

Finance Committee Meeting

February 7, 2024 7:00 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building – Room #229
900 Main Street Millis, MA 02054

Committee Members In Attendance:

Jonathan Loer, Chair
Michael Krone, Vice Chair
Peter Underhill, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Cathy MacInnes
Sara Reyes
Jen Zarutskie

Invited Guest in Attendance:

Chief Rick Barrett, Fire and Rescue
Michael Guzinski, Town Administrator
Craig Schultze, Select Board Chair

Jon Loer called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and made the attendees aware the meeting is being recorded.

Fire and Rescue FY25 Budget Presentation:

Chief Barrett outlined the Fire and Rescue Department's functions, staffing, community involvement, accomplishments and call volume. The department is essentially the "Swiss Army Knife" of Public Safety. The department's staff includes:

- (1) Full-time Fire Chief
- (4) Full-time Lieutenants
- (12) Full-time Fire Fighter/EMTs
- (13) On Call Fire Fighter/EMTs

The (16) Full-time Members work a (4) group system; groups consist of (1) Lieutenant and (3) Fire Fighter/EMTs. On Call members cover from 6:00 PM – 6:00 AM. The department saw the largest increase in simultaneous calls last year; 410. Ninety-three percent of calls were responded to before requesting Mutual Aid. EMS Call Volume has steadily increased 10 – 15% every year which is due to:

- Forty-four Percent of Millis' population is over the age of 55
- Regency at Glen Ellen – approximately 650 residents
- Acorn Place – approximately 100 residents
- Anthology (Assisted Living Facility) – approximately 125 residents
- Kennedy and Harry King Terraces – approximately 110 residents

The department has also had a 10% increase in Fire Calls. The department provides ALS (Advanced Life Support) Services to Dover, Holliston and Sherborn.

One of their greatest accomplishments was in response to a structure fire at Stoneybrook Drive on May 24, 2023. There were 32 apartments and 75 residents with smoke on three floors; all residents were evacuated. A temporary shelter was set up at Town Hall. The Police and School Departments assisted with transportation. Town Hall staff worked with the Millis Fund to provide food and other resources.

The FY25 Budget includes:

Salaries:	\$2,221,872.00
Expenses:	<u>\$ 375,100.00</u>
Total:	<u>\$2,596,972.00</u>

Salaries are funded from Ambulance Revenue, \$814,682.00 and Taxation, \$1,407,190.00. Ambulance Revenues have increased 27.5% over the last three Fiscal Years. FY24 Revenues for seven months are \$53,203.93 which is already a 9% increase from FY23. Expenses include EMT Certifications, Training, Consulting Services for Medical Control Doctors, Medical Supplies and Preventive Maintenance.

The department received a grant of \$15,000.00 for Turnout Gear, \$7,500.00 for Education Programs, \$5,000.00 for Emergency Response Equipment and \$11,000.00 for radios.

Above Level Service for a Full-time Captain/EMS Coordinator is being requested. The Salary range is \$90,000.00 - \$102,000.00. The position will be responsible for the increased responsibilities of the current EMS Coordinator, increased request for Inspections and Code Compliance. A recent retirement has left the department lacking a Second in Command and will build a clear succession plan.

A Capital Request in the amount of \$85,000.00 will replace Car #2, a 2012 Chevy Tahoe with approximately 70,000 miles. The department has instituted a 5-year replacement plan for smaller apparatus. However, the department typically extends the life of the equipment, etc. The replacement cost is from the Massachusetts Bid List and will be fully equipped. Upcoming Capital Replacements include Engine #5 and Brush #2 which will be combined into one piece of apparatus. Ambulance #2, the build time is 40 months and will need to be ordered next year. The presentation is available on the Finance Committee's Webpage:

https://www.millisma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif901f/uploads/fire_and_rescue_fy25_budget_presentation.pdf

The FY24 Budget is on track with the exception of the Shift Coverage Line Item; three members of the department are out on injury.

Jon Loer asked the committee to forward any questions to him prior to Department Budget Presentations which will allow the Department Head to be prepared to answer.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Mike Krone made a motion to approve the January 17, 2024 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes as written; Joyce Boairdi seconded. Vote: 7/0. Motion carries unanimously.

Board and Committee Liaison Updates:

Jon Loer, CPC (Capital Planning Committee) liaison outlined the requests to date:

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| • Fire & Rescue Car #2 Replacement | \$ 85,000.00 |
| • Library Exterior Building Repairs | \$ 35,000.00 |
| • Town Buildings Boom Lift | \$ 45,000.00 |
| • VMB Stairs | \$150,000.00 |
| • Council on Aging Vehicle Replacement | \$ 10,000.00 |
| • IT School Server | \$ 65,000.00 |
| • School Skid Steer | \$ 67,000.00 |
| • School Network Switch Project | \$ 70,000.00 |

Animal Control and DPW have Capital Item Requests as well. The CPC is scheduled to meet on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at 7:00 PM. Mike Krone suggested the schools might consider an IT cloud-based system as opposed to a server. Joyce Boairdi requested clarification on FTE: Full-time Equivalent or Full-time Employee. Mike Krone suggested the Liaison List be updated.

Old Business/New Business:

Cathy MacInnes attended a Webinar for Finance Committees and will put together a summary of questions for the Town Administrator and Finance Director.

Mike Krone and Jon Loer are working on the Finance Committee's summary for the Town's 2023 Annual Report. The summary will include the events of Town Meetings and the committee's position on the Tri-County Vocational School Project.

Adjourn Meeting:

Peter Underhill made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:10 PM; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 7/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore