

Citizens Advisory Finance Committee

Thursday February 13, 2025 at 6 pm ZOOM access
Harvey Hearing Room/Town Hall, Winthrop, MA

Members Present: Karin Chavis /Bill Gault/Joe Hanlon/John Macero (via zoom)
Members not Present: Shannon Poulos/Brent Farrell/Matt Gorzkowicz
Guests: Sarah Johnson/Finance Director (zoom), Robbie Powers/Ass't.CFO (zoom), Jim Letterie/Council President/Suzanne Swope/Councilor Pct.4(zoom)

Meeting called to order by Karin Chavis at 7 pm
Roll call done/quorum present
Minutes of January 8, 2024 tabled until next meeting
Election of Chair: Joe Hanlon nominated Karin Chavis, motion second by Bill Gault/ 4 yes votes

Sarah Johnson presented FY 25 budget to date, 63.4% of way through FY 25. General Fund expended 66.59% with property insurance and retirement paid up front at beginning of year, revenue is higher than expected, building permits coming in well, with Motor Vehicle excise Tax due to go with commitment of \$1,7 million.

GIC town employee health on the mark, Retirement health both town and school is running about \$100,000 short, but can be covered at years end. All enterprise funds look okay, Parks and Rec. may be a little short at end of year. Snow and Ice in deficit \$43,000, but can be covered with free cash or another source. Trash fees have now been lienied for FY 22/23/24. New system for tracking gas usage with FOBS and chargeback to users starting FY26. Waterways fees and excise tax bills going out and there will be a push for enforcement.

HR is researching Health Insurance Plans for the Town, Current GIC Contract expires in FY 26. Estimate by Town Finance of 9% increase in GIC FY 26 causes need for exploration other plans.

FY 26 Budget is currently in Draft stage. Highlights include new trash contract with Capital for 5 years, 6% increase first year and 5% each of next 4 years. MWRA Mitigation packet signed for 10 years with annual increase of 2.5%. This was a positive for the Town as MWRA is looking to stop all litigation funding. Robbie said the Town is looking into moving some Insurance back to MIIA. Further exploration is needed. Town had been forced to other Insurance carriers because of rising claims on Town Policies. All trash, water bills are paid by the town, there is no chargeback to the Schools. Question of Golf Club and their commitment to paying back money owed. Robbie will check with Treasure's office for more information.

School override vote in April if not passed, will affect the town's budget. The implication being discussed between TM and school superintendent along with Town Finance.

State and Federal grants: pending grant for renovation work at EB Newton School and Public Health. All other grants have been applied for, waiting funding. Possible grants for schools, Title 1. Robbie said state grants were less than a million dollars for FY 24. No grant is guaranteed, concern expressed about potential loss that could significantly affect town finances.

Minutes by:
Karin Chavis

