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City of Amesbury
Office of the City Clerk
62 Friend St.
Amesbury, MA 01913

City Council Budget & Finance Subcommittee Minutes

March 18, 2025, at 6:30 PM

City Hall 62 Friend St.

Councilor Stanganelli called the meeting to order at 6:33 PM.

Roll was called and present were: Councilor Frederique, Councilor Redfern, and Councilor Stanganelli

Also Present: Chief of Staff Ann Marie Casey, Police Chief Craig Bailey and Administrative Assistant Allie Connolly

Minutes for Approval:

- Councilor Redfern stated she had previously sent the Clerk's Office two minor typographical edits for the minutes. Administrative Assistant Allie Connolly replied that these had since been corrected.

Councilor Frederique made a motion to accept the February 18, 2025 minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern and passed 3-0.

Communication and Updates: None

Public Comment: None

2025-030 An Order to transfer \$65,000.00 from Police Personal Services to Police Other Expenses.

- Police Chief Craig Bailey gave an overview of the request. He stated that these funds would be used for a new command vehicle. The Fire Department currently has three and the police has none.
- These funds are coming from within the police budget where there was excess funds leftover.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked what they are currently using for vehicles. Craig Bailey responded that currently they have two older Ford Taurus' and the Lieutenants share a Ford Explorer. With the acquisition of the new command vehicle the Taurus' will be kept and the Explorer will be turned in.

Councilor Frederique made a motion to return 2025-030 to the City Council with a positive recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern and passed 3-0.

2025-031 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$15,000 from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) Wellness Grant program to be used by the Amesbury Police Department.

- Police Chief Craig Bailey gave an overview of the grant and explained its purpose as a heart health program.

- This grant would go towards a program to conduct full cardiac screenings for every officer. The cost is \$700 per officer.
- Councilor Redfern asked what the frequency of these screenings/program use would be. Craig Bailey answered that the idea is to have the screenings done once initially and that the officers would then follow up with their primary care and seek out preventative measures.
- Councilor Frederique asked if there was anything else they would need to follow through with this program and Craig Bailey said no.
- Councilor Frederique asked if currently there are any gym membership stipends. Craig Bailey answered no, but he did state there are physical fitness incentives currently.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked where the wiggle room in the budget came from to be used towards this program. Craig Bailey said he is pulling from the physical fitness incentive funds which did not get fully met this year.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked if the hope would be to utilize this program again in future years or if there are any insurance benefits for participating. Craig Bailey said he is hopeful MIIA continues funding for this and that questions about insurance premiums would be for MIIA.

Councilor Frederique made a motion to return 2025-031 to the City Council with a positive recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern and passed 3-0

2025-032 An Order to authorize a transfer of \$30,000.00 from the FY25 Budget Reserve account to the Legal Consultant Services account.

- Chief of Staff Ann Marie Casey gave an overview of the status of the Legal Consultant Services account. She stated that \$125,000 was the FY25 Budget and currently the total usage is 105,000. The team anticipates spending over what is left.
- Ann Marie Casey explained there were several bigger issues that required legal counseling this year including the solar farm, several civil service cases, terminating cable services... These bigger scale issues accounted for the higher spending. Typically 2-3 thousand per month would be expected.
- Still left in this year are all 5 Union Negotiations and remaining solar farm counseling which they anticipate being costly issues.
- Councilor Frederique asked if the administration has explored ways to reduce the cost of legal fees or inquired about a different firm.
- Ann Marie Casey answered that yes, they have explored other options, but they have not proved to be more cost beneficial.
- Councilor Frederique asked if the requested transfer would cover all remaining anticipated costs for the year. Ann Marie Casey said yes, they are hopeful it will.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked a question about the billing cycle of the legal fees. Ann Marie Casey explained that sometimes they do not receive all legal hours/fees at once.
- Councilor Stanganelli asked if the administration has considered in house counsel versus an outside firm. Ann Marie Casey answered that yes, they have investigated this, but it is not necessarily less expensive. Also, with a firm you have access to a variety of specialties versus one person who may be more limited.

Councilor Frederique made a motion to return 2025-032 to the City Council with a positive recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern and passed 3-0.

2025-033 An Order to authorize the Mayor to accept and expend a grant in the amount of \$9,020.00 from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency to be used by Amesbury Emergency Management Agency, which is managed by the Amesbury Fire Chief.

- Chief of Staff Ann Marie Casey spoke on behalf of Fire Chief James Nolan, she stated this is a grant they have seen before in FY24. She mentioned that Chief Nolan will be present at next week's City Council Meeting to answer any further questions.

Councilor Frederique made a motion to return 2025-033 to the City Council with a positive recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Redfern and passed 3-0.

Adjourn: Councilor Frederique made a motion to adjourn at 7:02. Councilor Redfern seconded, and the motion passed unanimously (3-0).

Respectfully Submitted,

Allie Connolly