stage Fort Park Preparing for Another 100 Years" with the Committee (placed on file).

Mr. Winslow said that the LWCF grant requires that the city provide matching funds and described the match totaling \$350,000 being met as follows: It is estimated the total project cost will be about \$600,000 with the grant

funding \$250,000. Applications will be submitted to the Community Preservation Committee for Community Preservation Act funds for \$250,000 and the CDBG program for \$100,000. The CPA match commitment must be finalized by the end of calendar year 2016 and can be conditional on receipt of the grant. Because the pathways improve the park's American with Disabilities Act (ADA) access, CDBG program funds will be possible. CDBG funds must be committed by the time of the construction contract.

Councilor Memhard asked about the general timeframe of the grant award. **Mr. Winslow** said they should hear by July if the state would recommend the grant application to the National Park Service and early in 2017, or possibly late 2016, they would hear of the grant award. The city has to commit the matching funds by the end of the year, he pointed out. Construction design work would be done in early 2017 with construction starting in the fall of 2017 and do that in the off season so as not to impact the use of the park and the parking lot, with renovations completed by the spring of 2018. He said that Mike Hale, DPW Director, is thinking of extending some power conduits to Stage Fort Park to enhance the park's use for events in conjunction with this project.

Councilor Orlando asked if additional parking can be added to the park area and is the area where the Farmer's Market is situated consume current available parking. **Mr. Winslow** said the plan is not to add parking. He advised that in the late afternoon in season on Thursdays parking is free because of the Farmer's Market, and the city works to ensure there is no impact to beach parking. A large cost is the repaving of the park's parking lot, he mentioned, and is not part of this project. He said they are looking at the slope down towards the Cupboard Restaurant to add better parking that would be an advantage and would help with the snow storage. Councilor Orlando said adding parking to the area would be very helpful as it helps to attract more people to the area. **Mr. Winslow** suggested there may be an opportunity to add useful parking and will be looked at with the designer.

Councilor Memhard asked about permeable surface area in the repaving of the parking lot and briefly discussed that with **Mr. Winslow** who noted there is a plan to add swales and possibly stabilized turf.

Councilor Ciolino expressed his appreciation for Mr. Winslow's work. He recounted some of the work and enhancements that has been accomplished by the Gloucester Rotary Club who maintain all that they have added. With the 400th anniversary of the city coming forward this is a timely project, he noted. **Councilor Memhard** added his approbation for the work already done for the grant. **Mr. Winslow** pointed out that he hopes this rehabilitation of the park will garner the kind of community support the rehabilitation of Newell Stadium.

Councilor Gilman mentioned prominently posting electronic signage to advise drivers on Route 128 that beach parking at Good Harbor and Wingaersheek is full should be prominently displayed on Route 128 to aid in traffic flow directing potential beachgoers to Stage Fort Park for parking and beach access. She suggested a trolley could be utilized to stop at the park's parking lot so that beachgoers and visitors can access the amenities of the city as well as other city beaches. She said in light of the past Stage Fort Park Advisory Committee comments, that Stage Fort Park remains a popular place for dog owners to exercise their dogs particularly in the off season when the public doesn't have to pay for parking there.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Orlando, seconded by Councilor Ciolino, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council permit the Community Development Department to apply for a Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant from the Department of the Interior - National Park Service passed through the Mass. Division of Conservation Services in the amount of \$250,000 for the purpose of the Stage Fort Park Beautification Project. The City's share of this grant if awarded would be an anticipated match of up to \$350,000 of the overall project cost to be made up of anticipated CDBG funds and CPA Act funds should the city receive the this grant.

*The Land and Water Conservation Fund is funded by federal oil lease revenues and activated by an annual vote of Congress. Funding levels vary from year to year.

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

Mr. Costa reported he was in receipt of an email that morning from the Department of Public Works that it has reached almost \$900,000 with invoices coming in and for overtime expenses from the most recent snow events. He said Mr. Hale has recommended that the Snow & Ice removal emergency expenditures be raised by \$500,000 to cap at \$1.5 million. (Note: The B&F Committee at its Feb. 4 meeting had voted to recommend a cap of \$1.0 million and was voted by the Council on Feb. 9.). He said it is hoped this will be the last time this winter the Council would

have to increase the Snow & Ice emergency expenditures cap. Appropriations to cover this deficit will come at a later date to fund the deficit, he advised.

Jim Destino, CAO, discussed the Snow & Ice deficit with the Committee briefly and the city's efforts to respond to snow clearing after snow events which is costly.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Orlando, seconded by Councilor Ciolino, 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 \$1,500,000. The increase of emergency expenditure authority is \$733,400 added to the current FY2016 DPW Snow and Ice Removal appropriation budget of \$766,600.

The Clerk of Committees reminded the Committee that Chair, Councilor Memhard will need to call for a vote of the Council to suspend its Rules of Procedure in order to take this matter up and vote on it because it didn't come through the Council's Consent Agenda for referral.

Mr. Destino recalled for the Committee that there was a plan put into place to pay two-thirds of last winter's Snow & Ice debt and amortized the other two years, and that the city had submitted a request for FEMA reimbursement (budgeted at \$300,000). He announced the FEMA reimbursement came in at \$430,000, more than the city had expected, which he said will be used to reduce the Snow & Ice deficit.

Mr. Costa then reviewed his reports (on file) with the Committee.

Councilor Memhard announced that a Budget & Finance Committee's schedule for the FY17 budget meetings was ready to be forwarded to the Administration.

A motion was made, seconded and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dana C. Jorgensson
Clerk of Committees

DOCUMENTS/ITEMS SUBMITTED AT MEETING:

- **Preschool Revolving Fund (283012) Current Spending Authority: \$45,000 Annually showing Fiscal Year and Revenue with projection for 2016 submitted by Tom LaFleur, School Department Director of Finance & Operation**
- **"Stage Fort Park Preparing for Another 100 Years Land and Water Conservation Grant Application Request February 2016" document to accompany grant application submitted by Stephen Winslow, Senior Project Manager, Community Development Department**