

City of Biddeford
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2020
(Due to COVID-19, the meeting was held virtually via ZOOM)

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by the Chair, Councilor John McCurry.

Present: Chair, Council President, John McCurry; Mayor Alan Casavant; Councilor Stephen St. Cyr; Councilor Mike Ready; City Manager, James Bennett; City Clerk, Carmen Morris; and Finance Director, Alison Garrison.

Adjustment to the Agenda

No adjustments to the agenda.

Approval of Minutes of September 1, 2020

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the minutes as printed, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Expenditure Warrants: September 8, 2020; September 15, 2020

The warrants were emailed to the Finance Committee members for their review.

Motion by Councilor Ready to approve the expenditure warrants, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous

Motion carries 4-0.

Discussion/Approval

Recommendation/Purchase of SUV for Police Department/Arundel Ford of Arundel, Maine

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend the purchase of an SUV for the Police Department from Arundel Ford of Arundel, Maine, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Recommendation/Purchase of Two (2) Police Cruisers/Arundel Ford of Arundel, Maine

Motion by Councilor Ready to recommend the purchase of two (2) Police Cruisers from Arundel Ford of Arundel, Maine, seconded by Councilor St. Cyr.

Discussion: Councilor McCurry noted the purchase of two police cruisers for total price of \$66,122.00 before discounts of \$11,600.00.

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Recommendation/Public Safety Radio System Upgrade

The Committee is being asked to figure out the dollar amount to spend on the Public Safety Radio System upgrade, and how it will be paid for.

The City Manager explained the upgrade is important because the current radio system does not work inside the Mill Buildings. Some of this may be funded by through the TIF District. It is still being looked at.

Councilor Ready asked Chief Beaupre if this would alleviate the dead spots around town. Chief Beaupre noted it is still an issue and this would address those coverage areas.

Councilor St. Cyr had a question in the number of the reduction in units, and then additional units. He asked if it was because of the reduction.

Chief Beaupre explained they shuffled some of the radios to other departments.

Chief Gagne explained everyone gets a portable and they maintain it.

Councilor St. Cyr asked if they had already determined these are not costs that could be shared by other communities.

The City Manager noted they will take a look at that.

Councilor St. Cyr asked if there was a way to phase this into departments and how long is the life of this system.

Chief Beaupre gave an explanation and noted it should all be done at the same time. The Motorola people indicated it would last about 15 years.

Councilor St. Cyr struggles with how expensive it is and would like to have had another option. He suggested looking at a longer term financing option.

Councilor McCurry asked about possible cost options for this project, whether we finance through Motorola or we go out to lease ourselves, or leasing the equipment rather than purchasing it.

Councilor McCurry asked about the need to supply portable radios for on-call Fire Department personnel including Fire Police.

Chief Beaupre explained the structure of the Fire Police.

Chief Gagne explained the importance of these portable radios during an emergency, approximately 30 times a year.

Councilor McCurry wants to ensure that if radios are being distributed to personnel, they are actually being utilized. He also asked about the installation for DPW.

Chief Beaupre explained DPW will do the radio installs getting guidance from Motorola staffing. It is a collaborative effort.

Motion by Mayor Casavant to recommend the Public Safety Radio Upgrade Project in the amount of \$4,502,304.00 with a lease purchase agreement; with the Finance Committee to work through the final details of the lease purchase agreement, seconded by Councilor Ready.

Discussion: The Finance Committee discussed the concerns of Council about the project and the cost.

Vote: Opposed; Councilor St. Cyr.

In favor; Mayor Casavant, Councilors Ready and McCurry.

Motion carries 3-1.

Other Business

Councilor St. Cyr asked to receive information on how the City ended the prior fiscal year; also monthly financial reports on revenues and expenditures for the current fiscal year.

The City Manager explained he is giving the Council monthly updates on the two major revenues, those being State Revenue sharing and excise tax. He will get the monthly revenue expense for the current year to the Committee. He noted the City did end FY20 in the positive.

Councilor McCurry agreed and wants monthly financials moving forward.

He also asked about personal property taxes and those that go uncollected. He wonders if a business goes out of business, will they still continue to receive bills and notices.

Jim explained that bills will still be sent out until the City cannot statutorily collect those taxes.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Ready, seconded by Mayor Casavant. .

Vote: unanimous.

Motion carries 4-0.

Adjourned at 5:48 p.m.