

**Board of Selectmen  
Open Meeting of April 5, 2023  
Seekonk Town Hall, 100 Peck Street  
BOS Meeting Room**

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Members Present: Justin Sullivan, Chris Zorra, Michael Healy, Michelle Hines, Pam Pozzi  
Town Administrator: Shawn E. Cadime

Chair Sullivan opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**Board and Committee Openings**

M. Healy read the Board and Committee vacancies into the record.

**Community Speaks**

Gary Sagar, 100 St. Laurent Parkway, suggested renting billboards along Route 195 to raise revenue and to use as a way to promote the Town. He also wanted to remind everyone the Lions Club will be holding their annual fishing tournament and the Taste of the Town on Monday, April 17, 2023.

**A. Reorganization of the Board**

J. Sullivan made a motion to nominate Michael Healy to be Chairman of the Board; it was seconded by C. Zorra, and it was **voted 3 in favor / 2 opposed (P. Pozzi, M. Hines)**.

J. Sullivan made a motion to nominate Chris Zorra to remain as Vice-Chair; it was seconded by M. Healy, and it was **voted 3 in favor / 2 opposed (P. Pozzi, M. Hines)**.

J. Sullivan made a motion to nominate Michelle Hines as Clerk; it was seconded by C. Zorra, and it was **voted 5-0 all in favor**.

**B. Accept the requested withdrawal, by Aric Emond, for the Conditional Offer of Employment for the position of full-time Police Officer**

Captain Jardine requested withdrawing the conditional offer of employment of Aric Emond.

P. Pozzi asked if there was a reason for his withdrawal.

Captain Jardine explained he withdrew for personal reasons.

**J. Sullivan made a motion to withdraw the conditional offer of employment of Aric Emond; it was seconded by C. Zorra, was unanimously approved.**

**Vote: 5-0 all in favor**

**C. Consider the Conditional Offer of Employment to Eric Schoonmaker for the position of Full-Time Police Officer**

Captain Jardine requested a conditional offer of employment for Eric Schoonmaker. He was a Seekonk Police Officer from January 2020 to January 2023. He resigned to work for a larger agency. He recently asked to return to the Seekonk Police Department.

S. Cadime stated his recommendation was as stated by Captain Jardine.

P. Pozzi asked if this would be a lateral transfer back into the Department.

Captain Jardine answered Office Schoonmaker will return as a new employee/Third-Class Patrolman.

**C. Zorra made a motion to appoint Eric Schoonmaker to the position of full-time Police Officer for the Police Department subject to and conditioned upon a favorable review of his current employment record; it was seconded by M. Hines, was unanimously approved.**

**Vote: 5-0 all in favor**

**D. Consider appointing a member of the Board of Selectmen as liaison to TV9**

M. Healy said this item was put on the agenda because he has received phone calls from people expressing their concerns with Cable 9. He suggested having a member of the Board serve as a liaison from the committee.

P. Pozzi asked what the concerns were.

M. Healy said the concerns were money, hiring, and retention.

J. Sullivan said the BOS negotiates the contract through Comcast so all the money flows through Comcast to TV9.

M. Hines asked when the contract was signed.

J. Sullivan answered two years ago.

M. Hines how many members are on the Board.

M. Healy said he believes there are seven members on the Board.

M. Hines asked if previous BOS members brought this before the Board of TV9.

M. Healy answered no.

S. Cadime said liaisons do not have any authority or jurisdiction. It is similar to other liaisons we have, such as Bristol County Advisory Board, SRPEDD, and Tri County.

**J. Sullivan made a motion to appoint the Chairperson of Board of Selectmen, regardless of who is the Chairperson is, as the liaison; it was seconded by P. Pozzi, and it was unanimously approved.**

**Vote: 5-0 all in favor**

### **E. FY 24 Budget Hearing**

Mr. Cadime stated the proposed FY24 budget was presented to the Finance Committee at their April 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. It requires final approval from the Board. FY24 proposed budget the :

Stabilization Accounts - \$12.6M

- Stabilization Fund -\$5,724,725
- Municipal Capital Fund -\$1,352,117
- Building & Infrastructure Fund -\$1,146,659
- OPEB Trust Fund -\$4,356,560

FY24 Recommended Budget

#### ➤ Budget Assumptions:

- New Growth budgeted at \$450,000
- 2.5% Tax Levy increase as voted at the Quad Board Meeting
- Conservative assumption with local receipts
- General Unrestricted Local Aid and Chapter 70 based on Governor's Budget
- Payroll will be based on 52 weeks
- Dispatch, Library, Supervisors, Clerical, and Public Works have expired or expiring CBAs-no salary adjustments built into the budget.

P. Pozzi asked if there were any other contracts expiring that are not part of the CBAs and if they were accounted for in the budget.

S. Cadime explained any adjustments you see in salaries are based on contractual agreements. The increases are with active contracts. Those who have expiring contracts you will not see the increase.

FY24 Budget Summary:

- Balanced Budget of \$69,194,745
- Reflects a 3.5% increase over FY 23

General Fund

- \$67,801,622 budget
- General Government \$18,805,497
- Education \$33,345,175
- Fixed Cost and Debt Service \$15,650,950

FY24 Budgeted Resources:

- Sanitation Enterprise Fund
  - \$1,393,123 budget
  - Reflects a 3.3% increase over FY23
  
- State Aid: \$9,350,915
  - General Unrestricted Local Aid: \$1,574,275 (\$4,213 decrease)
  - Chapter 70: \$7,776,640 (\$569,159 increase)
  
- Tax Levy: \$51,901,613
  - Prior Year Base: \$47,852,929
  - 2.5% increase on base: \$1,196,323
  - Estimated New Growth: \$450,000
  - Debt Exclusion: \$2,402,361 (down by \$374,906 in FY23)
  
- Local Receipts: \$2,990,900
  - 17.4% increase from FY23
  
- Motor Vehicle Excise: \$2,900,000
  
- Other Revenue Sources: \$1,811,579
  - No use of Free Cash
  - Ambulance Receipts: \$1,300,000
  - Overlay Surplus: \$450,000
  - Other Revenue Sources: \$61,579

FY24 Departmental Budgets:

- General Government: 3.6% increase
- General Government Legal: 0% increase
- Public Safety: 5.1% increase
- Education: 3% increase
- Highway & Streets: 4.4% increase
- Other Environment: 3.3% decrease
- Human Services: 2.2% decrease
- Culture & Recreation: .6% decrease
- Debt & Interest: 9.9% decrease
- Other Fixed costs: 7.2% increase
- Sanitation Enterprise Fund: 3.3% increase

Percentage of Department Budgets:

- General Government: 28%
- Education: 49%
- Employee Benefits/Fixed Costs: 19%
- Debt Services: 4%

#### FY24 New Budget Items

- Fire Department
  - 5 new full-time positions
- Police Department
  - 2 new full-time positions
- Management Information Systems (MIS)
  - 1 new IT Specialist/Analyst
  - 1 new MUNIS Server
- Parks & Recreation
  - Recreation Coordinator - potential mid-year transition to full-time

S. Cadime also summarized the expected highlights/changes for each department including staffing plans for Public Safety and DPW. Also discussed were the FY24 Debt & Fixed Cost Highlights and the Education Highlights reflect a 3% increase over FY23. Tri County School is proposing a new building project and will increase Seekonk's assessment by approximately \$1M. Bristol County Agricultural School completed their building project last year.

The collection contract for sanitation is in year 10 of 10 and anticipate a significant increase due to recycling. They will go out to BID late summer/early fall.

M. Hines asked for clarification of the rubbish fees and separation of recyclables.

S. Cadime stated the trash bags pay for the tipping fee. The trash fee covers all disposal and collection. The DEP requires recycling.

P. Pozzi asked about an increase for utilities.

S. Cadime said they did have an increase to public safety but they have not witnessed the significant increase as proposed by the school department. The budget does reflect minor increases but they try to have a three-year budget forecast. He said they have seen a greater increase with motor vehicle fuel costs.

M. Healy thanked the Administration and Department Heads for presenting a balanced sustainable budget.

**COMMUNITY SPEAKS:** No one was present to speak

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:**

- A. South End Fire Station Building Committee – They are currently working on construction documents with the Architects.
- B. Department of Public Works Building Committee – They met with Brewster Thornton Group. They thought the fees were little high so they will go back to the consultants and subs.

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN LIAISON REPORTS AND COMMENTS**

- A. Accounts Payable Warrant
- B. Bristol County Advisory Board (M. Healy) – Waiting for notice of their upcoming meeting.
- C. Aitken School Expansion Building Committee Report (C. Zorra) – There was nothing new to report.
- D. 540 Arcade Avenue Building Committee Report (M. Hines) – Insulation is in and the drywall is being installed.

M. Hines suggested moving forward with changing the wording to gender neutral in the Charter, By-laws, Board/Committees, policies, signage, etc.

S. Cadime said the Board can make changes prior to making it formal in the Charter. They have been trying to make changes as new policies have been made.

Chair Healy said he would add this discussion to a future agenda. He also congratulated the new Board members for winning the elections and thanked Mr. Andrade and Mr. Petronio for their service to the Town.

### **Adjournment**

**C. Zorra made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:47 p.m. to A) conduct strategy sessions with respect to negotiations with Seekonk Firefighters Union IAFF Local 1931 per MGL c 30A § 21(a) (3) as having the discussion in open session would be detrimental to the litigation or bargaining position of the town; it was seconded by J. Sullivan, and unanimously approved.**

### **Roll Call Vote: 5-0 all in favor**

Justin Sullivan-Aye; Pam Pozzi-Aye; Chris Zorra-Aye; Michelle Hines-Aye; Michael Healy-Aye

Respectfully submitted,  
Michelle A. Hines, Clerk

Prepared by:  
Kristen L'Heureux

### **Items Distributed at the April 5, 2023 Board of Selectmen Meeting**

- Memo from Chief Enos, for the withdrawal, by Aric Emond, for the conditional offer of employment for the position of full-time Police Officer
- Memo from Chief Enos for conditional offer of employment to Eric Schoonmaker
- FY24 Budget presentation documents