

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
As a Committee of the Whole
MAY 13, 2019 AT 6:30 p.m.
COMMITTEE ROOM
WOBURN CITY HALL**

Voting Members present: Chairman Michael Concannon, Alderman Edward Tedesco, Alderman Richard Gately, Alderman Lindsay Higgins, Alderman Robert Ferullo, Alderman Darlene Mercer-Bruen, Alderman Mark Gaffney, and President Michael Anderson. Absent: Alderman Joanne Campbell

Also present: Mayor Scott Galvin

* * * * *

Order to transfer the sum of \$334,399.62 from Unreserved Fund Balance Acct to Teamsters, Non-Union Dept Heads, City Hall SEIU, DPW/Cemetery/Parks, Non-Union Non Dept Heads – Purpose: Contract Settlements & Commitments: Mayor Galvin said this is not the final appropriation for contractual raises as the administration has still not settled with the library and police superior officers’ unions. He said he is optimistic the library workers will settle. He said there was a meeting with the superior officers today and negotiations will move on to the next step. Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen that the order “ought to pass;” approved, 8-0.

With the following departments, to review the Fiscal Year 2020 budget: Chairman Concannon said the Finance Committee will conduct meetings with the city’s department heads, starting with the mayor, whose departmental budget is on page 2.

Mayor – Mayor Galvin said is a line item of \$160,000 for pending contract settlements that will roll over into FY ’20. He said the remainder of his budget is pretty straightforward. He said he also sent a cover letter explaining the challenges in compiling a municipal budget. He said in addition to his appearance tonight he is also available by phone or in his office to answer questions. He said he will be at the council’s budget hearing on June 10. Alderman Gately asked if \$160,000 will cover the increases in the union contracts that remain unsettled. Mayor Galvin said there are only about 20 superior officers and that the library is also a small union, but he will probably will have to come back for more money once the contracts are settled. He said his budget is basically level-funded.

Inspectional Services – Chairman Concannon said the Inspectional Services budget is on page 28. Building Commission Thomas Quinn said his budget is pretty straightforward. He said there is an anticipated increase in overtime and temporary help to accommodate what is expected to be an increased work load associated with the Woburn Mall and other pending projects. He said he anticipates permits will start being issued for the mall in July. He said he will be back before the council to fund the overtime account. Alderman Gately said there are increases in wages and sick leave buy back. He said he knows about the increase in the overtime account. He said the departmental budget is otherwise level-funded all the way around. Commissioner Quinn said he tries to take a conservative approach with the budget, but he said he expects there will be additional costs associated with the permitting of the mall project. He said it thought it would be

better to come back later with the hard number rather than an estimate now. He said he does not want to ask the council for more money twice. Alderman Gately asked if Commissioner Quinn has talked to the mayor about overtime and costs. Commissioner Quinn said he has. Alderman Mercer-Bruen thanked Commissioner Quinn and his staff for their efforts with the mall project. She said she thinks every municipal department that was involved in the project did a great job. She said she does not think a lot of people know the Building Dept. handles enforcement and complimented Commissioner Quinn and his staff for making sure things get done right. Alderman Gately said the Building Dept. does a fabulous job.

Veterans Affairs – Chairman Concannon said the Veterans Affairs budget is on page 51. Director of Veterans Affairs Larry Guisepe said he is representing both the Veterans Services budget on page 51 and the United Veterans Council budget on page 52. He drew the committee's attention to the line item for Cash Aid and said the initial appropriation of \$250,000 will be about half of what will be needed to sustain the program. He said what has been done over the past four years or so is make an initial appropriation to get through December 31 and then come back later in the fiscal year. He said cash aid is reimbursed at a ratio of 75 percent by the state. He said the total amount of cash aid disbursed during the year is around \$500,000. He said the remainder of the budget is level-funded, as it has been for the past seven years. Alderman Gately asked how long the \$250,000 appropriation for cash aid will last. Director Guisepe said it will get the department through the end of December, and then he will make a supplemental budget request. Alderman Gately said Director Guisepe does a fabulous job and the city of Woburn is lucky to have him.

Engineering – Chairman Concannon said the City Engineer's budget is on page 32. City Engineer John Corey said the departmental budget is level-funded. He said his department receives funding from multiple sources. He said the vast majority of the budget is devoted to salaries. Alderman Tedesco asked if there is an allocation for a traffic consultant. Engineer Corey said a capital line item for a traffic consultant was submitted. Alderman Tedesco said the addition of a traffic consultant has been beneficial to the Traffic Commission so far. Engineer Corey said he agrees with Alderman Tedesco. Alderman Gately said there is a slight increase in the line item for office supplies but he would let that slide because there is a decrease in the line item for consultants. He asked how new GIS Coordinator Matthew Barrett is working out. Engineer Corey said Coordinator Barrett has been a wonderful addition to the department. He said Coordinator Barrett has proved particularly adept at disseminating information on social media, and that has allowed the department to communicate with a lot more people. Alderman Gately asked if Engineer Corey has heard from former GIS Coordinator Bret Gonsalves. Engineer Corey said Mr. Gonsalves will take over the Stoneham Dept. of Public Works next week. President Anderson thanked Engineer Corey and his staff for their efforts throughout the permitting process for the Woburn Mall. Engineer Corey said the effort with the mall was collaborative. President Anderson said Engineer Corey and his department bore a large share of the burden. President Anderson asked about the status of the fish ladder at the Scalley Dam. Engineer Corey said an estimated 15,000-20,000 river herring have come through the spillway. He said the herring do have a high mortality rate and they tend to get caught up in the stones. He said the Great Blue Herons at the pond sit at the top of the spillway and pick off some of the fish. Alderman Mercer-Bruen thanked Engineer Corey for his efforts with the mall project. She said most people don't know how much time and effort the City Engineer's office put into that

project. She asked if it would be worth the city's while to hire a full-time traffic engineer. Engineer Corey said he does not think there would be enough for a full-time traffic engineer to do. He said the addition of a traffic engineer would also require the purchase of very complex software and equipment. He said the traffic engineer would have to be an expert in the field. Alderman Mercer-Bruen asked if Engineer Corey is satisfied with the current arrangement of hiring consultants. Engineer Corey said the arrangement is satisfactory. He said the city would also have to pay benefits and a pension to a full-time employee.

Information Technology – Chairman Concannon said the Information Technology budget is on page 9. Chief Innovation Officer David Mastronardi said it has been another busy year in the Information Technology Dept. He said Craig Dean, a new operations specialist, was brought on board last month and he is getting up to speed very quickly. Officer Mastronardi said he is planning to undertake a data system refresh which will be funded in the capital budget. Alderman Gately asked when Operations Specialist Dean was hired. Officer Mastronardi said his first day was April 29. Alderman Tedesco said the salary for the position was approved earlier in the year. Alderman Gately asked if the appropriation for the salary was \$73,900. Mayor Galvin said last November he asked for half the salary and another \$15,000 to cover benefits. He said the council approved half the salary last year. He said Operations Specialist Dean is set up with the union. Alderman Gately said the IT budget took a pretty good hit and it is receiving \$21,000 less than last year. Officer Mastronardi said his department makes due with what it is allotted. He said he is happy to have a new IT person. Alderman Gately asked what Operations Specialist Dean will do. Officer Mastronardi said he will spend a lot of time getting up to speed on systems. He said he does not want to put too much on him to start. Alderman Gately asked if the IT Dept. has been working with the Schools. Officer Mastronardi said the Schools have their own IT setup. Alderman Ferullo thanked Officer Mastronardi for his help in getting him set up with technology when he joined the council. Alderman Mercer-Bruen thanked Officer Mastronardi for all he does. She asked if Officer Mastronardi is comfortable with the security systems the city has in place. Officer Mastronardi said security systems are constantly changing. He said he does not want to speak too much about security at a public meeting which is being televised. He said he is willing to speak to Alderman Mercer-Bruen privately. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said security is clearly a priority in the IT Dept., and she appreciates that. Officer Mastronardi said security is always the number one concern. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said often-times she directs constituents to the city's website, but it can be difficult for them to find projects because they are replaced by newer items. Officer Mastronardi said he is working on the projects page. He said he has Operations Specialist Dean is working on that. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said the Eversource matter was posted but over time was replaced by other items. She asked if each alderman could have a spot on the webpage to post items of interest. She said she has heard from people who have had difficulty navigating the website. Officer Mastronardi said the website is supposed to feature newer content. Alderman Higgins said she enlists the aid of Officer Mastronardi a couple of times every year and he is always quick to respond.

Woburn Public Library – Chairman Concannon said the Woburn Public Library's budget is on page 53 and 54. WPL Director Bonnie Roalsen said the library budget is pretty straightforward and designed to provide the community with adequate access to library services. She said the new facility opened on March 16 and there has been a sharp spike in usage. Alderman Gately asked Director Roalsen where she worked before coming to Woburn. Director Roalsen said she

worked in Dedham and Dover. Alderman Gately said there were 23 employees at the library before the remodel and now there are 28 employees. He said the line items for utilities and telephone went up about \$69,000. He asked if there has been an increase in attendance since the new library opened. Director Roalsen said there has been a sharp spike in attendance. She said 15,000 people have registered for library cards. Alderman Gately said he did not vote in favor of the library addition. He said he did not like the cost per square footage. He said there are more people working at the library than the DPW puts on the ground every day. He said the library addition resulted in a big hit to the taxpayers of the city. He said none of that is Director Roalsen's fault, though, and he hopes she does well there. Director Roalsen said it is a real privilege to be the director of the Woburn Public Library. Alderman Gately said the library addition came with a big price tag that he did not think was necessary. Alderman Ferullo said he thinks the library is beautiful. He asked Director Roalsen to be as conservative as she can be with expenditures. He said he comes from the public safety realm and the library has hired more people than other departments. He said she has to maintain a conservative approach. Chairman Concannon said the city spent a lot of money on the library under the rationale that if the city builds it, people will come, and they are coming. Director Roalsen said people are indeed using the library. Chairman Concannon welcomed Director Roalsen to Woburn.

Fire – Chairman Concannon said the Fire Dept.'s budget can be found on pages 24-27. Chairman Concannon said he has a relative who works for the Fire Dept. He said he has sought consultation on ethical matters involving the Fire Dept. He said he can participate in the discussion but was advised to abstain from a vote on any page on which the relative's name appears. Chief Stephen Adgate said his departmental budget is basically self-explanatory. He thanked Alderman Ferullo for his previous comment about manpower in the public safety realm and he concurs with the Alderman's point. Alderman Gately asked how the addition of a second set of turnout gear is working out. Chief Adgate said the second set of turnout gear is working out fine. He said he appreciates the council's support and the steps that were taken to address the issues that firefighters have to face. Alderman Gately asked about building maintenance. Chief Adgate said building maintenance comes under the jurisdiction of the DPW. He said there have been conversations about the Fire Dept. taking back maintenance and he would be in favor of that. He said the goal of establishing a central headquarters is paramount. President Anderson asked if there are any requests from the Fire Dept. in the capital budget. Chief Adgate said he requested money for a new Engine 5. He said the money for a new ambulance has been approved, and it made more sense this year to take the money out of ambulance receipts. Mayor Galvin said a \$650,000 outlay for a new pumper still has to be approved by the council. Chief Adgate said his job is to advocate for the Woburn Fire Dept. He said he and the mayor have conversations about how to improve conditions for firefighters on a daily basis. President Anderson said there have been discussion among the chief, the mayor and members of the City Council to review the facilities. He said there have been discussions about building one new fire house and two satellites. He said money is a determining factor. He said he expects there will be a recommendation in the near future. Alderman Ferullo complimented the Fire Dept. for their efforts to battle the opioid crisis in the city. He said Woburn's firefighters are literally saving lives. He said they are doing a phenomenal job. Chief Adgate said he would pass that compliment along to the members. Alderman Higgins said she was going to ask about the status of the fire stations but that subject was already broached by President Anderson. Alderman Gately said the Fire Dept. does a great job. He said there have been discussions about building a

fire station for a long time. He said the council has been trying to get the Fire Dept. the facilities it needs. He said he hopes he is around to see a new headquarters. Chief Adgate said his department works with the resources it has to do the best job it can. Alderman Mercer-Bruen thanked Chief Adgate for all the work he did on the Woburn Mall. She said there were a lot of questions and Chief Adgate's expertise was invaluable. Chairman Concannon said the chief's efforts with the turnout gear issue were much appreciated. Chairman Concannon said the Finance Committee will resume budget deliberations with 7-8 department heads on Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

Motion made by Alderman Mercer-Bruen and seconded by Alderman Tedesco to adjourn; approved, 8-0. Chairman Concannon adjourned the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

Attest: _____
Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees