

IPSWICH SELECT BOARD
Meeting of Tuesday, January 21, 2020
Ipswich Town Hall | 25 Green Street

Pursuant to Open Meeting Law M.G.L. Chapter 30A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk and delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Select Board was held on Tuesday, January 21, 2020 at 6:30 PM in Meeting Room A.

Board Members present: William Whitmore, Chair; Linda Alexson, Vice Chair; Dr. Tammy Jones; Kerry Mackin; Nishan Mootafian

Also present: Finance Committee; School Committee; Dr. Brian Blake, Superintendent of Schools; Anthony Marino, Town Manager; Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

Abbreviations used: FY, Fiscal Year; GFOA, Government Finance; TIF, Tax Increment Financing

Executive Session

Vote: Dr. Jones moved to enter into Executive Session and return to Open Session following, and Ms. Alexson seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.

The Select Board returned from Executive Session at 7:18 PM.

Welcome/Announcements

Mr. Whitmore reminded Board members present to be conscious of speaking into the microphones.

Citizen Queries

None.

FY 21 Budget Overview Presentation

Mr. Marino informed viewers that the budget is available for viewing on the Town website under the *Government* tab, as *Town Manager Budget Presentation*.

GENERAL FUND REVENUE ESTIMATES

The FY21 Maximum Levy Limit Including Override is \$42,988,169. Other Revenue total receipts available is \$10,688,044 made up of revenue from education stabilization, overlay surplus, tourism, septic loan programs, and waterways.

Challenges in FY21 and beyond include the rising costs of health and property insurance, fully funding Facilities to include necessary preventative maintenance, providing an additional officer for traffic and parking enforcement, continuing to streamline departments, and possible regionalization opportunities.

Over the next few weeks, department heads will meet with the Select Board and Finance Committee to present their individual department budgets. Town officials will begin drafting Annual Town Meeting articles, and continue to fine-tune the budget document in preparation for its submission to the GFOA. Mr. Marino will also work with the Select Board, School Committee, and Finance Committee to review the capital plan.

GENERAL FUND EXPENSES

FY21 Budget objectives include maintaining existing service levels, meeting mandated and contractual costs, funding a 7.1% increase for solid waste and recycling services through JRM Hauling & Recycling, using conservative revenue estimates with no increase in state aid, and incorporate the Facilities Needs Assessment into the new five-year capital plan.

The Ipswich Police Department requested about \$70,000 to hire a full-time officer to be devoted to parking and traffic enforcement; this was denied, but Chief Nikas has developed a plan to utilize reserve officers in the summer months to enforce parking and traffic regulations. The Ipswich Public Library requested a part-time staff member be

hired for 15 hours a week; this was denied. The ReCreation and Culture Department requested an additional \$10,000 for part time staffing during community events; this was partially funded at \$5,000.

Highlights of the budget include a \$10,000 increase in legal spending to cover Special Legal Counsel for 40B projects, a 6% increase in health insurance costs, funding to bring the part-time building inspector to full-time, funding for a combined Town and School Human Resources Department, a 7.1% increase in the JRM Hauling & Recycling contract, a 2% increase in union salaries, and some employees who will receive a raise larger than 2%.

Mr. Whitmore asked why the solid waste and recycling contract increased by such a steep percentage. Mr. Marino responded that the five-year contract was negotiated by his predecessor, and the 7.1% increase is lighter compared to what some municipalities are seeing as the cost of recycling rises. He noted that when the JRM contract ends, the Town will need to look at other vendors to obtain the best price, but noted that a new contract could bring an increase significantly higher than 7%. Mr. Whitmore asked how many staff additions will be made in FY21; Mr. Marino responded that the only personnel change is the part-time building inspector moving to full-time employment.

Phil Goguen (4 Kingfisher Road) asked what the dollar amount increase would be from the FY20 to the FY21 budget. Mr. Marino responded that it is approximately a \$1.4M increase. Mr. Goguen asked Board members to be mindful that the increase will come from taxpayer. He stated that other municipalities have Advisory Committees that advocate for taxpayers. Mr. Marino clarified that Advisory Committees are a title difference, and act as Finance Committees in other municipalities. Mr. Goguen asked when the next time the Tri-Boards will meet; Mr. Whitmore responded that the Tri-Boards will meet at Bean Counting on April 4.

FY21 Capital Budget

The capital budget is a five-year plan, with the largest sums of money spent in the first three years. The plan focuses on FY21, 22 and 23, and is speculated conservatively through FY24 and FY25. The capital budget anticipates the Town's success in becoming a Green Community, which we should find out in the next week or two, and then we will apply for grants.

New England Biolabs Addition and Proposed TIF

Brian Tinger (Controller, New England Biolabs) provided an overview of the expansion planned on the New England Biolabs campus. Biolabs is planning to construct a 95,000 square foot building adjacent to their current building. The new facility will house laboratory space, manufacturing space, and shipping/receiving. The building will have three stories, and 100 underground parking spaces. The expansion aims to create over 100 jobs over the next ten years, and anticipates minimal water and electrical usage increase. To assist in expansion, Biolabs is seeking a ten-year TIF connected to state funding. Mr. Tinger noted that the TIF will only impact future property taxes. He stated that over the last ten years, Biolabs has paid about \$6.3M in property taxes to the Town of Ipswich. Expansion of Biolabs will bring income to the Town through building fees, property taxes, and additional job creation.

Mr. Whitmore noted that a TIF is an agreement made between the Town and Biolabs in relation to property taxes, and that the TIF must be approved by voters at Annual Town Meeting.

Ms. Mackin stated that Biolabs has been a leader in the area in regards to renewable energy, and has always carefully managed their water resources.

Community Development Plan

Ethan Parsons (Director of Planning and Development) appeared before the Tri-Board to provide an update on the Community Development Plan. The CDP is intended to serve as a guide for the Town addressing land use, economic development, transportation, historical preservation, and education, among other items. Mr. Parsons noted that the CDP was adopted in 2003 and amended in 2008, and the current plan aims to provide guidelines for the next fifteen years. He emphasized that unlike previous plans, this version will consider education and the role that economic development and housing will play in education over the next few years. Data gathering processes for the CDP included surveys on the Town website and social media, a table at the pop-up farmers' market, and citizen input at public forums. Over the next few months, the CDP steering committee will meet on a monthly basis, and will select a consultant to assist in phase two of the plan's development.

Ms. Mackin stated that she is happy to hear that climate change impacts are being considered in the development of the CDP.

Public Safety Facilities Committee

Robert Weatherall (Public Safety Facilities Committee) appeared before the Boards to provide an update. He informed the Board that the Public Safety Facilities Committee no longer plans to submit a warrant article for Annual Town Meeting, but hopes to have it ready for Special Town Meeting in the fall. Instead, they will provide a Committee Report at Annual Town Meeting. The committee is currently working with HKT Architects to research topography and soils at the proposed property, located at the corner of Pineswamp Road and Linebrook Road. The committee has also launched a new website, IpswichPublicSafetyFacility.net. A meeting will be held at Our Lady of Hope on January 29 to hear from parishioners and neighbors about the committee's plans for the site.

Dr. Jones, also a member of the Public Safety Facilities Committee, stated that the committee aims to reflect the wishes of the entire community, which includes maintaining fiscal responsibility.

New Business

Mr. Whitmore asked if the Tri-Board would like to meet again before Bean Counting, scheduled for April 4. Janice Clements-Skelton (Finance Committee, Chair) did not believe the Finance Committee would be able to find another available night before April 4 due to their demanding regular budget season meetings.

Vote: Ms. Alexson moved to adjourn, and Dr. Jones seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The Select Board adjourned at 9:20 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
01.26.2020*