

Jan 12 2023 4:26 pm



**City of Fitchburg
Massachusetts 01420**

CITY COUNCIL

Councilors at Large

Marcus L. DiNatale
Sally H. Cragin
Amy L. Green
Samantha M. Squailia
Anthony M. Zarrella

President

Anthony M. Zarrella

Vice President

Andrew J. Van Hazinga

Ward Councilors

Ward 1 – Bernard J. Schultz, III
Ward 2 – Paul R. Beauchemin
Ward 3 – Andrew J. Couture
Ward 4 – Andrew J. Van Hazinga
Ward 5 – Marisa R. Fleming
Ward 6 – Derrick J. Cruz

Finance Committee

A meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by Councilor DiNatale on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 at 6:03 PM in the Legislative Building, 700 Main Street, Fitchburg, MA.

Committee Members present: Councilors Paul Beauchemin, Derrick Cruz, Marcus DiNatale, Andrew Van Hazinga, and Anthony Zarrella.

Committee Members absent: None.

The chairman read an announcement regarding the recording of public meetings, noting that FATV was recording and broadcasting the meeting. No other person stated that they were recording the meeting.

The chairman opened the meeting for public comment. No one spoke.

003-23 ORDER: that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the I. C. Federal Credit Union gift in the approximate amount of \$5,000.00 (FIVE THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said gift, which is to provide heating assistance to city residents.

Discussion: Councilors thanked I. C. Credit Union for this gift.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Cruz second by Councilor Beauchemin, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #003-23.

004-23 ORDER: that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the MEMA Emergency Management Performance grant in the approximate amount of \$20,150.00 (TWENTY THOUSAND, ONE HUNDRED FIFTY AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to purchase two haz-mat suits, two gas meters, and two battery powered generators.

005-23 ORDER: that the City of Fitchburg hereby approves the expenditure of funds from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, Firefighter Safety Equipment grant in the approximate amount of \$24,999.00 (TWENTY-FOUR THOUSAND, NINE HUNDRED NINETY-NINE AND 00/100 DOLLARS) for the purpose of said grant, which is to update the communication base stations located at each of the city's three fire stations.

Discussion: The chairman announced that the committee was taking up Orders #004-23 and #005-23. Fire Chief Dante Suarez was present. The MEMA grant is to purchase equipment. The chief said that the generators being purchased could be used in investigations and for civic events. The two haz-mat suits are to replace ones that have expired. The two meters are ten years old and are in need of constant maintenance. The second grant is to update the radio base stations at each of the fire stations. The ones currently in use are old and it is difficult to find replacement parts. This purchase will bring the department into compliance with statewide communications guidelines.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Zarrella second by Councilor Beauchemin, the committee voted unanimously to approve Orders #004-23 and #005-23.

006-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$25,500.00) same to be transferred from RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES and credited to INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY EXPENSES, CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS for the purpose of installing drops and conduits at the Senior Center.

Discussion: Director of Facilities Russell Karlstad was present. He said that the Veterans Department will be moving out of City Hall to the Senior Center, where it will be joining the Veterans Council. There is a need to update connectivity in the building and the IT Department will do the update which should be good for the next five to ten years. The second floor will be recabled and wi-fi access will be added to the hall. Furniture is being donated by AIS.

Councilors asked about current connectivity at the Senior Center and were told that it is old and unreliable. It doesn't meet current needs and there is no wireless Internet. When asked, Mr. Karlstad indicated he did not know who would be moving into the Veterans Department office on the first floor of City Hall. Councilors also expressed concern about parking around the Senior Center.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Zarrella second by Councilor Van Hazinga, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #006-23.

007-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$100,000.00) same to be transferred from RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES and credited to CAPITAL PROJECTS, LONGSJO SCHOOL BOILER REPLACEMENT for the purpose of paying costs for the replacement of boilers at the Arthur M. Longsjo Middle School, including a feasibility study and all other costs incidental or related thereto, as detailed in the order.

Discussion: School Director of Finance and Operations Jeremy Roche was present. He said that the city was invited to participate in a second Accelerated Repair project by the MSBA, specifically one to replace the boilers at Longsjö Middle School. This order will fund the schematic design and engineering which will be used to figure the total project cost. Currently the windows and doors will be replaced in the summer of 2023 and the boilers would be replaced in the summer of 2024.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Cruz second by Councilor Van Hazinga, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #007-23.

008-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is transferred from within the sum of SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$700,000.00) same to be transferred from EMPLOYEE BENEFITS, HEALTH INSURANCE and credited to SCHOOL EXPENSES.

Discussion: City Auditor Calvin Brooks stated that the city had a premium holiday in October, so health insurance costs will be less than expected. The resulting decrease in school indirect spending needs to be transferred to the school department for direct spending and to continue to meet Net School Spending.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Beauchemin second by Councilor Zarrella, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #008-23.

009-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY-EIGHT THOUSAND, FIFTY-TWO AND 49/100 DOLLARS (\$258,052.49) from RESERVE FOR APPROPRIATION, PEG ACCESS and credited to INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, FRANCHISE FEE for the purpose of paying FATV for franchise fees received during the second and third quarters of 2022.

Discussion: The chairman read a letter from Information Technology Director Trevor Beauregard dated December 28, 2022. Councilors remembered that a change was made in the flow of funds, so that payments now come to the city to be given to FATV, rather than going directly to FATV as in the past.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Cruz second by Councilor Beauchemin, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #009-23.

010-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of THREE HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$350,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to STABILIZATION FUND.

Discussion: The chairman read a letter from the mayor dated December 29, 2022. He indicated that this amount is the same amount the city has deposited into Stabilization for the past several years.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Cruz second by Councilor Zarrella, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #010-23.

011-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWO HUNDRED FIFTY THOUSAND AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$250,000.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to OTHER POST EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS (OPEB) TRUST FUND.

Discussion: The chairman read a letter from the mayor dated December 29, 2022. He indicated that this amount has been approved in prior years.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Zarrella second by Councilor Van Hazinga, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #011-23.

012-23 ORDER: that there be and hereby is appropriated the sum of TWENTY-SEVEN THOUSAND, FIVE HUNDRED AND 00/100 DOLLARS (\$27,500.00) same to be charged against AVAILABLE FUNDS and credited to RESERVE FOR OTHER MUNICIPAL PURPOSES, CAPITAL EXPENSES.

Discussion: City Auditor stated that this amount is to return funds to the reserve account that had been used to cover expenses prior to Free Cash being certified.

Action: On a motion made by Councilor Zarrella second by Councilor Beauchemin, the committee voted unanimously to approve Order #012-23.

On a motion made by Councilor Beauchemin second by Councilor Zarrella, the committee voted unanimously to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Calvin D. Brooks, Clerk