



**Finance Committee Meeting
March 21, 2023 @ 12:00 pm
VIA Conference Call & Town Hall
141 Main St, Townsend, DE 19734**

12:00 pm Finance Committee Meeting

- I. Call to Order: 12:04 pm
- II. Opening Ceremonies
 - A. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell, Councilman E. Dugan, Town Manager A. Tantillo, Financial Officer J. Helms, Police Chief R. Longo, and Town Clerk M. Rivera.
 - B. Recognition of Visitors – none.
 - C. Announcements – none.
- III. Adoption of Agenda
 - A. The Finance Committee agreed to move forward with discussing the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget first.
 - B. Agenda adopted.
- IV. Discussion regarding Fiscal Year 2024 Budget
 - A. FO Helms advised a PowerPoint presentation has been prepared for how the Town's taxes will be affected based on the drafted budgets for the Police Department (PD). FO Helms explained the drafted Police Departments budget reflects what it would be to hire one police officer and two police officers.
 - B. FO Helms advised taxes will need to be raised dependent on the number of officers. FO Helms clarified no change has been made to Town of Townsend FY24 Budget summary that has been presented.
 - C. Chief Longo advised the Town may use ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds to cover the PD pensions.
 - i. TM Tantillo advised against hiring via grant funds that will expire. Additionally, Council has already discussed possible uses for the ARPA funds.



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- ii. FO Helms advised the Finance Committee has looked for a compromise, keeping the taxpayers in mind and public safety. FO Helms advised more than half of the ARPA funds will be needed.
- iii. Chief Longo expressed his concern with public safety and the need for new hires.
- iv. FO Helms clarified the Finance Committee is concerned with the feasibility and sustainability of funding the officers after the grant funds are exasperated. Noting, it has been understood that the Police Department will grow slowly. Chief Longo noted with his proposal it will allow for a slow increase in taxes.
- v. Mayor Lobdell advised the Town has the option to find funding for items listed on the budget. Mayor Lobdell noted ARPA funds may be considered.
 - a. Chief Longo advised he will perform research on grant funding for the Police Department. Noting, PD grants are based on the amount of officers.
 - b. Mayor Lobdell asked if there are grants that the Police Department may get that may be considered a guaranteed annual source of funding similar to the Town MSA (Municipal Street Aide-Grant) Fund budget. Chief Longo confirmed he will provide the list of grants based off the last 10 years. Additionally, there is also federal funding the Town may be able to use.
 - c. FO Helms noted the Police Department will need an administrative assistant. Chief Longo advised the PD is currently performing all the administrative work. Additionally, accreditation will be required for this. Furthermore, this will position will not be needed until 2026.
 - d. Mayor Lobdell advised the Town should use ARPA funding for the department buildings as discussed. Additionally, recommended that the Police Department seek grant funding for one time purchase items needed.



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- e. FO Helms confirmed the Town is on track and may have funds remaining to rollover. Additionally, the building addition has been removed from the proposed budget. Mayor Lobdell noted there are several budgeted items that may be purchased via ARPA and/or Grant funding. Additionally, there are budgeted items that may be decreased. TM Tantillo to provide a breakdown of the available ARPA funds for the discussion needed.
- f. Mayor Lobell noted even without the need for officers funding is needed. The Finance Committee noted the Town will need to find a comprise to ensure taxes remain low with the additional Police Department staffing.
- g. Mayor Lobdell requested Chief Longo to research grant funding the Police Department may be able to apply for items in the proposed draft budget presented.
- h. FO Helms advised the Finance Committee will also need to look into grant funding for General Fund Budget items.
- i. Chief Longo noted grant funding is based on staffing. Mayor Lobdell requested Chief Longo to look into the grant funding amounts if the Town were to hire four officers. Additionally, advised a budget revision may be needed to include a proposal for all three options presented to hire officers. Chief Longo advised funding is based on the amount of full-time employees, not for part-time employees.
- j. FO Helms confirmed the proposed Transfer Tax rate. Mayor Lobdell noted the current budget reflects a more accurate amount to be expected. Explaining, that this limits the Town's reliance of transfer taxes.
- k. Mayor Lobdell advised the Town should look at using some investment funds towards building expansions. Noting, these types of projects are considered investments. FO Helms advised this may be possible; however, advised against doing this continuously.



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- V.** Discussion and review of edits to Financial Policy as previously discussed.
- A.** TM Tantillo confirmed this has been discussed during the November Finance Committee.
 - B.** FO Helms confirmed there was a strikethrough from the Capital Improvement Policy.
 - C.** TM Tantillo confirmed the Town Manager and Financial officer have the flexibility to make budget adjustments as necessary without approval from Council.
- VI.** Discussion and review of edits to Purchasing Policy as previously discussed.
- A.** The Finance Committee added additional revisions. The following are the most notable items during discussion:
 - i.** FO Helms to perform research regarding item C for proposed adjustments.
 - ii.** Items O removed after FO Helms noted the Town does not typically use purchase order process.
 - iii.** Spending authority adjust to be flexible.
- VII.** Adjourn
- A.** TM Tantillo confirmed final revisions to the Policies discussed will be sent to the Finance Committee. Once approved, the revised Policies will go to Council for final approval.
 - B.** Adjourned
 - i.** Meeting adjourned at 1:44 pm.