

Phil Carroll, Chair  
Jordana Bloom, Vice Chair  
Dan Wiedemann  
Dan Honan  
Judith DeStefano  
Andy Clure



## **TOWN OF NEWTOWN**

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

### **Municipal Operations Committee Special Meeting March 24, 2021**

The Legislative Council Municipal Operations Committee was called to order at 7:32.  
In Attendance by zoom: Phil Carroll, Dan Wiedemann, Dan Rosenthal, Jordana Bloom, Andy Clure, Dan Honan, Judith DeStefano, Paul Lundquist.

The committee discussed the municipal budget with First Selectman Dan Rosenthal which included:

Solar panels on town buildings and property.

Police budget

Park & Rec budget & equipment

State reimbursement

As well as other items in budget book

There were questions submitted to and answered by First Selectman that will be attached with minutes.

There was a motion made by Judith DeStefano Move \$220,000.00 from capital nonrecurring budget to lower it to zero with the intent to take it from excess fund balance in the future: Seconded by Dan Wiedemann: Passed unanimously.

Next meeting was agreed to be Monday, March 29 at 7:30.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:55

Submitted by  
Philip Carroll

1. Pg. 260 Contingency – Is \$115,000 enough?

The contingency used to be larger because we sometimes under budgeted for winter maintenance and legal fees. We also did not budget for any wage increases that were not negotiated yet. Now we do a five year average on winter maintenance items, try to forecast an appropriate amount for legal and we use a wage increase that the town plans to offer the union in negotiations. That being said it may not be enough. However, savings in other accounts can be used to cover shortfalls in other accounts. A history of the contingency account is attached.

2. Could we use the expected \$700,000 overage in fund balance to offset onetime expenses? \$250m BOS - \$450m BOE

The expected overage (over 12% of total budget amount) is actually around \$1,700,000 less the \$400,000 already used for BOE COVID expenditures. It is planned to request that the overage be transferred to the capital and non-recurring fund, designating most of it for capital items (including capital items taken out of the 2021-22 budget).

3. What were our energy savings? Where can that be found?

Any type of energy savings, whether they are from a boiler replacement or lighting reduction (LED) project, direct solar installation or credits from Virtual Net Metering are already included in the operational line item to offset increases from higher energy unit costs. These increases are due to higher charges by the utilities for transmission and delivery of the energy we use. Our savings help to stabilize and minimize our increases for energy cost. They do not necessarily create actual line item reductions.

However, without those savings we would be increasing our energy line items more rapidly. It should also be noted that many of those savings sources are variable. How often a building is utilized or how much cloud cover we have at a specific time of the year will affect the results.

Submitted by Fred Hurley

4. Police – How many officers vs what should a town our size have?

One chief; one captain; 3 lieutenants; one administrative sergeant; 6 sergeants; 3 detectives & 30 officers (45 in total).

Per the Department of Justice, FBI Criminal Justice Information Services Division the average number of officers, in New England having town/cities with populations 25,000 to 49,999 is 1.9 officers per 1,000 inhabitants (2016).

5. What is the income from the Transfer Station?

On page 60 in the revenue budget detail the transfer station fees account is budgeted for \$475,000. These fees comprise daily/monthly/annual car passes; demolition material fees (for dropping off); stump and pallet drop off fees; scrap metal sales; etc.

6. Please explain pg 182 maintainer vs facilities mgr.

The main difference is that the facilities manager is on call 24/7 at the community center and also requires a certification in pool operations.

7. Pg 208 Please explain the increase in Newtown Parent Connection.

Dan can answer.

8. Pg. 242 Turf tractor rental? What are the uses?

See attached description of the turf tractor that Parks & Recreation requested (instead of renting the turf tractor).

9. Pg.264 what is internal lease? Public works & P&R

An internal lease (let's say a five year internal lease) is where we budget five annual payments (over five budget years) to be transferred to the capital and non-recurring fund to pay off a purchase (from the capital and non-recurring fund) of a capital item. Instead of securing a commercial lease.

10. Pg.275 85k overtime? Do we have enough staff?

Emergency communications is a 24/7 operation. We have enough staff to operate the system. Overtime is needed for coverage when employees are out on vacation, sick leave, training, and when positions are open.

11. Pg.275 Rental equipment? Can't remember what this is for

Detail of rental equipment is on page 121 of the budget document. Mainly rentals of Town communication equipment such as cell phones; phone lines; fiber net service; radios; communication towers; etc.

12. Pg.281 senior bus contract? Is this the Heart bus?

Yes, it is the bus contract with the Housatonic Area Regional Transit (H.A.R.T.) authority.

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CARL SAMUELSON  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARKS

## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

### PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

**Kubota 3010 -** Replace 19 year old tractor with new turf tractor more suitable to run implements used by the department. Existing tractor is too small and unreliable to run most of the implements used in field maintenance practices. Existing tractor has a 1750 lb lift capacity; most of our implements exceed 3000 lbs. Old tractor would be moved to Eichlers Cove beach cleaning detail and would allow us to purchase a lower cost beach cleaning implement (Barber SandMan TT) that does not need an engine. Beach cleaning equipment to be self-funded through waterfront account for removal of beach debris and goose droppings. **\$87,000.00 / \$22,500 #1 of 4 lease payment**

Options: Continue to seasonally rent a tractor as needed. Tractor rental rates for an adequate tractor are \$1200-\$1300 per week. We currently rent for 8 weeks due to budget constraints but could use double that amount of time to complete cultural practices on our athletic fields. Not purchasing tractor or renting for longer duration also would require us to choose a self-powered beach cleaning option for Eichlers Cove.

\$10,000 in  
contractual for  
tractor rental

