

2024 FEB 12 AM 8:14
MILLBURY, MASS.

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes
Zoom Number 883 2338 1927

Date: January 31, 2024

Time: 6:30 p.m.

Present: O'Connell, O'Connor, Cooper, Pratt, Cooney, Kuphal, Wells

Absent: None

Meeting called to order at 6:45 p.m.

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Cooney to accept the minutes of January 29, 2024 as written. Unanimous.

Jennifer Barrett, Finance Director and Karyn Clark, Acting Town Manager were present at the meeting.

Chris Bailey and Tara Fafard, representatives from MIIA Health Benefits Trust were in to explain what their company has been doing to help with the health insurance premiums.

Chris Bailey: The MIIA was formed in 1992 and we work with Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Mass.

Jen O'Connell: Do you go out to any other insurance agencies?

Chris Bailey: The contracts cannot match what Blue Cross/Blue Shield can offer.

Russell Wells: Do you go out to bid?

Chris Bailey: We have not.

Charles Cooper: Are there any fees associated with MIIA?

Chris Bailey: There are no fees. It costs nothing to join. We just need a 90 day notice if you want to discontinue.

Russell Wells: Do you offer a better rate if we give you more?

Chris Bailey: We cannot, by law, give a break on health insurance. You did add dental and vision over the past few years.

Jen O'Connell: Any changes have to go through collective bargaining?

Chris Bailey: Yes, they do.

Jen O'Connell: What is the average employee contribution with the cities/towns that you work with?

Chris Bailey: Most municipalities are between 70-75% for employee contributions.

Denise Marlboro: We have some people on 70/30 and some on 75/25. The newer employees are on the 75/25.

Chris Bailey: We had a study on the increases in health insurance and how long before it is not sustainable for employees. The dollar amount levels off around 2035-2040,

Tara Fafard went over the Active Rate History of Millbury with MIIA

Denise Marlboro: The vision and dental are paid 100% by the employee.

Chris Bailey: Our goal is to have a stable rate. It is much easier to budget instead of having a really low amount one year and then a large spike the following year.

Charles Cooper: Are there offsets in costs on the medical?

Chris Bailey: In medical, no.

Russell Wells: Is the 5.5% based on Millbury's experience?

Chris Bailey: The trend usually averages 6-10%. 75% is based on your experience and 25% is based on the trust's experience.

Tara Fafard went over the details of claims and premiums and loss ratios over the past 2 years.

There was discussion on the large wellness program that MIIA offers.

Treasurer/Collector Budget-Denise Marlboro, Treasurer/Collector

Denise Marlboro went over her staffing pattern and core responsibilities of the Collector

Jen O'Connell: Why are there so many bank statements?

Denise Marlboro: There used to be much more. We have combined a lot of them. When we have a contractor come in, we open an account to hold funds. We do all of the payroll for the Town side and the Schools.

Denise Marlboro went over the core responsibilities of the Treasurer

Denise Marlboro: I am also the Benefit's Coordinator. I oversee all School and Town active and retired employee benefits. This is from start to finish.

Budget Highlights

Denise Marlboro: There is a reduction in Professional Services for Payroll due to the Police bi-weekly contract agreement effective January 1, 2024. Online payroll is now fully funded through the budget. There is a partial market adjustment in the salary line.

Debt

Jennifer Barrett: Denise is also involved with our bonding and debt.

Jennifer Barrett briefly went over the debt of the Town.

Jen O'Connell: How much did we spend on McCracken Road?

Jennifer Barrett: That was \$1.78million.

Jen O'Connell: We spent a lot of money on McCracken Road which helps the Mall. We need to be mindful of that when we talk about the MS4 fees.

Police Department-Brian Lewos, Police Chief

Brian Lewos went over the core responsibilities of the Police Department

Brian Lewos went over the staff.

Jen O'Connell: Besides yourself and the lieutenant, is there anyone else that is not in the union?

Brian Lewos: My Administrative Secretary is also not in the union.

Jen O'Connell: You used to have a supervisor for the dispatchers.

Brian Lewos: Yes, we did. We do not have that person anymore. We do all our own training with the dispatchers.

Russell Wells: What does the Court Officer do full time?

Brian Lewos: He does all of our hearings with the Clerk Magistrate. He transports the prisoners and does all of the paperwork for the courts.

Jen O'Connell: Do the administrative officers pick up shifts if someone calls in sick or is on vacation?

Brian Lewos: They can. They do have that option and sometimes they do fill in.

Brian Lewos went over the residential growth over the last 20 years and the need for additional officers to cover this.

Brian Lewos went over the concerning trends.

Brian Lewos: Some cases do not get service due to all of the staff being out on various calls. Some people cannot wait for the officer to come in and talk about their case. Most calls are very time consuming. It is recommended that there are 2 officers for every 14,000 residents. This would mean that we should be at 28 officers at this point. We are at 24.

School Resource Officer

Brian Lewos: The School wants an additional SRO. They feel there is a need for one to be primarily at the High School and another one to go between the elementary schools.

Brian Lewos went over the goals of the SRO

Brian Lewos went over the MPD analysis report by year for the last 3 years. He also went over the calls for service over the past 3 years.

Budget Presentation

One Talk phone system and cell phones for patrol vehicles

IT purchases-monitors, keyboards, external hard drive

Additional FT officer (academy tuition, uniforms and equipment)

2nd SRO-uniforms and equipment

2 cruisers-year 2 of lease \$43,165.43

\$73,000 for new cruiser plus \$12,000 for equipment

Letter drafted to Senator Moore requesting funds for access control system, cameras, detective/forensic supplies and a restraint chair-Approximate cost \$30,000.

Russell Wells: How long do the leases run?

Brian Lewos: They run for 3 years.

Judy O'Connor: If we buy the cruiser instead of leasing it, at least we own it at the end and can auction it off or trade it in. What do we get with a lease?

Brian Lewos: At the end of the lease, we purchase it for \$1.00 and it is ours.

Charles Cooper: Does the SRO use a cruiser or his own vehicle?

Brian Lewos: He has his own cruiser.

Jen O'Connell: It looks like the Lieutenant is not getting as much of a raise as everyone else.

Brian Lewos: He will get an additional raise in July to get him closer to what the other Lieutenant's get.

Karyn Clark: He is getting his salary adjustments in 2 parts. He received \$4,000 this year and will receive \$4,000 next year.

Jen O'Connell: This is someone who steps in as Chief when you are out. It looks like the Sergeants get close to what he gets.

Judith O'Connor: Does he get extra when he steps in for you?

Karyn Clark: He does. It comes out of the overtime account.

Brian Lewos: We knew he was at the low end, that is why we did this in 2 steps.

Jen O'Connell: You will be putting in articles on the Warrant for the additional items that you need?

Jennifer Barrett: There are a couple of them.

Jen O'Connell: I have not heard back from BVT. What is our schedule coming up?

Jennifer Barrett: Monday's meeting is at the new Fire Station. We had to get a permit to allow us to meet there.

Motioned by Pratt, seconded by Wells to adjourn at 9:44 p.m. Unanimous.

Jen O'Connell

Charles Cooper

W. H. Pratt

Ryan Wells

Nicol L. Conroy

Timothy J. Pratt

Judith O'Connor