

ATOWN OF IPSWICH  
Finance Committee  
Meeting of January 15, 2018  
Town Hall, 25 Green Street

With a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 7:33.

Finance Committee members present: Chair Janice Clements Skelton, Tammy Jones, Chris Doucette, Rob White, Michael Schaaf, and Kevin Murphy

Not Present: Jamie Fay, Mike Dougherty

Also present: Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Alyson von der Esch, Recording Secretary; Sarah Johnson, Chief Theriault, Chief Nikas

Chris Doucette arrived at 7:33.

Robert White arrived at 7:37.

**1. Citizens Queries – Janice Clements Skelton**

- No citizens queries.

**2. Acceptance of Finance Committee Minutes – Janice Clements Skelton**

- 11/13/18 and 12/11/18
    - Motion to accept minutes made by Kevin Murphy, seconded by Michael Schaaf.
- Vote: Motion passed unanimously, 6-0

**3. Town Manager Update – Anthony Marino**

- Fire Truck case: finding third party to inspect our truck once the engine is put in, which will finalize settlement. New engine will have a 5-year warrantee with additional 2-year warrantee on the install.
- Payroll benefits offices still forming. Finished first bi-weekly payroll.
- Promoted firefighter James McInness to become the new Deputy Chief, which now leaves two vacancies for firefighters.
- Climate Resiliency Committee met last night, they are focusing on getting Green Communities work done and having all of the criteria met. Goal is to present this to the boards in late March or early April, and apply by October.
- New Facilities Director Chris Rais started on Monday.
- School Dude assessment is in place.
- Finishing up union contract meetings.
- North Ridge Road documents are finished. Easement is done. Can now go back to abutter to have their attorney look it over and then get the land sold.
- Generator update: 8-10 weeks away. Police Station is priority. Two current generators in use at fire station will be repurposed for use elsewhere in the town. Once new generators are in place, buildings with backup generators include: Town Hall, High School, Police Station, Fire Stations, Outer Linebrook. In the future, would like to put generators into elderly housing to reduce expenses during power outages.
- Budget book will be emailed and delivered at Tri-Board meeting.
- Janice has reached out to Nishan to schedule an update on the Affordable Housing Trust; Nishan has recommended after the budget hearings. Janice reminded the committee that we will also have an opportunity to review the current status as part of the Planning Department's budget hearing
- Mr. Marino met with Dr. Blake as well as sub-committee. All in agreement with what is being funded. Will be presented on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Murphy commented on how the town and schools have worked together so well with the budget.

**4. Public Safety Feasibility Study RFP's – Chief Nikas and Chief Theriault, Mr. Weatherall**

- Chief Theriault discussed his goals of keeping the Fire Department on a positive track.

- A lot of changes have been made to promote from within and promote leadership, education, and training.
- People within the department are stepping up and taking on additional responsibilities, and the Chief is also allowing senior firefighters to take charge of more complex incidents, with guidance and feedback.
- Janice asked Chief Theriault if he feels like he has the team he needs. Chief Theriault replied yes. Janice would like to make sure there is a full staff, for safety issues but also to eliminate overtime expenses.
- Janice would like the Chief to send FinCom the OSHA rules before the budget hearing, so they can be better prepared.
- Chief Nikas also updated FinCom on the Police Department.
  - Police Department is fully staffed, but has one officer attending academy for 6 months beginning in March. This should not have too big of an effect on overtime.
  - Overtime is tracking low this year based on years past.
  - There has been a dramatic cost increase over the last 5 years due to the demands being placed on the department with opioids and mental health issues.
    - This is not specific to Ipswich, but on trend with everywhere else in the country.
    - The department is working on bringing in outside resources, such as mental health professionals and addiction services. This will help people to get the help they need but will also keep the costs to the town down so that Emergency Response is not needed.
  - Vehicles are in good shape.
  - Will be asking for money for two new servers as well as for some building upkeep.
  - Advanced Educational training for de-escalation will also be a part of the requested budget.
    - Signed on for “One Minds” campaign. Currently 20% are trained in de-escalation, will continue to train staff.
    - Two officers trained as drug recognition experts, more being trained.
  - Going after Mass State Accreditation to become an Accredited Department within the next year.
    - 251 points the department must hit.
    - A panel will then review facilities, policies, and forms.
    - Insulates town from a lot of liability and saves money on legal expenses.
  - Chief meets with Dr. Blake frequently to make sure they are on the same page and to discuss programs at the high school including D.A.R.E. and the Criminal Justice Academy summer program.
  - Janice asked about what the updates have been.
    - Chief Nikas explained they created a small secure interview room but more space is needed for interview rooms or rooms for discussions when someone comes in in crisis.
- Rob Weatherall, Labor and Vain Road, Chair of Public Safety committee
  - Interviewed 3 candidates for Public Safety Building and conveyed opinions to Town Manager, who has a meeting this Thursday with the top candidate.
  - Chose to extend deadline for 30 more days.
  - Hoping to have a contract in place at the end of February. Once contract is signed there will be public meetings every two weeks. Starts with needs assessment, programming needs, site assessments, design phase.
  - Will bring this to the fall Town Meeting.

## **5. Short and Long Term Capital Planning –Sarah Johnson, and all**

- Roads: Have gotten a fair amount of money from state
- Needs must be prioritized. Main focus will be Chapter 90.
- Buildings: waiting for Dude Solutions to be done with assessment. They just started and should be done in about 2 months.
- HVAC and Facilities: also waiting on Dude Solutions.
  - Janice wanted to make sure roofs and generators are paid attention to.
  - Robert noted that he would like efficient air conditioning in all of the rooms in the HS in the 2021 Capital Plan.
  - Kevin Murphy mentioned that he believes a lot of the School Dude information will be used for FY21.
  - Janice noted that it should still be considered for FY20 so we aren’t wasting money that will be spent again the following year.
  - Sarah mentioned that Green Communities may be able to help with HVAC costs.

- Utilities: Tony is hoping Green Communities will help.
- Vicki's FY20 budget will shed light on all of this.
- DPW and Water and Sewer are in communication and planning.
- Current Facilities Needs Assessment will have a software that will be helpful in keeping track of updates made and when updates will be needed in the future.
- Robert asked about updates to the cloud. Sarah said all of the email is in the cloud and assessments will soon go into the cloud as well. A lot of computer replacements have been made. New assistant for Greg in IT.

**6. FY20 Budget Process and Meetings Schedule** – Anthony Marino and all

- Confirming dates (see schedule).
- Discussion over Warrant Hearing and order articles will be presented.

**7. New/Other Business** – Janice Clements Skelton

- Phil Goguen, Kingfisher Road. Asked if Green Communities and Dude Solutions could be tied together to find projected savings.
  - Kevin Murphy explained that as part of the Green Communities program you have to provide examples where the town is using programs to lower fossil fuel use. Dude Solutions is one of these programs as it is helping to update facilities.
- Open Checkbook Status: working to get reports tied in, Sarah estimated implementation should be completed within a couple of months. Mr.Goguen expressed dismay over the length of time it is taking to get up and running. Sarah explain, given the major initiatives of establishing a centralized HR function and change of payroll schedule, Open Checkbooks had been delayed; but will be the priority once her portion of the FY20 budget is complete. Provides a narrative that answers typical questions that citizens want to know. Will also have a presentation to show how the software will work.
- Tri-Board next week 1/22 for draft Town Budget and Capital Plan.

**8. Adjournment** – Janice Clements Skelton

- Motion to adjourn made by Tammy and seconded by Robert.  
→*Vote: Motion passed unanimously,6-0*

Respectfully Submitted By  
Alyson von der Esch  
1.21.19