

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
Steven P. Rose, Chairman  
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk  
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

Gregory S. Enos  
**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

# Town of Avon Massachusetts

Town Offices  
Buckley Center 02322  
(508) 588-0414  
FAX (508) 559-0209



TOWN OF AVON  
2022 FEB 18 A 10:33  
TOWN CLERK

## **BOARD OF SELECTMEN & FINANCE COMMITTEE JOINT BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING FEBRUARY 12, 2022 at 8:30 a.m.**

**Members Present:** Steven P. Rose, Chairman  
Eric S. Beckerman, Clerk  
Jason L. Suzor, Associate

**Others Present:** Gregory S. Enos, Town Administrator  
Shanna M. Faro, Executive Assistant  
Deb Morin, Treasurer/Collector (via videoconference)  
Erin Barry, Town Accountant (via videoconference)  
Elise LaForge, Library Director  
Jane Carthas, Council on Aging Director (via videoconference)  
Nancy Puckett, Library Trustee, Council on Aging Board

**Finance Committee:** Dan Norian, Chairman  
James Norian, Member  
Derek Staffier, Member  
Judith Leggett, Member (via videoconference)  
Richard Jordan, Member (via videoconference)  
Shannon Coffey, Member (via videoconference)

Chairman Rose called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. He announced that this joint Budget Workshop meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee is being conducted via a hybrid method. The public may attend the meeting in-person or may continue to participate via remote Zoom access. Until further notice, in-person attendees, who are not vaccinated, will be recommended to wear a mask. Chairman Rose reminded the viewing audience that people who would like to view this meeting while in progress may do so by joining the Zoom link for the videoconference.

### **Library**

Ms. LaForge and Ms. Puckett appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed library budget for Fiscal Year 2023. Ms. LaForge stated that there was a small increase in library automation fees, however, she was anticipating grant funding to offset those charges. She informed the Board that all other expense line items were level funded.

Ms. LaForge requested that the Board fund the full-time position that was not funding in Fiscal Year 2022. Ms. LaForge stated that while this is a notable increase by approximately \$40,000, it is necessary for the continued improvement of services at the library. Ms. LaForge stated that after an assessment of the community's needs, she was requesting that the position be changed from full-time Circulation

Assistant to full-time Children's Librarian. Ms. LaForge stated that by hiring a Children's Librarian, the library would be able to offer more programs for a wider range of ages, from approximately 18 months to age 17. The full-time Children's Librarian would curate a well-developed children's book collection, create engaging displays, and dedicate a huge time allotment to the creation of a successful Summer Reading Program. Ms. LaForge stated that this position would also do significant outreach to all town's schools, developing a vital connection with other town services.

Ms. LaForge informed the Board that the second important purpose that the Children's Librarian would serve is that the expenditure would significantly help the Avon Public Library reduce the waiver amount as submitted the past two fiscal years to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners ("MBLC"). Ms. LaForge explained that during the pandemic, the town did not meet the Municipal Appropriate Requirement ("MAR") as required by the MBLC to maintain its certification. Ms. LaForge stated that since the town was not able to spend its appropriation, the library applied for the waiver. Subsequently, the MBLC has set up a 5-year waiver plan. Ms. LaForge was concerned about going into year three of the waiver, as after the five years, libraries still not meeting their quota are at risk of losing their certification. What this means is that for one-year patrons are not able to access the Old Colony Library Network and exchange books from other libraries. Ms. LaForge stated that it would be a severe disadvantage for library patrons. Ms. LaForge stated that with the additional staff member, the library would only be a few hundred dollars shy of its required MAR. The Board requested that the library place additional money in the budget in an expense line so that the Avon Public Library will meet its MAR and not have to apply for a waiver in Fiscal Year 2023. Ms. LaForge stated that she can add to the automation line item or programming expense line item to meet the quota. Satisfied with the response from the Board and Finance Committee, Ms. LaForge departed the meeting.

### **Council on Aging**

Ms. Carthas and Ms. Puckett appeared before the Board to discuss the proposed Council on Aging budget for Fiscal Year 2023. Ms. Carthas stated that increases to salary line items were contractual or step increases. Ms. Carthas stated that she has reduced the gas/fuel line item as the Council on Aging is trying to use the revolving fund for van related expenses. Ms. Carthas informed the Board that over the years, the van revolving fund has accumulated a total of approximately \$17,000. Ms. Carthas stated that it is her intent to spend down from that account, which can be used on van related expenses only, for items such as gasoline, maintenance and repairs needed for the van. Chairman Rose asked Ms. Carthas if the revolving account could be used to pay the salaries of the van drivers as well. Ms. Carthas stated that she was uncertain if there was enough funding in the account to pay the salaries. However, she is meeting with the Town Accountant on Monday regarding the van revolving account and will report back to the Board.

### **Other Budgets**

Mr. Enos reviewed other department budgets quickly with the Board. He reminded the Board that the Fiscal Year 2023 COLAs for non-union employees had not been determined yet.

**Town Accountant** – audit services expenses have risen due to a new contract with the auditor

**Fire Department** – The Fire Chief has requested four additional full-time firefighters. The Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee unanimously agreed to decline the request and reduce the union salary line-item budget by \$332,000. Mr. Beckerman requested that Chief Spurr apply for the SAFER grant before funding this request into the budget.

**Gas, Plumbing, & Wire Inspectors** – Mr. Enos asked the Board if we are increasing the salary line-items for the inspectors.

**Avon Public Schools** – Mr. Enos reminded the Board that the School Committee has requested a 6% increase which may have to be reduced.

**Park & Recreation** – Mr. Enos stated that he is working with the Recreation Director to change the way the Commission uses their revolving fund.

**Memorial Day** – Ms. Faro informed the Board that the Parade Committee has requested a \$500 to \$1,000 increase due to inflation of food costs.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Beckerman made a motion to adjourn the Workshop Meeting at 12:00 p.m. Mr. Suzor seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held. Mr. Suzor voted aye. Mr. Beckerman voted aye. Chairman Rose voted aye. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,



Shanna M. Faro  
Executive Assistant