

PLYMOUTH ADVISORY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE SUB-COMMITTEE B
MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 17, 2023

This meeting was held via Zoom

<https://pactv.zoom.us/j/99949942201?pwd=RExHbi9CcTgvVGpwdFJyUU50T0kzZz09>

Meeting ID: 999 4994 2201

Passcode: 627418

PRESENT **Members:** Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, & Ashley Shaw
Department Heads (or representatives): Lynne Barrett, Finance Director; Joe Young, Information Technologies Director; Anne Dunn, Director of Assessing; Patricia Meachen, Treasurer/Collector; Sandra Strassel , Kere Gillette

ABSENT None

Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 12:50pm.

Public Comment None at this time.

FY2024 Budget Presentations:

- Finance & Accounting – Presented by Lynne Barrett and Kere Gillette. The Grant Writer position was transferred from the Town Manager Department to the Finance Department. This has increased the salary line item by \$81,888, the Sick-LTIA by \$1,575, and the addition of a line item Grant Finder Subscription in the amount of \$4,000. The change amounts to \$88,463. In addition, the printing line item in the amount of \$14,000. which was allocated to the Finance Dept. in the past for Town Meetings has been shifted to the new Elections and Town Meeting Department. The net increase in the Finance & Accounting budget is 11.7%.
- Assessing – Presented by Anne Dunn. The total budget reflects an increase of 4.8% or \$34,690. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations including sick leave buyback. The new initiative part-time employee was made permanent to continue to assist in fieldwork. Ms. Dunn spoke about the additional fieldwork being required since COVID. Ms. Barrett spoke about the importance of the Assessing Department in capturing the revenue for the Town.
- Treasury & Collections – Presented by Patti Meachen. The total budget reflects an increase of 3.8% or \$32,696. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations and an increase in seasonal employees. Additional step increases due to new staff. Select Board requested to return from an online-only model of beach sticker sales enacted during COVID to both online and in-person. Reduction in stock of stickers and printing was a result of online sales.
- Procurement – Presented by Sandra Strassel. The total budget reflects an increase of 5.8% or \$24,166. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations including sick leave buyback. Reflective on the past two years of expenses related to advertising, that line item decreased by 33%. Courier services were increased due to gas prices. Data plans for cell phones were required to be upgraded, increasing the cell phone budget by 16.7% or \$6,000. High-security shredders were purchased for the Police Dept. and the Human Resources Dept. due to the sensitive nature of the documents being destroyed. In addition, office furniture was purchased for the Police Dept. and the Water Dept. These

purchases increased the budget by 757.3% or \$22,720. The total budget for the Procurement Dept. was increased by 5.8%.

- Information Technology – Presented by Joe Young. The total budget reflects only a slight increase of 0.8% or \$19,406. The increase essentially reflects a level-funded budget. New Initiative “Archive Social” software for archiving social media accounts. Reduced funding for consulting and departmental equipment.
- Salary Reserve Fund – Presented by Lynne Barrett. The decrease in the FY2024 budget is \$150,728, a 65.1% decrease from FY2023. The FY2024 budget represents decreases due to the settlement of contracts. All contracts were mostly settled through FY2024. There are still lingering reclassifications that still need to be reconciled. This amount should cover those items.
- FinCom Reserve Fund – This is a level-funded budget
- Tax Title Foreclosures - The total budget reflects a decrease of 11.8% or \$35,000. The department has been successful in collections and has performed most of the work in-house without having to utilize outside legal assistance.
- Pension Contributions – Presented by Lynne Barrett. The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$1,384,505, an 7.8% increase from FY2023. This budget is produced using the state schedule with a long-term goal of being fully funded by 2035. This reflects the town employees and non-education-based school employees. The Trust is managed and invested by the Plymouth Retirement Board, a 5-member board that meets on a regular basis.
- Unemployment Trust – Presented by Lynne Barrett. This budget has decreased by \$105,000. CARES Act reimbursement was helpful in replenishing the unemployment trust fund. Positions that are being cut this year are unfilled positions. Any positions that may be cut will be offered an opportunity to fill vacant positions that remain open.
- Member Insurance - The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$1,332,154 a 3.3% increase from FY2023. This increase appears appropriate given Plymouth’s claims trend and the balance projections for the Health Insurance Trust Fund. The proposed budget increase reflects a conservative approach to funding the Health Insurance Trust Fund by minimizing premium increases for employees and ensuring adequate funding of the Trust to pay estimated claims.
- OPEB Trust - The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$22,990, a 2.0% increase from FY2023. The FY2023 funding is based on 1% of the estimated payroll.
- Compensated Absences – Presented by Lynne Barrett. This budget is level funded for FY2024.
- Long Term Debt, Long Term Interest, Short Term Interest, and Misc. Interest – Presented by Lynne Barrett.
 - The decrease in the Long-Term Debt budget for FY2024 is \$170,260 a 1.8% decrease from FY2023. This budget reflects principal payments due on existing debt.
 - The decrease in the Long-Term Interest budget for FY2024 is \$447,381, a 7.5% decrease from FY2023. This budget reflects the interest on existing long-term debt.
 - The increase in the Short-Term Interest budget for FY2024 is \$1,138,522, a 1,414.3% increase from FY2023. This budget reflects the interest on new approved projects in their early stages before a long-term bond is issued.
 - The Miscellaneous Interest budget is level funded for FY2024. This budget is primarily for interest paid on tax abatements.

- The Bond issuance Costs – Presented by Lynn Barrett - budget is unfunded for FY2024. This budget reflects the costs of issuing bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes paid up front, such as legal, printing, etc., that are not covered by bond premiums.

Ms. Shaw made a motion to accept the total Select Board's budget of 83,050,599 in addition to line items for a Grant Writer position transferred from the Town Manager budget of \$84,463. in payroll and \$4,000 for additional expenses related to that position for a total budget amount of \$83,139,062. The motion was seconded by Steve Nearman. A rollcall vote was taken and it was unanimous.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:25pm

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary :#129 Salary Reserve Fund

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$80,820	\$0	\$0	\$80,820
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$231,548	\$0	\$231,548
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$60,727	\$0	\$60,727

Department Synopsis

The Salary Reserve Fund is used for potential contract settlements, reclassifications, or other contractual issues that may come up in any particular year.

Budget Observations

The decrease in the FY2024 budget is \$150,728, a 65.1% decrease from FY2023. The FY2024 budget represents decreases due to the settlement of contracts. All contracts were mostly settled through FY2024. There are still lingering reclassifications that still need to be reconciled. This amount should cover those items.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Boards budget of \$80,820

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#132 FinCom Reserve Fund

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$0	\$150,000	\$0	\$150,000
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$129,700	\$0	\$129,700
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$73,800	\$0	\$73,800

Department Synopsis

The FinCom (Advisory & Finance Committee) Reserve Fund is used to fund unexpected emergency town expenses due to unforeseen circumstances. Examples include special elections, fuel, and utilities, etc. Requests for funds are made to the Advisory & Finance Committee, and if they are approved, the funds are transferred from this fund to the appropriate account.

Budget Observations

This is a level-funded budget

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board’s budget of \$150,000.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#133 Finance & Accounting Division

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$814,187	\$121,792	\$0	\$935,979
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$696,059	\$130,095	\$0	\$826,154
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$605,933	\$122,788	\$0	\$728,721

Department Synopsis

The Finance and Accounting department is responsible for maintaining the town's financial records and budget analysis. The town's internal auditor reports to this division administratively.

Budget Observations

The Grant Writer position was transferred from the Town Manager Department to the Finance Department. This has increased the salary line item by \$81,888, the Sick-LTIA by \$1,575, and the addition of a line item Grant Finder Subscription in the amount of \$4,000. The change amounts to \$88,463. In addition, the printing line item in the amount of \$14,000. which was allocated to the Finance Dept. in the past for Town Meetings has been shifted to the new Elections and Town Meeting Department. The net increase in the Finance & Accounting budget is 11.7%.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Finance & Accounting Dept. budget of \$935,979. as presented during the Sub-Committee B meeting.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#138 Procurement

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$211,814	\$227,985	\$0	\$439,799
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$202,206	\$213,427	\$0	\$415,633
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$167,373	\$287,933	\$0	\$455,306

Department Synopsis

The Procurement Department is responsible for organizational purchasing services for the Town. Organizational purchasing is substantially different from consumer purchasing. Within the constraints of legal and statutory regulations organizational purchasing has the objective of ensuring effective operations, strategic planning, and competitiveness. The core principles of centralized purchasing are economies of scale, standardization of products, consolidations of supplies, purchasing policies, financial controls, and common information.

Budget Observations

The total budget reflects an increase of 5.8% or \$24,166. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations including sick leave buyback. Reflective on the past two years of expenses related to advertising, that line item decreased by 33%. Courier services were increased due to gas prices. Data plans for cell phones were required to be upgraded, increasing the cell phone budget by 16.7% or \$6,000. High-security shredders were purchased for the Police Dept. and the Human Resources Dept. due to the sensitive nature of the documents being destroyed. In addition, office furniture was purchased for the Police Dept. and the Water Dept. These purchases increased the budget by 757.3% or \$22,720.

The total budget for the Procurement Dept. was increased by 5.8%.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board’s budget of \$439,799.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#141 Assessing

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$635,758	\$124,462	\$0	\$760,220
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$601,481	\$124,049	\$0	\$725,530
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$425,030	\$74,319	\$0	\$499,349

Department Synopsis

The Assessing Department works with the 5-member appointed Board of Assessors and is responsible for valuing all real and personal property. It is also responsible for annually submitting a tax rate recapitulation summary (recap sheet) for approval by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, and recertify the value of the town by doing field and data reviews of the community every five years in an attempt to maintain equitable values. Additionally, the department is responsible for motor vehicle excise bills.

Budget Observations

The total budget reflects an increase of 4.8% or \$34,690. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations including sick leave buyback. The new initiative part-time employee was made permanent to continue to assist in fieldwork. Ms. Barrett spoke about the importance of the Assessing Department in capturing the revenue for the Town.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$760,220.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#146 Treasurer & Collector

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$805,422	\$92,669	\$0	\$898,091
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$765,410	\$99,985	\$0	\$865,395
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$581,644	\$86,211	\$0	\$667,855

Department Synopsis

The Treasurer and Collector department is responsible for collecting property taxes, vehicle excise, beach and dump sticker fees, and most other taxes and fees the town collects. In addition, the department is responsible for the treasury functions of the town, including cash management, debt issuance, and investing town funds.

Budget Observations

The total budget reflects an increase of 3.8% or \$32,696. The increase reflects contractual salary obligations and an increase in seasonal employees. Additional step increases due to new staff. Select Board requested to return from an online-only model of beach sticker sales enacted during COVID to both online and in-person. Reduction in stock of stickers and printing was a result of online sales.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$898,091.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#155 Information Technologies

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$751,199	\$1,582,355	\$18,750	\$2,352,304
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$768,360	\$1,531,008	\$33,530	\$2,332,898
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$581,791	\$1,005,806	\$0	\$1,587,597

Department Synopsis

The Information Technologies (IT) Department has a staff of 8. This includes one employee primarily responsible for supporting the Police Department and another employee responsible for the Fire Department. The goals of the IT Department are: to maintain a municipal area network connecting all town buildings; train town personnel on the use of new computer technologies; support and maintain the town's municipal area network; provide a stable infrastructure on which to build; and implement technologies allowing other departments to more efficiently accomplish their goals.

Budget Observations

The total budget reflects only a slight increase of 0.8% or \$19,406. The increase essentially reflects a level-funded budget. New Initiative "Archive Social" software for archiving social media accounts. Reduced funding for consulting and departmental equipment.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$2,352,304.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman,
and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#158 Tax Title and Foreclosures

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$0	\$261,000	\$0	\$261,000
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$296,000	\$0	\$296,000
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$141,375	\$0	\$141,375

Department Synopsis

This budget covers the costs of land court recordings and legal services. These costs, primarily associated with real estate tax liens and foreclosures, are usually recovered by the town when the taxes are ultimately paid.

Budget Observations

The total budget reflects a decrease of 11.8% or \$35,000. The department has been successful in collections and has performed most of the work in-house without having to utilize outside legal assistance.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$261,000.

Department of Finance – 710-755 Debt and Interest

	FY22 Actual	FY23 Revised	FY24 Proposed
710 Long Term Debt	\$9,848,983	\$9,672,799	\$9,502,539
750 Long Term Interest	\$6,295,731	\$6,001,616	\$5,554,235
752 Short Term Interest	\$0	\$463,759	\$1,219,022
753 Misc Interest	\$407	\$5,000	\$5,000
755 Bond Issuance Costs	\$10,746	\$25,000	\$0
Total	\$16,155,867	\$16,168,174	\$16,280,796

Budget Observations

The decrease in the Long-Term Debt budget for FY2024 is \$170,260 a 1.8% decrease from FY2023. This budget reflects principal payments due on existing debt.

The decrease in the Long-Term Interest budget for FY2024 is \$447,381, a 7.5% decrease from FY2023. This budget reflects the interest on existing long-term debt.

The increase in the Short-Term Interest budget for FY2024 is \$1,138,522, a 1,414.3% increase from FY2023. This budget reflects the interest on new approved projects in their early stages before a long-term bond is issued.

The Miscellaneous Interest budget is level funded for FY2024. This budget is primarily for interest paid on tax abatements.

The Bond issuance Costs budget is unfunded for FY2024. This budget reflects the costs of issuing bonds and Bond Anticipation Notes paid up front, such as legal, printing, etc., that are not covered by bond premiums.

Recommendations

The sub-committee recommends approval of the Select Board budget amounts for each of the debt and interest budgets listed above.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary: #911 Pension Contributions

	Town	School	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$13,816,851	\$4,601,852	\$18,418,703
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$12,449,141	\$4,585,057	\$17,034,198
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$11,866,955	\$4,335,173	\$16,202,128

Department Synopsis

This budget (comprised of both the town and non-educational-based School Department pension contributions) represents the town’s normal pension funding based on current employees and retirees using actuarial calculations, plus an amount needed to amortize the unfunded prior liability.

Budget Observations

The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$1,384,505, an 7.8% increase from FY2023. This budget is produced using the state schedule with a long-term goal of being fully funded by 2035. The chart above reflects the town employees and non-education-based school employees. The Trust is managed and invested by the Plymouth Retirement Board, a 5-member board that meets on a regular basis.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board’s budget of \$18,418,703.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#913 Unemployment

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$0	\$20,000	\$0	\$20,000
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$225,000	\$0	\$225,000

Department Synopsis

This budget represents a transfer to the Unemployment Compensation Trust. The Trust is used to cover unemployment compensation claims.

Budget Observations

This budget has decreased by \$105,000. CARES Act reimbursement was helpful in replenishing the unemployment trust fund. Positions that are being cut this year are unfilled positions. Any positions that may be cut will be offered an opportunity to fill vacant positions that remain open.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$20,000.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman, and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary: #914 Member Insurance

	Town	School	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$15,463,518	\$25,780,341	\$41,243,859
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$14,764,275	\$25,147,430	\$39,911,705
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$13,683,746	\$23,469,298	\$37,153,044

Department Synopsis

This budget represents the taxpayer-funded employer contributions to the Healthcare Trust Funds (one for Medical and one for Dental).

Budget Observations

The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$1,332,154 a 3.3% increase from FY2023.

This increase appears appropriate given Plymouth’s claims trend and the balance projections for the Health Insurance Trust Fund.

The proposed budget increase reflects a conservative approach to funding the Health Insurance Trust Fund by minimizing premium increases for employees and ensuring adequate funding of the Trust to pay estimated claims.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board’s budget of \$41,243,859.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman,
and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary: #915 OPEB Trust Funding

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$0	\$1,172,491	\$0	\$1,172,491
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$1,149,501	\$0	\$1,149,501
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$1,109,956	\$0	\$1,109,956

Department Synopsis

This budget puts aside funds for the Other Post-Employment Benefits obligations of the town to its employees. The primary component of that liability is retiree health insurance benefits.

Budget Observations

The increase in the FY2024 budget is \$22,990, a 2.0% increase from FY2023. The FY2023 funding is based on 1% of the estimated payroll.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$1,172,491.

To: Advisory & Finance Committee
From: Budget Sub-Committee B: Christine Richards (Chair), Steve Keith, Steve Nearman,
and Ashley Shaw

Date: January 17, 2023
Subject: Sub-Committee B FY2024 Budget Review & Recommendations:

Budget Summary:#916 Compensated Absences

	Personnel Expenses	Other Expenses	Departmental Equipment	Total
Proposed FY2024 Budget	\$0	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000
FY2023 Revised Budget	\$0	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000
FY2022 Actual Budget	\$0	\$125,000	\$0	\$125,000

Department Synopsis

This fund serves to pay out unused vacation and, if applicable, sick time to employees who exit their jobs.

Budget Observations

This budget is level funded for FY2024.

Recommendations

The Sub-Committee recommends approval of the Select Board's budget of \$125,000.