



## TOWN OF SOUTHBRIDGE

### A JOINT GENERAL GOVERNMENT SUBCOMMITTEE/TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

April 28, 2022 at 7:00 PM

VETERANS ROOM

### AGENDA

#### 1. Call to Order

Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and called the roll.

#### 2. Roll Call

<b>Subcommittee Members Present: (5)</b>	<b>Members of the Public Present:</b>
Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan, Town Councilor	Chairman John Daniel, Town Councilor
Gus Steeves, Town Councilor	David Adams, Town Councilor
Michael Marketti, Town Councilor	Michael McCall, Town Manager
Denise Clemence, Citizen Member	Karen Harnois, Finance Director
Martena Shea, Citizen Member	Margaret Morissey, Library Director
	Heather Blakely, DPW Director
	Adriana Robaina, HR Director
	Andrew Pelletier, Director of Inspections
	Paul Normandin, Fire Chief
	Joseph Hulyk, Deputy Fire Chief
	Shane Woodson, Police Chief
	James Cosgrove, Cable Director
	Nick DaDalt
	Derek Julian, PPP Citizen Member

#### 3. Consider and accept General Government Subcommittee Minutes of April 14, 2022

Meeting Minutes were not finished, Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan will bring forward at a future meeting.

4. Review the proposed job description for the IT Director position and entertain a motion to recommend to the Town Council for approval.

Town Manager Michael McCall explained that this position is to fill the vacancy in the position of IT Director. Assessor WII Conoyer was the IT part-time for the Town before his retirement. The Manager also explained that there was a need to make this position independent due to the enormous amount of work that is required in IT now compared to ten years ago. This person would maintain the IT System town wide, help with onboarding new employee electronics and town electronics, and manage our cloud systems. There could be some savings as we will now not need a managed service provided to oversee our Cloud.

Councilor Michael Marketti asked if there would be some other savings in IT costs since there will be one person in house. To which the Town Manager replied that it could lead to less specialist costs and calls for servicing when some of those functions could be done in house by the IT Director.

Councilor Gus Steeves asked how much savings would the position bring to which the Town Manager replied that the overall savings from consultant and specialist contracted services would pay for 50%-70% of the IT Director's job cost to the town.

**MOTION:** Recommend that the Town Council Approve the proposed Job Description for the IT Director Position.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Councilor Gus Steeves

**SECONDED BY:** Citizen Member Denise Clemence

**MOTION PASSES (5-0) Unanimous of All Present**

5. Review the proposed job description for DPW Assistant Engineering position and entertain a motion to recommend to the Town Council for approval.

Town Manager Michael McCall explained that this job proposal was created to add the additional project and road oversight that the Town Council wanted due to the high amount of construction projects in the town currently. DPW Director Heather Blakely continued that she agreed with the assessment the Town Council made about further oversight needs and created this proposed job description. The role would mainly focus on Project Oversight and work on the MS-4 Permit that is required by the federal government.

Councilor Gus Steeves asked if that wide set of skills would be available for this type of role at this rate of pay to which DPW Director Heather Blakely stated that she would try and thinks the role is fillable but that the candidate pool is very small and that other towns are looking for very similar roles in the own Town DPWs. He did think the position was needed in the town to help with oversight in the town.

Councilor Michael Marketti feels that this position is something that shouldn't be considered right now due to the upcoming resignation of the DPW Director and he feels that department doesn't need an Engineer but more of a Clerk of the Works.

Citizen Member Denise Clemence agreed with Councilor Michael Marketti's comments and thought that maybe the town needed someone with oversight and job sight experience over an engineer. She also thought the salary was low for an engineer that will need a lot of specialized knowledge and experience.

PPP Subcommittee member Derek Julian felt that based on his experience in DPW and DPW matters didn't need a town engineer and felt that the title could lead to the person being able to

negotiate a higher salary.

DPW Director Heather Blakely explained that she agrees that the person doesn't need to be an engineer and does believe an experienced oversight specialist could also fill the role nicely. She agrees that the job description should become more generalized.

Town Councilor David Adams stated that he thinks the position should be sent to the Town Council for May 9th with the recommended changes talked about tonight even if with a negative recommendation from the subcommittee to have this position finalized in time with the Budget.

Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan then stated that there is a General Government Subcommittee Meeting before the May 23rd Town Council Budget Adoption Meeting scheduled for May 12th and that the Subcommittee could take up the final draft at that meeting and simply add it to the May 23rd Town Council Meeting Agenda.

**MOTION:** Postpone the item until there is an updated finalized job description.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Citizen Member Denise Clemence

**SECONDED BY:** Councilor Michael Marketti

**MOTION PASSES (4-1)** with Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan opposed.

6. Review/discuss the addition of Grade A10 to salary schedule 1 for IT Director position and entertain a motion to recommend to the Town Council for approval.

Town Manager Michael McCall Explained that this is to add the IT Director Position in Agenda item #4 to the Salary Schedule 1 at a Grade A10.

**MOTION:** Recommend that the Town Council adopt the addition of a Grade A10 to Salary Schedule 1 for the IT Director Position.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Councilor Gus Steeves

**SECONDED BY:** Citizen Member Martena Shea

**MOTION PASSES (5-0) Unanimous of All Present**

7. Review/discuss the addition of DPW Assistant Engineer Position to Salary Schedule 1, Grade P/T7 and entertain a motion to recommend to the Town Council for approval.

There was no discussion on this item as agenda item #5 had been postponed to the next general government subcommittee meeting and this agenda item was tied with agenda item #5.

**MOTION:** To postpone this agenda item to the next posted General Government Subcommittee Meeting.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Citizen Member Denise Clemence

**SECONDED BY:** Councilor Michael Marketti

**MOTION PASSES (5-0) Unanimous of All Present**

8. Review the Town Manager's five-year Capital Plan, FY 2023-2028 and entertain a motion to submit to Town Council as presented.

Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan explained that she would go through the proposed plan and its proposed funding for 2023 at a departmental level and that she would take questions and comments about those proposed capital items during those Department sections. Town Manager Michael McCall explained that the Capital Plan is presented in a new format as determined by the Capital Planning Ad Hoc Committee.

## **TOWN HALL**

Councilor Gus Steeves asked about grant opportunities for historic town halls and the Town Manager explained that they were not able to get any grant funding for this fiscal year on that front.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

Councilor Michael Marketti asked about the Communication Tower and Fire Chief Paul Normandin explained that this is a Communication Tower for Fire communication purposes.

## **INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT**

**Director of Inspections Andrew Pelletier withdrew the Capital request for this year but will bring it forward next year.**

## **MISC. BUILDINGS**

Councilor Michael Marketti asked why the Dog Kennel was being funded again and the Town Manager explained that was a mistake he made as the Kennel has already been funded and won't be funded again.

## **POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Councilor Michael Marketti asked the Police Chief Shane Woodson why the town was replacing two more police vehicles. Chief Woodson explained that this is the standard practice and the vehicles are over 300,000 Motor hours.

Councilor Gus Steeves asked if the Department has considered smaller and/or electric cars to save on gas costs. Chief Woodson explained that if there was reliable infrastructure in place, he would have the department go electric tomorrow however there would be other problems to overcome as well like compatibility with radio equipment. Chief Woodson went on to also explain that the vehicles cannot get any smaller due to the prisoner cages inside the vehicles.

Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan stated that she continues to support replacing three police cruisers a year in the police department because the town wide study and best department practices shows that this is the best and most sustainable model for the size of our Police Department.. Chief Woodson stated that Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan was correct and that the department does show the need to have three cruisers replaced annually but can manage with only two because he understands the financial situation of the town.

Councilor Michael Marketti asked the Police Chief about the proposed parking lot repairs for the police station and the Police Chief

## **FIRE DEPARTMENT**

Councilor Michael Marketti asked about the proposed Administrative Vehicle to which Fire Chief Paul Normandin explained that this is a replacement of 2013 vehicle that Lt. Chief Hulyk has been used for being first on the scene for smaller incidents that don't require an ambulance or Fire Truck

to respond. The Fire Chief showed the subcommittee cost and fuel efficiency comparisons for the three vehicles being considered and recommends going with the Chevy Tahoe.

Councilor Michael Marketti asked why the Forest Fire truck was being recommended for replacement and Fire Chief Normandin explained that this vehicle was hand built by the department in 1971 and needs to be replaced. The vehicle proposed would be more efficient and up to today's Fire Fighting standard.

Citizen Member Denise Clemence asked how many times a year the Forest truck is used to which the Fire Chief stated that the truck gets regular use especially during Brush fire season.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

Councilor Michael Marketti asked about the Dump Trucks being recommended for replacement and DPW Director Heather Blakely explained that these dump trucks have lived well beyond their recommend road life and have been suffering multiple breakdowns during peak use that are becoming ever more expensive due to the age and the model not being universally used leading to parts being harder and more expensive to find.

Citizen Member Denise Clemence asked what the Metrics were to have a vehicle in DPW recommended for replacement to which DPW Director Heather Blakely explained that is a combination of factors like age of the vehicle, the amount of mileage on the vehicle, the amount of breakdowns and repairs the vehicle has had, the cost of performing those repairs and by getting input from the people in her department.

Citizen Member Denise Clemence also asked if there had been a comparison done to see if it would be cheaper for the town in the long term to contract it's street sweeping services out to a company instead of having town owned Street Sweepers to which DPW Director Heather Blakely stated that there has not been one done however it is her opinion that the costs would be much higher annually to contract the service out instead of having our own town employees do the street sweeping.

## **WATER DEPARTMENT**

**DPW Director Heather Blakely explained that the Dennison Hill and Downtown Water Main projects will likely held until next year or until the ARPA Ad Hoc committee makes a determination on using ARPA funds for those projects.**

## **SEWER DEPARTMENT**

**No Questions or comments on this Department's Capital Plan for FY23.**

## **COMMUNITY CENTER**

Citizen Member Denise Clemence asked if Asbestos testing had been done around the windows being recommended for replacement and in particular the Caulking, as the caulking found during the Community Center downstairs renovations did have asbestos but will dramatically increase the cost of the project to which the Town Manager explained that it had been brought to his attention and will be looking into whether there is asbestos up in the windows.

## **CABLE DEPARTMENT**

Citizen Member Denise Clemence explained that this budget is funded by Charter and by Cable customers in the town, not the taxpayers directly.

Cable Director James Cosgrove explained that the Field Cameras being recommended for replacement will likely be swapped out for a more urgent need in the Department that just began to show itself. The Graphic system needs to be replaced as it is glitching due to it being over six years old and is causing issues with the recording of meetings. The graphics system replacement will be a

lower cost than what was quoted to replace the field cameras.

## **SOUTHBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Chairwoman Jacquelyn Ryan explained that the Southbridge Public School district was going to fund this year's capital needs for the school system out of the substantial increase the Town of Southbridge got in Chapter 70 aid from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and will not need the town to put forward any additional monies for the School System's capital needs for this fiscal year.

**MOTION:** To recommend the Town Council Adopt the Capital Plan as presented.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Councilor Gus Steeves

**SECONDED BY:** Councilor Michael Marketti

**MOTION PASSES (5-0) Unanimous of All Present**

### 9. Adjournment

**MOTION:** To Adjourn the Meeting.

**MOTION MADE BY:** Councilor Michael Marketti

**SECONDED BY:** Citizen Member Martena Shea

**MOTION PASSES (5-0) Unanimous of All Present**

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11PM

Meeting Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

Mx. Jacquelyn M. Ryan

Chairwoman, Southbridge General Government Town Council Subcommittee