

Minutes Holden Finance Committee, February 8, 2023, Senior Center

Members Present: Paul Challenger, Dave White, Chris Lucchesi, Don Graves, Al Berg, Jane Titcomb, Stephanie Adams, Donna Wallace, Marilyn Foley
Also Present: Peter Lukes Manager

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 P.M.

Peter updated the Committee on the status of FY 23 Capital Plan. Most vehicles on order have been delayed in delivery due to the shortage of computer parts, with the ambulance looking at an 18 month delay. The wait for the rest could be up to a year. The funds for these capital purchases have been encumbered and the town is locked into the prices quoted. Trucks #3 and #50 for the DPW have been purchased as well as new upgrades for Holden Cable TV. Dave suggested we should consider ordering another ambulance now rather than waiting to order next year, then waiting years to receive.

Peter reported on the new computer system, Clear Gov. that the town will install and use in the F/Y25 budget preparation. This will integrate with the Munis system now in use.

Peter reported that the Fire Department will apply for another SAFER Grant. If successful, the grant would fully cover the cost of 2 new EMT/Firemen for 3 years. This would provide the staffing 2-3 years earlier than the Chief's previous staffing plan called for, but due to increased call volumes, would be valuable to have.

Peter reported on ARPA funds received. The town received grants for \$5,700,000.00, with strict criteria for use of the funds, which have since been loosened to allow virtually any municipal use. The Town has spent about \$1.0M and encumbered another \$.8M. The remainder of the funds are a treasury note (about \$2,700,000.00). \$2.8M of the funds are planned to be used for Dawson/DPW field project. The money must be spent by December 31, 2026. Annual reports are due on March 31 each year.

Funds remaining from the DPW project will be used for the repairing of the Senior Center HVAC system.

Peter reported on the use of Chapter 90 funds received each year from the State. These funds can be used for road improvement and maintenance, any public works projects actually. The funds can also be rolled over for future use. The Town expends money, and then submits reimbursement requests. Almost all awards have been used, with only about a \$17,000 balance remaining to be drawn down.

Peter discussed the staffing study that had been completed comparing Holden with similar towns. Job descriptions of the 12 departments heads were evaluated as to compensation for the position. Most positions are fairly compensated now, with several required minor adjustments. The Assistant Town Manager, however, is significantly underpaid and will require a significant increase to get to market value. A similar study will be done for non-union staff in the coming year.

The committee discussed the goals formulated by the Finance Sub Committee's study. A motion by Al 2nd by Stephanie to approve the Goals as written was voted in favor 8-1 (opposed Jane).

A motion by Dave 2nd by Donna to approve the minutes of January 4, 2023 was voted unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn Foley, Clerk