



Board of Finance Meeting, Tuesday, June 1, 2021, 5:30 pm
****VIRTUAL MEETING****
6/1/2021

BURLINGTON BOARD OF FINANCE

REMOTE MEETING WITH CALL-IN NUMBER

BURLINGTON, VERMONT

MINUTES OF MEETING

June 1, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Max Tracy

Karen Paul

Ali Dieng

Miro Weinberger

OTHERS PRESENT: Katherine Schad

Eileen Blackwood

Rich Goodwin

Jordan Redell

Sarah E Carpenter

Mark Barlow

Jon Murad

Jack Hanson

Lise Veronneau

1.0 CALL TO ORDER and AGENDA

Mayor Weinberger the Board of Finance meeting to order at 5:30 PM.



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- i. Motion to amend/adopt agenda

MOTION by Councilor Dieng, SECOND by City Council President Tracy, to adopt the agenda.

VOTING: unanimous; motion carries.

2.0 PUBLIC FORUM (VERBAL)

2.01 Verbal Comments

- Sharon Bushor requested a line item to prepare or groom cemeteries for Memorial Day. She also expressed concern that the City has been unable to fill crossing guard positions. She also asked the City to examine whether it could provide assistance to residents in the case of sewer line breakage and repair. She finally suggested examining the rapidly-growing Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Department positions being created to ensure that there is no overlap between them and already-existing positions.
- Jeff Nick asked the Board of Finance and City Council to increase the Police Department's budget, especially for downtown areas and streets. He said that the gross receipts tax imposed on businesses and restaurants was meant to fund an increased police presence, but that the department is being scaled back. He cited concern with issues such as motorized skateboards in the pedestrian right-of-way.

Forum closed at 5:26 PM.

3.0 REVIEW RESULTS FROM THE CITY BUDGET SURVEY

3.01 Review the Results from the City Budget Survey

Mayor Weinberger introduced the item, saying that a survey was developed to better understand the community's priorities for the Fiscal Year 2022 budget for Burlington. He noted that the survey was fielded between May 5 and May 24 and that there were 814 responses.

City Council President Tracy asked if the administration anticipates making changes to the budget based on any of the community feedback received from the survey. Mayor Weinberger replied that this was a learning experience and that they anticipate improving the survey for future budget years. He said that there was overwhelming support for investments in infrastructure. He noted that there was support for the equity initiatives but there was also a contingent of survey respondents that were opposed to them, though he doesn't anticipate making changes those initiatives.

Councilor Dieng asked if the survey was successful and could be statistically valid based on the response rate. Mayor



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Weinberger noted that around 6,000 people were notified of the survey directly and that it was also posted on Front Porch Forum and other social media. Chief Administrative Officer Schad said that the lack of lead time resulted in less outreach than the administration would have wanted. She said that for next year, they will work to translate the survey into the languages spoken in the Burlington community and start the process earlier.

4.0 FURTHER DISCUSSION OF THE BPD BUDGET

4.01 Further discussion of the BPD budget

Mayor Weinberger asked for additional feedback from the Board of Finance on the Burlington Police Department's FY22 budget. He spoke briefly about the savings anticipated in FY22 based on the reduced number of officers. He said that the administration is proposing to use the \$777,000 in savings to invest into non-officer personnel, like a public records request specialist and an expansion of the CSO program. He said that another \$400,000 would be proposed to help launch a significantly expanded mental health response. He said that the remaining money is being held for a number of months pending City Council action once the result of the operational assessment of the BPD has been finalized.

Councilor Dieng asked about the ambassador program in the proposal and could be considered part of the police budget or whether the CSOs would be in that role. Acting Chief Murad replied that there isn't an ambassador program in the budget. He said that the department is currently in the process of hiring and training the CSOs and that they could be a presence at Church Street Marketplace once they are trained.

City Council President Tracy asked about the progress on park ranger job descriptions and how the rangers will be deployed. He also asked how the dollar amounts for the mental health reserve and the BPD assessment were calculated and how those funds will be spent. Mayor Weinberger said that the park ranger positions would be created through the budget resolution when it passes and that they don't currently have job descriptions but that the Council will review and approve them once they are drafted. He said that the park rangers would assist visitors in the parks and help with rule enforcement. City Council President Tracy suggested that the rangers be trained in CPR and other first aid, as well as have the ability to carry Naloxone. Mayor Weinberger then reviewed the methodology and assumptions used to develop the line items in the police department's budget.

Councilor Dieng asked whether the hiring of the CSOs could augment attrition of sworn officers. Acting Chief Murad replied that the attrition noted in the budget is a projection, so it could be more or fewer. He also said that the Department is authorized to onboard 6 positions in the first half of the fiscal year and the remaining 4 in the second half of the fiscal year. He said that the goal is for these positions to take on some of the tasks that the sworn officers so that those officers have the capacity to deal with higher-priority safety issue.

5.0 ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK OR DISCUSSION ON BUDGETS NOT YET ADDRESSED

5.01 Any additional feedback or discussion on budgets not addressed thus far in the process

Mayor Weinberger noted that he's received feedback on a number of climate items, as well as NPA funding and funding for Town Meeting TV to cover the NPA meetings.



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Councilor Carpenter asked if there would be an opportunity to use ARPA funding on accessibility, such as beach access at Leddy Beach. Mayor Weinberger replied that ARPA funding doesn't specify accessibility as a prioritized funding category.

City Council President Tracy asked about the climate analysis related to budget and how each department addresses Burlington's net zero energy goals. Mayor Weinberger replied that a comprehensive organization of climate investments should be forthcoming from the administration for the Council's review. He noted new climate discussion ideas around further electrifying the City's fleet by installing new charging stations as well as studying a new transportation demand management (TDM) system.

City Council President Tracy also noted additional items that constituents have reached out about for inclusion in the budget. These include community bystander training for active interventions when sexual harassment or abuse are taking place in the community, and a reparations study for indigenous peoples, similar to the study around reparations for chattel slavery. Mayor Weinberger said he would take these under advisement.

Councilor Dieng asked about funding for infrastructure improvements for Franklin Square in FY22. Mayor Weinberger replied that he has consulted with Director Spencer and DPW about this topic, and that this is being looked into for inclusion in the budget. Councilor Dieng also asked about the costs associated with the Language Access Plan.

6.0 REVIEW OF ANALYSIS ON FY22 ONE-TIME VS. STRUCTURAL ADDITIONAL COSTS

6.01 Review of analysis on FY22 one-time vs. structural additional costs

Mayor Weinberger said this analysis is helpful to show potential budget challenges after one-time investment funding is exhausted, specifically for unfunded ongoing costs. He said that ARPA funds can be used through 2024 and that the Board of Finance should discuss whether to set aside ARPA funding for budget gaps in upcoming fiscal years. He reviewed the significant budget increases between FY20 and FY22, which totaled approximately \$5.5 million and that around \$4 million of it has a known ongoing funding source or a reasonably strong potential funding. He said that around \$1.6 million of that spend remains unfunded in future years, and that most of that is for the equity initiatives. He expressed optimism that more federal funding for local governments could be coming in the next several years during the Biden administration's tenure.

6.0 ADJOURNMENT

6.01 Motion to Adjourn





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With no further business and without objection the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

RScty: AACoonrad