

**Budget & Finance Standing Committee**  
**Thursday, March 23, 2023 – 5:30 p.m.**  
**Harbormaster’s Conference Room, 19 Harbor Loop**  
**and via Zoom**  
**-Minutes-**

**Present (in person):** Chair, Councilor Scott Memhard; Vice Chair, Councilor Tony Gross; Councilor Jeff Worthley

**Other Councilors Present (in person):** Council President Val Gilman

**Also Present (in person):** Mayor Greg Verga; CAO, Jill Cahill; CFO, John Dunn; Auditor, Kenny Costa; Police Chief, Ed Conley; Assistant Auditor, Dyan Katz; IT Director/Police Building Committee, Ryan Knowles; Clerk of Committees, Sherry White; Brad Dore of Dore & Whittier and Neil Joyce of Construction Monitoring Services

**Also Present (remote):** Director of Communications and Constituent Services, Pam Tobey; Police Building Committee, John McCarthy; Chip Heitkamp of Dore & Whittier

**Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.**

**Councilor Memhard** announced, “If you are calling in on a phone, you can press Star 9 to request to speak. If you are watching on a computer or a device, there is a raised hand button that you can tap or press to request to speak. Please use either of these options to be recognized to speak.”

**Councilor Memhard** announced the names of the B&F Committee members in attendance (Councilors Gross, Worthley and himself), and City staff who were attending in person and via Zoom.

**Matters were taken out of order. Minutes reflect the order in which matters were taken.**

***1. Memorandum from CFO re: Loan authorization request in the amount of \$19.3 million for the Gloucester Police Station and Courthouse Renovation Project***

**Summary of Discussion:** Mayor Greg Verga stated that this project started with the prior Administration with the first loan order of approximately \$600,000 in 2018. He stated that when he took office the project was estimated at approximately \$13 million and that he questioned if there was a commitment from the court to stay and, if so, did the court plan on contributing to the project cost and that answering this question was the main reason for the recent delay in taking up the loan order. He explained that the **CFO, John Dunn**, and **General Counsel, Suzanne Egan**, negotiated a lease with the court for thirty years for \$5.13 million. He stated that the Police Building has deteriorated over the years due to deferred maintenance and that this is a chance for the City to correct that.

**Mayor Verga** stated that the question of building a combined Police/Fire Station has been raised but that he believed that the State would not agree to move the court. He stated that the cost of renovation versus the cost of a new building is \$19.3 million versus approximately \$60 million and that the renovation will be completed in approximately 18 months.

**Senator Bruce Tarr** stated that he is also speaking on behalf of Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante who joins him in support of the project. He stated that for many years he, as well as Representative Ferrante, has worked to ensure that the court remains on Main Street in the City as there have been attempts in the past to close the court. He highlighted the functions of the court, including civil and criminal matters, as well as stating that it contributes to the economic climate of Main Street. **Senator**

**Tarr** also explained that because of the City's commitment to the court that a number of years ago he placed a \$2 million earmark in a General Obligation State Bond Bill for the court and for the rehabilitation of the building which, he stated, Representative Ferrante had also supported. As a team, he stated that they were able to get it included in the final version of the Bill and stated that he will use his best efforts and good faith to pursue further assistance to hopefully be able to further reduce the total overall cost. He thanked the B&F Committee for their consideration on this matter as proposed and for the borrowing for the project.

**Mr. Brad Dore of Dore & Whittier** gave a brief history of the project and stated that it originally started as a window replacement project but that during the walkthrough it was quickly determined that the building needed additional work including an upgrade of the HVAC system. He highlighted that the building was built in the 1970s and that the building is used 24/7. As a result of the proposed upgrade to the HVAC system, it was determined that an upgrade to the electrical system was needed to support the HVAC system. He stated that the building also needs to be brought up to State code for accessibility issues as well. He also highlighted a number of functional deficiencies including the women's locker rooms and security provisions and stated that all of these issues have been addressed in the proposed renovation. He emphasized that the renovation is intended to address the specific deficiencies that are inherent in an older building to bring the building into compliance, as well as addressing the functional deficiencies for first responders in a 24/7 building.

**Mr. Brad Dore** stated that the overall cost is \$19.3 million which is broken up into construction costs, as well as the soft costs including design, OPM, contingencies, as well as FF and E (furniture and equipment). He stated that the project is running at approximately \$603 ft<sup>2</sup> which is consistent (and a bit on the low side) with other like renovation projects in eastern Massachusetts. He pointed out that there has been a significant escalation of costs in the construction market for materials and labor. With respect to the construction timeline, he stated that if the project is approved the intent is to be able to issue some initial awards for early release on some subcontractors in order to get into the queue as there is a long lead time on certain construction materials. He stated that the target completion date is approximately January or February 2025. He asked that the City Council support this matter.

The **Police Chief, Ed Conley** explained that his comments will be limited to the current condition of the Police Department building and what he sees as general improvements that will come from this project being approved. He highlighted deficiencies within the current building including:

- Water into the Roll Call room, detective offices and the basement
- Breaking pipes causing damage and mold to the Records Storage Facility
- Toilets leaking from the court bathroom directly into the Police Department's hallways
- Detainees intentionally clogging toilets resulting in contaminated flooding
- Outdated HVAC systems with no internal ventilation
- Nonoperational shower facilities
- Out-of-date locker rooms with no ventilation.

From a safety standpoint, he highlighted the following deficiencies:

- Lack of proper entry doors and general access controls
- Street-level windows provide no protection to officers at Roll Call
- Fire suppression systems which are either nonexistent or out of date
- A fire arms range which is not compliant and has tiles falling from the ceilings
- Lack of dedicated training space
- Outdated dispatch IT communication equipment.

He stated that all of the above items he listed would be corrected and/or improved as a result of the proposed project.

In terms of safety in the detention area, the **Police Chief** highlighted the following proposed improvements:

- Seven cells with two being ADA compliant, as well as improvements in the juvenile and female cells
- Improved cell ventilation system
- Upgraded cameras
- New bathroom fixtures with remote flushing
- Improved lighting
- Redesign to the booking area with improved safety
- Secure electronic access control to the main floor
- Secure interview view
- Improvements to the entrance area
- Creation of a citizen records access area.

The **Police Chief** also highlighted the improvements to training. He stated that the outdated firearms range is going to be repurposed into a MILO simulator, which is a simulation training system, and he highlighted the benefits of simulation training.

#### **Questions from Councilors**

**Q1. (Gross):** Asked if leaks were coming through the masonry of the building.

**A1. (Dore):** Stated that there may be patches that need to be made to the walls but that the flashing of the windows is currently the biggest problem area.

**Q2. (Worthley):** Asked if thought has been given to combining the Police and Fire Buildings.

**A2. (Mayor):** Stated a combined Police/Fire Building is not in the cards for this century. Stated that the City is actively identifying locations for a new Fire Station.

**Q3. (Worthley):** Asked to confirm the amount of the courthouse lease.

**A3. (Mayor):** Stated about \$5.31 million, which equates to approximately \$180,000/year. Stated that the court takes up approximately one-third of the building space.

**Q4. (Worthley):** Asked if windows will be bulletproof.

**A4. (Conley):** Stated that the windows and walls will have ballistic protection.

**Q5. (Worthley):** Asked **Mr. Dore**, in his best estimate, how long the renovations will last before another renovation is needed.

**A5. (Dore):** Stated with proper maintenance buildings are projected to last 50 years. Emphasized the importance of maintenance and stated that maintenance will save money over time.

**Q6. (Worthley):** Asked who will be performing the maintenance.

**A6. (Cahill):** Stated that the City has the Stabilization fund to help fund building maintenance.

**A6. (Dunn):** Stated that the DPW has the responsibility for maintenance of all City buildings.

There was a brief discussion regarding the benefits of training, as well as cost savings of training, with the MILO simulator.

**Q7. (Worthley):** Asked if this project will eliminate the possibility of a parking garage in the area.

**A7. (Dore):** Stated that the Police Building footprint is not changing; stated if it was a viable option before, it would still be viable.

**Q8. (Worthley):** Asked if the exterior stairs would be addressed.

**A8. (Dore):** Confirmed that the stairs would be fixed.

**Q9. (Worthley):** Asked if this project contemplates renewable energy as part of construction.

**A9. (Dore):** Stated that the building will be solar-ready and that the building would have the pathways. Stated building efficiency and energy consumption is a balance.

**Q10. (Worthley):** Asked if the City received additional funding for the project could it be applied to lessen the debt.

**A10. (Dunn):** Stated that the project will be financed with short-term debt issuance and will not be completely financed until project completion. Stated the language in the loan order allows for any subsequent funding to be applied, if applicable.

**Q11. (Gross):** Asked for a description of the current female locker rooms.

**A11. (Conley):** Stated that the room being used as the female locker room is very tiny and inadequate.

**Q12. (Worthley):** Asked if there would be a gym in the new facility.

**A12. (Conley):** Stated that the design plan calls for improving the current gym which is in the garage. Stated that a sally port will be built as well.

There was a discussion regarding where Police operations will be housed during construction, as well as a discussion regarding agreements with other communities for housing of detainees.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor Gross, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council approve the loan order as follows:

**Ordered:** That the City of Gloucester appropriates Nineteen Million Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$19,300,000) to pay costs associated with the renovation of the Gloucester Police Station and Courthouse facility, including costs incidental or related thereto. To meet this appropriation the Treasurer, with the approval of the Mayor is authorized to borrow said amount under and pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 44 or pursuant to any other enabling authority. The Mayor and any other appropriate official of the city are authorized to apply for, accept and expend any grants or gifts that may be available to the City to pay costs of the projects. Any premium received by the City upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount.

**Further Ordered:** That the Treasurer is authorized to file an application with the Municipal Finance Oversight Board to qualify under Chapter 44A of the General Laws any or all of the bonds authorized by this order and to provide such information and execute such documents as the Municipal Finance Oversight Board may require for these purposes.

**The Public Hearing for this matter will be held at the March 28, 2023, City Council meeting.**

- 2. CC#2023-017 (Gilman):** Review of the annual salary of City Councilors pursuant to City Charter Sec. 2-to determine if it be increased from \$11,500 per/yr. to \$xxx per/year effective January 1, 2024 and that the Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article II "City Council" Sec. 2-28 "Council Salary" be amended by DELETING \$11,500 effective January 1, 2014 and ADDING \$XXX per/yr. beginning January 1, 2024 (Cont. from 3/9/23)

**Summary of Discussion:** Councilor Memhard explained that the Ordinances & Administration's recommendation on March 20, 2023, was unanimously voted not to increase the salary of councilors.

**Councilor Gilman** stated that at O&A a Public Hearing date was set for April 25, 2023. **Councilor Gilman** wished to be clear that this is a housekeeping matter as councilor salaries have not been reviewed in approximately ten years. She pointed out that the matter is not about a particular person or any of the current councilors and that it is about future councilors and would not become effective until January 1, 2024.

**Councilor Gross** stated that he has no desire to increase the salary and that it is not the driving force for public servants. There was a brief discussion regarding procedure if there are two separate Committee Recommendations (O&A and B&F). **Councilor Worthley** agreed that public service is a higher calling. He stated that he believed the position has changed from years prior and from what the Charter envisioned thirty years ago. He stated that all councilors work many hours and that, for him personally, his income has decreased due to the amount of time/work he puts in as a councilor and that many councilors do not count on this salary to sustain themselves, which is not the case for all. He stated that he believes the salary should be increased even though he knows that seeking a higher salary is politically unpopular. He pointed out, as **Councilor Gilman** stated, that the salary increase is for a future cast of councilors.

**Councilor Memhard** stated that he is in favor of an increase. He stated that it is an honor to serve as councilor but that it is a disservice not to have compensation adjusted periodically. He suggested the increase should be around \$13,000 or \$14,000. **Councilor Gross** stated that a three or four thousand dollar increase will not change who runs for Council. **Councilor Worthley** stated that even a small increase will help the councilor that needs to pay for a babysitter, etc. to attend meetings. **Councilor Memhard** stated that the increase is also reflective of self-respect when he reviews the salaries of other communities as compared to the complexities of the City. He stated that not making an incremental increase over a long period time is a disservice.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor Worthley, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 2 in favor, 1 (Gross) opposed, to recommend that the City Council, pursuant to Sec. 2-3 of the City Charter, increase the Council salary to \$14,000 per/year.**

- 3. CC#2023-018 (Gilman): Review of the annual salary of the Mayor pursuant to City Charter Sec. 3-1(c) to determine if it be increased from \$100,000 per/yr. to \$115,000 per/yr. effective January 1, 2024 and that the Code of Ordinances Chapter 2, Article III "Officers and Employees," Division 2 – Mayor, Sec. 2-54 "Compensation" be amended by DELETING \$100,000 effective January 1, 2014 and ADDING \$115,000 per/yr. effective January 1, 2024 (Cont. from 3/9/23)*

**Summary of Discussion:** **Councilor Gilman** read the language of Sec. 3-1(c) of the Charter and stated that it speaks clearly that the salary is about the position and not the person. She stated that her recommendation is to increase the salary to \$115,000 to be effective January 1, 2024. She stated that she compiled salary data of like communities. The **Clerk of Committees, Sherry White**, shared her screen.

CITY	POPULATION	MAYOR	BENEFITS	CITY COUNCIL			BENEFITS	SCHOOL COMMITTEE		BENEFITS	NOTES
				MIN	MAX	OTHER		MIN	MAX		
Melrose	28,113	\$132,000.00	Y	\$5,000.00			Y	\$0.00			Mayors salary include \$7,000 stipend. Council includes \$1,000 stipend, used to cover misc School Committee is unpaid.
Northampton	28,516	\$92,500.00	Y	\$9,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$10,000.00	Y	\$5,000.00	\$5,500.00	Y	
West Springfield	28,609	\$127,500.00		\$10,000.00	\$12,500.00			\$5,000.00			President \$12,500
Agawam	28,854	\$110,000.00	Y	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00		Y	\$5,000.00			President \$12,000
Marlborough	39,736	\$107,707.41	Y	\$10,770.74			Y	\$3,000.00			X
Woburn	40,304	\$123,000.00	Y	\$12,000.00	\$14,000.00		Y	\$6,500.00			President \$14,000
Beverly	41,885	\$119,999.88	Y	\$11,733.00			Y	\$5,886.56			Y
Pittsfield	42,756	\$102,525.75	Y	\$6,000.00			Y	\$4,000.00			X
Salem	43,252	\$150,000.00	Y	\$15,000.00			Y	\$9,000.00			X
Leominster	43,782	\$91,957.39	Y	\$12,308.11			X	\$4,000.00			X
Attleboro	44,789		Y				Y				Y
Peabody	52,906	\$122,399.94	Y	\$11,015.94			Y	\$5,099.90			Y
Weymouth	56,734	\$140,000.00	Y	\$10,000.00	\$11,000.00	\$12,000.00	Y	\$6,000.00	\$7,000.00	Y	President \$12,000, Chair, Budget Mgmt. Comm. \$11,000.00/Chair \$7,000
Medford	57,637										
Malden	60,984	\$104,999.96	Y	\$17,500.08			Y	\$7,000.24			X
Waltham	62,777	\$145,159.00	Unk	\$23,135.00			X	\$12,114.00			X
Newton	86,593										
<b>AVERAGE</b>		<b>\$119,267.81</b>		<b>\$11,818.78</b>	<b>\$11,800.00</b>	<b>\$11,000.00</b>		<b>\$5,957.75</b>	<b>\$6,250.00</b>		
Gloucester	29,789	\$100,000.00	Y	\$11,500.00			Y	\$5,000.00			Y

Mayor's last Increase January 2014  
 School Committee last Increase January 2001

**Councilor Gilman** stated that the average of all the data points collected regarding salaries of mayors from like communities is \$119,267 and stated that this matter has not been addressed since 2014. She explained that a resident, Mr. Steve Aiello, had suggested that the salaries of both mayor and councilors be reviewed as there has not been an increase in ten years.

**Councilor Gross** stated that when the City Charter created the Strong Mayor back in the 1970s the City went from a City Manager to Mayor. He stated that the only qualifications for Mayor, who is popularly elected, are simply that he/she gets elected by the voters and that the Mayor cannot take another job. He stated that the CAO is the actual manager of the City in which there are a number of requirements for that position, including being qualified as a municipal administrator by virtue of education, training and previous experience, and that they do not need to be a resident. He gave a brief overview of the duties of the CAO including financial management, preparation of policies and overseeing all City agencies. He stated that he believes this matter is premature without recognizing what the salaries of CAOs are in like communities. He stated that he also believes that there is a misconception that the City's elected mayor is the executor of the City and stated that the mayor is not the qualified administrator of the City. He stated that the current salary of \$100,000 is adequate.

**Councilor Worthley** stated that he respectfully disagreed with **Councilor Gross'** stance and that by definition the CAO has to have certain qualifications and stated that the "buck does stop with the mayor." From his perspective, he stated that it is a 24/7 position and that he believes the position is a bigger responsibility than the Charter Commission imagined. He stated that the mayor is blamed for anything that goes wrong in the City and that when elected it is only for a two-year job security. He stated that he would be in support of an increase to \$130,000. **Councilor Menhard** stated that he will be supporting an increase to \$115,000 that O&A has suggested. He, again, stated that he believes an increase helps to honor the respect of the person holding the office.

**Councilor Worthley** suggested that in the future this matter be automatically placed on the agenda in February after the first month on the job for discussion. He also suggested possibly tying the mayor's salary to the overall budget by ordinance so there is not a ten-year gap in reviewing the salary. **Councilor Gross** stated that all the language, except for the amount of the mayor's compensation, is in the Charter so a Charter review would have to review this matter. **Councilor Worthley** stated that he would support an increase to \$115,000.

**Councilor Gilman** stated that she also researched this matter further in anticipation of questions. She read language from the Massachusetts Municipal Management Association – Forms of Local Government.

**Mayor / Council**

**Features**

Voters directly elect a mayor and Council. The Council size varies from 7 to 15. The mayor is the chief executive who appoints key officials and all or some boards, and prepares budget, approves contracts, negotiates with unions and oversees administration. A mayor may be empowered to veto some Council actions. The elected Council is the legislative body, and adopts budgets, adopts laws (ordinances, zoning, etc.), approves indebtedness (bonding), and may be empowered to approve or veto some Mayor appointments. The council also may appoint some boards and committees. Mayor is also usually a voting member of school committee. A limited number of boards and/or commissions may be elected.

She stated that City is in need of a Charter review to take the Charter forward as the duties outlined by the MMA are more than what the City’s Charter states. **Councilor Gross** outlined that there is no educational expense and no qualifications that are required by a mayor and reiterated that the CAO is the most important appointment, who has to meet certain qualifications.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor Worthley, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 2 in favor, 1 (Gross) opposed, to recommend that the City Council, pursuant to City Charter section 3-1(c), increase the Mayor’s salary from \$100,000 per/yr. to \$115,000 per/yr.

*4. Memorandum from Director of Elder Services requesting acceptance of donations in the amount of \$1,240*

**Summary of Discussion:** There was no additional discussion on this matter.

**COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:** On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor Worthley, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to recommend that the City Council accept various cash donations, under MGL c. 44, §53A, to support the Council on Aging in the amount of \$1,240 from the following members within our community:

Joanne Libro	\$ 10.00
Marianna Ciulla	\$ 10.00
Ron & Joan Gilson	\$ 50.00
Maureen Masciola	\$ 30.00
Marie Muller	\$ 25.00
Marilynn Grant	\$ 15.00
Gerry Favaloro	\$ 15.00
Fred Cowan	\$ 400.00
Joel Crocker-Monroe	\$ 100.00
Mary Benham	\$ 50.00
Norma Seppala	\$ 75.00
Norma Silva	\$ 20.00
Donne Cutting	\$ 100.00
Elizabeth McDonough	\$ 100.00
Claire Tomlinson	\$ 100.00
Marilynn Grant	\$ 10.00
Gerry Favaloro	\$ 15.00
Kathleen Bach	\$ 50.00
Connie Condon	\$ 45.00
Jose Maligno	\$ 20.00

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**Total: \$1,240.00.**

**5. Memorandum from City Auditor regarding accounts having expenditures which exceed their authorization & Auditor's Report and other related business**

**Summary of Discussion:** The Auditor, **Kenny Costa**, stated that there are 15 accounts on the Basic Overdrawn Report, as compared to 17 at the prior B&F meeting. There was a brief discussion regarding the snow and ice accounts. He stated that he felt that the City was in a good spot.

**Mr. Costa** also gave a brief overview of a conference he recently attended. **Councilor Memhard** thanked **Mr. Costa** for keeping up with his professional development. There was a brief discussion regarding the opioid compensation payment from the State.

**MOTION: On a motion by Councilor Memhard, seconded by Councilor Worthley, the Budget & Finance Committee voted 3 in favor, 0 opposed, to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.**

**Submitted by: Sherry White, Clerk of Committees**

**Documents submitted at the meeting:** None.

**Meeting Recording:** <https://www.gloucester-ma.gov/1097/Past-Remote-Public-Meetings>