

**COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
As a Committee of the Whole
JUNE 22, 2020 AT 6:32 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBER
WOBURN CITY HALL**

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

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Order to transfer \$20,137.00 from Stabilization-Affordable Housing Acct to Planning Consultant/Peer Review Acct: Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to accept a related memorandum from Mayor Scott Galvin and make it part of the permanent record; all in favor, 9-0. Chairman Concannon asked if there is any discussion. Motion made by President Anderson and seconded by Alderman Tedesco that the order “ought to pass,” approved, 9-0.

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MOTION made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to approve the minutes of the meetings of May 26, 2020; June 8, 2020; and June 18, 2020; all in favor, 9-0.

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Discussion of the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget with the following departments: Chairman Concannon said the Finance Committee is doing things a little differently this year by bringing in the heads of major departments and those department heads who volunteered to appear before the committee. He said members of the committee can reach out on their own with questions to department heads who opted not to appear before the committee. **Mayor** – Chairman Concannon said the mayor’s budget can be found on page 2 of the mayor’s draft copy of the FY ’21 budget. Mayor Galvin said the big thing that’s missing from this year’s departmental budget page is salary adjustments due to contractual obligations. He said salary adjustments have already been factored into each department’s budget. Mayor Galvin asked if any of the committee members have questions about his department’s budget or the budget in general. Alderman Gately asked about a \$15,000 increase in the City Stat line item. Mayor Galvin replied he is looking at hiring three part-time analysts. He said the City Stat program may be expanded. He said Alderman Ferullo can confirm to the committee the Police Dept. would appreciate a little help. He said he is thinking about project management. He said three existing City Hall employees would be approached about City Stat. Alderman Gately asked if the budget is otherwise level-funded. Mayor Galvin said it has been one of those years. He said the city is not trying to undertake too many new initiatives. He said the School Dept. budget is going up another 1 percent and that increase will be offset from federal money. He said the city has been very generous to the schools. He said the overall increase in the school budget is close to 5 percent. He said it is important that message is put out there clearly. President Anderson said the council amended the

ordinance to provide for increases in the mayor's salary. He asked if the salary has been capped. He said the mayor's salary is the same as it was this year. Mayor Galvin said the mayor's salary line item is \$123,000. He said he thinks it is capped. He said his job is a lot easier when the City Council understands the city's financial picture. He said thinks the mayor's office and the City Council have worked very well together. He said the city asks a lot from its employees. He said the city appreciates the hard work they do. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said the city is very fortunate. She said the city is ready for a rainy day. She asked if there is any possibility the City Stat program can be accessed from a phone. Mayor Galvin said the city has two systems they hope to merge. Alderman Higgins said she uses the on-line application all the time. She said she was able to download the app to her phone. Mayor Galvin asked if that goes to Q-Alert. He said there are two different apps. Alderman Mercer-Bruen said Q-Alert is the system the city has asked its residents to use and it doesn't work with a phone. Mayor Galvin said Information Technology Director David Mastronardi is working on it. **Veterans Services** – Chairman Concannon said the Veterans Services Dept. budget can be found on pages 51 and 52. Director of Veterans Services Lawrence Guiseppe said his proposed departmental budget for FY '21 is basically the same as it's been, but he wanted to appear before the committee to address a couple of issues. He said the new flag park at Ferullo Field in North Woburn has been turned over the city of Woburn. He said the flags cost approximately \$5,000 to replace and his department will be looking into that. He said Friends of Woburn Veterans has committed to putting a sprinkler system around the area where the flags are located. He said he has spoken to Parks Supt. James DeLong about installing a sprinkler system around the entire park. He said during the Covid-19 pandemic he added 14 new clients for veterans' cash aid. He said he assumes most of them will go back to work once the pandemic subsides. He said all his cash aid has been disbursed for this fiscal year. He said the Veterans Services Dept. is in good shape. Alderman Gately asked Director Guiseppe if there have been any problems with reimbursement of cash aid by the state. Director Guiseppe said reimbursement used to take 2-3 months but the books for May have already been closed and certified. He said the state is turning around the reimbursements in 2-3 days due to the emergency situation with the pandemic. Alderman Gately said Director Guiseppe is doing a great job. He said the flag park came out beautifully. Alderman Ferullo thanked Director Guiseppe on behalf of his family for his efforts to create the flag park. Chairman Concannon said the line item for flags and graves was reduced by the mayor from \$8,000 to \$5,000. Director Guiseppe said he asked for an increase of \$4,000. Chairman Concannon said the city will have to come up with that money later in the year if necessary. Director Guiseppe said they lost a few flags to vandalism and damage. Alderman Gately asked who would vandalize a flag. Director Guiseppe said one of the flags was stolen. **Fire** – Representing the Woburn Fire Dept. were Chief Stephen Adgate and Deputy Chief Donald Kenton. Chief Adgate said any increases in the Fire Dept.'s budget are basically contractually-driven. He said there are some changes to the regular maintenance and ambulance maintenance accounts. He said the mayor addressed the turnout gear line item. He said he has not discussed a capital plan with the mayor, and he suspects it will be put off. He said part of the capital plan is recognizing the need for two sets of turnout gear. He said they are coming up on the 10-year age mark of the original sets of turnout gear. Chief Adgate asked if any members of the committee had questions. Alderman Gately asked if the Fire Dept. is running three ambulances during the pandemic. Chief Adgate said they have been running a second ambulance on Saturdays and Sundays from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. since the outbreak of Covid-19. He said he thinks Covid-19 is going to be with us for some time. He said it is important to recognize it is not going anywhere. He said the city does not want

to let its guard down. He said even though there has been a tendency to lower precautions, the virus is not going anywhere. He said the city still has to maintain the policies that were instituted in March. He said he is not sure how much longer the mayor is going to support the second ambulance on weekends. Alderman Mercer-Bruen agreed Covid-19 is not going anywhere until there is a vaccine. She asked the chief if his firefighters have all the protective gear they need. Chief Adgate said policies were established right from the beginning of the pandemic. He said Covid-19 is probably going to change the way the Fire Dept. operates. He said funding for PPE has been supported by the city's EMS partner. He said he wants to thank the City Council for its support of and commitment to Woburn Fire Dept. issues, particularly in the purchase of new equipment, including a new aerial, a new engine company, two ambulances, two sets of turnout gear, an extraction washing machine and approval of all the transfers that have been submitted. He said deficiencies in the department have been identified and addressed. He said Woburn is growing and continues to grow, and there will be a need to increase staffing at some point. He said the new fire station is critically important, along with the remodeling plans for some of the existing stations. He said there has been tremendous support from the City Council. Alderman Gately said the City Council as a whole has supported the installation of fire suppression in all new buildings. He said when the Fire Dept. doesn't have to go into a building, it is a good day. Chief Adgate said the department appreciates that. He said there will never be a day when there is never a need for firefighters to enter a building, however. Chief Adgate said he is retiring in November and thanked the council for its cooperation during his tenure as chief. **Police** – No one appeared on behalf of the Woburn Police Dept. Chairman Concannon asked if there is any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to adjourn.

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Motion made by Alderman Tedesco and seconded by Alderman Mercer-Bruen to ADJOURN, all in favor, 9-0. Meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD ATTEST

Gordon Vincent
Clerk of Committees