TOWN OF STONINGTON
BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING
Stonington Police Department Meeting Room
Wednesday, June 1st, 2022
7:15 PM

A meeting of the Board of Finance was held on this date at the Stonington Police Department Meeting Room. Members present were Chairman Tim O’Brien, Michael Fauerbach, Lynn Young, Bob Statchen and Chris Johnson. Members Deborah Norman and David Motherway were not in attendance.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:16 pm.

Public Comments: None.

Previous Minutes: No previous minutes were available at this time for review.

Bid waiver Requests:
Bid Waiver Request from the Public Works Director for various bid waivers for fiscal 2022/2023:

Barbara McKrell, the Public Works Director, asked for several bid waivers to obtain equipment approved for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. She presented a memo showing eight quotes for equipment using State and Sourcewell purchasing cooperative contracted vendors, totaling $447,826.96. The Chairman called for a motion to approve the bid waiver request for the purchase; Lynn Young motioned, and Chris Johnson seconded. The Chairman called for discussion; Ms. McKrell noted a correction was needed to bid request #4. The Brush Bandit Chipper from Bobcat of Connecticut, was quoted at $33,515.00, but didn’t include optional add-ons. Ms. McKrell requested the chipper quote be updated to $41,204.70, which would include the add-ons, bringing the bid waiver total to $455,516.66.

Ms. McKrell continued, stating she expects about $15,000.00 back from equipment trade-ins, leaving this year’s Public Works approved 22/23 fiscal budget of $470,000.00 with a $30,000.00 cushion, once the new equipment is purchased. Gengras Ford, one of the State-approved vendors, indicated to Ms. McKrell that their quote may change soon, so she came to the board to expedite the bid waiver approval.

The Chairman requested the initial motion to be withdrawn; Ms. Young and Mr. Johnson withdrew the motion in lieu of the bid waiver correction. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the updated bid waiver total for $455,516.66 of equipment approved for the 22/23 fiscal year; Lynn Young made the motion, and Chris Johnson seconded the motion. The Chairman called for a continuation of the discussion, and Mr. Statchen requested some insight regarding the
Sourcewell and State bidding processes. Tom Curioso, the Highway Supervisor, explained Sourcewell purchasing cooperative offers bids through a government vendor database, often providing steep discounts for equipment. However, Ms. McKrell noted that when State contractors have a better offer, she’ll opt to use State vendors instead. The Board had questions pertaining to the vendors and possible equipment delays, which Mr. Curioso and Ms. McKrell addressed.

The Chairman called for a vote on the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Bid Waiver Request from the Chief of Police (License Plate Reader Cameras):

Chief DelGrosso, the Stonington Chief of Police, asked for a bid waiver to enter a two-year service and lease agreement with Flock Group Inc. to obtain four license plate reader cameras for the Town. The cost over two years would be $21,400.00, $10,700.00 annually for the four cameras and associated software. The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the bid waiver total of $24,400.00 for the license plate reader cameras from Flock Group Inc. Mr. Statchen made the motion, and Ms. Young seconded. The Chairman called for discussion.

Chief DelGrosso explained the Flock Group technology easily integrates with the current department camera system, with the quote including four Flock proprietary license plate reading cameras for monitoring traffic.

Mr. Fauerbach asked about annual fees for the Flock cameras, and Chief DelGrosso stated that for the four proposed cameras, there’s a $350.00 per camera installation fee, with an annual service fee of $2,500.00 per camera per a two-year contract, totaling $21,400.00. The Board asked for clarification about camera/technology leasing options, and reviewed examples of how the plate reading technology will be used with Chief DelGrosso. Chief DelGrosso said a reduction in man-hours will be expected, with the efficiencies the Flock camera technology provides.

The Chairman asked if the bid waiver request fulfills the costs of the 2022/2023 contract, and Chief DelGrosso confirmed it would cover the full two-year contract. Mr. Fauerbach asked if other towns use the Flock camera technology, and Chief DelGrosso cited examples of other towns using it, particularly towns with Axon camera systems. Chief DelGrosso noted that with the two-year contract, if the technology doesn’t work as well as expected, they wouldn’t be locked into a costlier, long-term system. There was further discussion with Chief DelGrosso about the Flock proprietary technology, and future plans for the Town’s camera system. Mr. Fauerbach suggested that the four-camera, two-year trial is ideal, before investing in a larger camera system.

Mr. Johnson noted that the initial bid waiver motion was for $24,400.00, which was actually the total line-item transfer request figure to the telecommunications line, not the bid waiver request amount, the bid waiver request amount should only be for $21,400.00. Therefore, the Chairman asked for the Mr. Statchen’s motion to be withdrawn. The Chairman called for a new motion to approve the revised bid waiver request of $21,400.00, for license plate reader cameras from Flock Group. Mr. Statchen made the motion and Ms. Young seconded.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion was unanimously passed.
**Line-Item Transfer Requests:**

- Mr. O’Brien requested a motion to approve the request from the Solid Waste Manager to transfer $51,000.00 from account #10152-80260 “Disposal Fees (SCRRA)” to account #10152-80262 “Commercial Collections”. Mr. Fauerbach made the motion, and Ms. Young seconded. The Solid Waste Manager, John Phetteplace, was not in attendance, so the Chairman reviewed a memo showing commercial collections have gone up, leading to a $51,000.00 shortfall in the Commercial Collections account. At the same time, residential haulage is down, and Mr. Phetteplace predicts a $56,000.00 surplus in the SCRRRA Disposal Fees/Residential MSW account. Therefore the $51,000.00 line-item transfer will cover the shortage in Commercial Collections.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion was unanimously passed.

- The Chairman called for a motion to approve the request from the Director of Economic and Community Development to transfer $2,030.00 from account #10141-80166 “Professional Services” to account #10126-80096 “Community Development Project Assistant” to cover additional services provided by planning department intern. Ms. Young motioned, with Mr. Statchen seconding the motion. Susan Cullen, the Director of Economic and Community Development, was not in attendance. The Chairman explained that the previously funded Community Development intern project took longer than expected, and the transfer will cover the deficit.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion passed unanimously.

- Mr. O’Brien called for a motion to approve the request from the Chief of Police to approve yearend line-item transfers within in the Police Department budget. Ms. Young made the motion, and Mr. Fauerbach seconded. The Chairman called for questions, and Mr. Statchen asked about the privacy aspect of the license plate reader cameras from the public’s perspective. Chief DelGrosso explained that there are already several cameras monitoring traffic, and officers in cruisers currently have the ability to scan plates while patrolling. Chief DelGrosso stated that since this data is already being collected and reviewed, the implementation of the Flock technology makes the license plate scanning process more efficient. Chief DelGrosso continued, saying he’s opting to limit the system to four Flock cameras, and not a larger camera network like many municipalities rely on. Chief DelGrosso referenced other real-world examples for the Board, and various restrictions and limitations that will be implemented with the technology.

The Board Members asked Chief DelGrosso questions pertaining to various transfer request line-items, officer recruitment and overtime estimates.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion was unanimously passed.

- The Chairman asked for a motion to approve the request from the Public Works Director to approve various yearend line-item transfers totaling $179,548.00 within the Public Works and Facilities departments budgets. Mr. Johnson motioned, and the motion was seconded by Ms. Young. Mr. O’Brien called for discussion; Mr. Johnson
addressed the $12,000.00 Sand/Gravel line-item to complete repair and leveling work at the Town Dock after the removal of the Lobster Pot Tree, asking if it would be recurring every year. Ms. McKrell explained it wouldn’t be a recurring expense; the land had a steep slope that needed to be leveled once, but is now available for the Holiday Tree and Blessing of the Fleet.

Ms. Young asked why there was $55,000.00 remaining in the labor salary, and $20,000.00 in the seasonal help line-items. Ms. McKrell said an employee was injured and was out for the year, and therefore wasn’t being paid as much. Barbara explained that the DPW has also had a difficult time finding seasonal help, despite several proactive measures. Ms. Young asked what “DEP Com Town-wide” was, and why there was $5,000,000 remaining in the budget line. Ms. McKrell detailed various mandatory reporting and compliance requirements that have to be completed every few years, however, she noted this year all the compliance requirements were still in effect from prior year so the funds were not required in current year. The Board inquired of several other line-items, and Ms. McKrell provided summaries of the various expenses and future DPW/Highway projects.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion was unanimously passed.

Additional Appropriation/Transfer of ARPA Grant Funding Requests:

Leanne Theodore, the Human Services Director, requested an additional appropriation of $486,133.00 of ARPA grant funding to fully fund reconstruction of tennis courts with lights (or $499,333.00, if with lights and netting), from ARPA contingency line-item, pursuant to bids received last week for the project. Ms. Theodore wasn’t in attendance, so the Chairman summarized the current status of the project. The tennis court bids were received and bids came in higher than anticipated, necessitating the request for additional funding. The chairman noted that two other ARPA funded projects, the Town Hall and Human Services HVAC projects, are anticipated to be more costly than anticipated, so these two HVAC projects have been postponed in the case of the Human Services project, and scaled down in the case of the Town Hall project. With that being the case, a portion of the ARPA contingency line-item that was earmarked for the two HVAC projects can be reassigned to the tennis court project. Mr. O’Brien noted the Director of Finance, James Sullivan, and Richard Ward, the Town Recreation Administrator, suggested the remainder of the contingency fund would suffice to fund the Town Hall boilers and HVAC electrical upgrades.

Mr. Fauerbach asked what the current bid is for the courts with lights, the total bid including alts 1 & 2 which includes lighting is $1,071,500.00. Mr. O’Brien said the full tennis court project, including alts 1, 2, & 3, would require $499,333.00 of ARPA grant funding, plus $692,517.00 of previously budgeted funds, totaling $1.92M. There was detailed discussion among Board Members about the project costs. The Board also discussed the Town Hall boiler/electrical project considerations, along with other various ARPA funded projects.

Mr. Fauerbach referenced the previous estimate for the court project, and the recent $216,000.00 estimate increase. Mr. Ward said the earlier estimate wasn’t a formal bid just an engineer’s estimate, and the actual bid accounts for inflation, the pickle ball courts and other additions. Mr.
Ward stressed the quote expires at the end of this month; therefore, the tennis court contract should be signed at once.

The Chairman called for a motion to approve the additional appropriation of ARPA funds for $499,333.00 to the tennis court projects coming out of contingency line-item for ARPA funds; Ms. Young made the motion; it was seconded by Mr. Statchen. The Chairman called for further discussion, and Mr. Statchen asked what happens to the remaining $750,000.00 in the ARPA fund account. Mr. O’Brien explained if the ARPA funds aren’t spent by January 2024, they will be returned, therefore the tennis courts are a great use of the funds.

The Chairman called for a vote, and the motion was passed unanimously.

**Additional Appropriations:**

No change from last meeting.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Liaison Reports:** None.

The Chairman requested a motion to adjourn; a motion was made by Mr. Fauerbach, with Mr. Statchen seconding. The motion was passed unanimously at 8:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Eckert

Board of Finance Recording Secretary

6/1/22