



**Members**

- Robert Vanderslice, Chairman
- Julie Tarmy, Secretary
- Peter Barba
- Barbara Beatty
- DeWitt Brown
- Dan McMackin
- Dana Sheehan
- Deborah Warren
- Judy Zahora

**TOWN OF NAHANT**  
**Advisory and Finance Committee**

Wednesday, March 16, 2022 via Zoom  
 Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Beatty, Brown, Sheehan, McMackin, Vanderslice, Warren, Zahora

Members Absent: Barba, Tarmy

Others present: Antrim, Barletta, Furlong, Nieto

Meeting Called to Order at 7:28 by Zahora

**Motion made by Brown to approve the minutes from March 9, 2022, seconded by Beatty; passed unanimously, approved.**

**Budget update:**

Nieto noted a few budget updates. Barletta said he would send us more on water and sewer, after it has been approved by the Board of Selectmen.

**Police Budget:**

Chief of Police Furlong summarized his submitted budget, which we had in our online files, and said not much had changed from his current budget.

When asked about the future, he said the biggest upcoming needs were related to the new state requirement for officer and department certification, based on the Police Reform Act. To meet the requirements, the building will need new evidence and interview rooms. A new female locker room is required immediately, because the Department has hired its first full-time female officer. Other certification requirements will likely include body cameras, although this has not been mandated yet.

Zahora said we understand that the Police and Fire Department buildings need upgrades, and that there has been much talk about a combined public safety building, but that there were questions about feasibility now. She asked how much money would be available now? Nieto said that the plan was to use some free cash for a feasibility study, about which a meeting with an architect was planned in the upcoming week, for which ARPA funds could be used.

Zahora asked whether spending money on a feasibility study made sense when the public safety building project might not be feasible.

Vanderslice asked about whether there was a cost estimate for the Police locker room. Beatty explained that the plan was to divide a room in half. McMackin said that there were no biddable documents yet, but that it would probably cost about \$20,000 to \$30,000. Vanderslice asked if there would be



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economies of scale if combined with other projects. McMackin said he didn't know because there was no scope of work yet for bids.

Sheehan asked if an increase was needed in funding for gasoline. Chief Furlong said that he thought not. He explained summer staffing increases and the fifteen reserve officers. Nieto added later that the Town was not asking for additional funding for gasoline, because there appear to be existing funds to cover large increases.

Discussion followed about costs and timing of purchasing new software and body cameras and required training for certification. Chief Furlong said that he wanted to purchase Power DMS software used by other departments, for a cost about \$10,000. In answer to Warren, he said it would require training and an annual fee. Questioners were raised about whether state or ARPA funding could be used for some costs. Nieto and Furlong explained that for some costs yes, others no. In response to Vanderslice, Chief Furlong said that financing for body cameras would go away unless purchased soon. We suggested going ahead now. Furlong said that he has a meeting with a vendor to soon get an estimate.

Nieto explained that the proposed 4.9% salary increase included a deferred, promised 3% raise for officers, and that administrative salaries would increase accordingly. Furlong noted that his assistant Mariana Hire gave him weekly updates on costs, and that they worked well together, as Beatty and McMackin had seen when they visited.

Discussion followed in response to questions about costs for the locker room. McMackin said that about \$30,000 would probably cover it and that going with a contractor rather than a study was appropriate. Furlong said that he was meeting with a contractor soon.

McMackin, after questions by Vanderslice and others about the public safety building, explained potential costs and timelines, which he thought might be \$15 to \$20 million and take some eight years to finish, from the starting date. Warren suggested we have a special meeting to discuss a public safety building. It was agreed this was a good idea rather than discussing it in more detail now. Further questions were raised about location, whether Police and Fire should be combined, the possible need for an override, and other issues. Barletta explained that the proposed \$500,000 for the feasibility study might be high, what such a study would entail, and that we would have more information after the upcoming meeting with an architect.



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**Fire Department Budget:**

Chief Antrim explained the proposed Fire Department budget and needs McMackin summarized what he and Beatty learned when they visited. Antrim added in-depth details.

Salary increases are mostly contractual, Chief Antrim said. An increase is requested to cover training for on-call firefighters, in part to encourage them to stay with the Department, as we tend to lose them. Service and supplies include the contractual agreement with Lynn for dispatch.

Antrim explained the need for portions of a new roof, due to leaks, and for windows that blow into the living area, making sleeping difficult. He said these necessary repairs should make existing living conditions “tolerable.”

Discussion followed about sunk costs and funding methods. Nieto explained plans to use a combination of funding from free cash, which must be used next year, and ARPA, which must be used by 2024. Brown suggested as a general rule to apply for state grants first, then use ARPA, then free cash, with borrowing last.

Discussion moved to building costs. Antrim said that asbestos found in the walls endangered the health of firefighters. He explained the state standard of four feet on each side of a truck in the vehicle bays and noted that a “massive” increase in footage would be required to meet this need. As Beatty, McMackin, and others confirmed, it is difficult to even get by a truck because of extremely limited space.

Chief Antrim noted that a feasibility study is being done soon, which will provide an estimate for a new building. McMackin described the order of magnitude and timeline to complete the project. Zahora questioned the value of a feasibility study if the project cannot go forward soon because of costs. She agreed that we have a problem and that employees deserve better.

Chief Antrim explained his request for a new fire truck, which will cost about \$700,000 to 750,000. The existing truck is 18 years old, has problems, and is unsafe due to its water hammer defect. Discussion of needs for types of trucks and hoses ensued. Antrim went on to describe how all three trucks are dispatched for working fires, how much water is needed, and other details of firefighting procedures in Nahant. He noted that the price for the truck would go up if not ordered now, and that it would take a minimum of two years for delivery. McMackin asked about the incremental safety benefit of a new



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truck and whether it justified a new one. Antrim explained the safety benefits of a new truck. He said that the town had the right amount and type of equipment, but that this truck was old, unsafe, and needed to be replaced. Nieto said the plan was to borrow half and use ARPA for the other half of the cost.

**Hearing no questions from the public forum, Brown moved for adjournment. Sheehan seconded.**

**After a unanimous roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:45p.m.**

**Approved on March 30, 2022.**

**Respectfully submitted by Barbara Beatty, 4/13/22.**