



Braintree Town Council

Committee of Ways & Means

One JFK Memorial Drive
Braintree, Massachusetts 02184

MEMBERS

Meredith Boericke, Chairwoman
Charles Ryan, Vice-Chair
Donna Connors, Member
Julia Flaherty, Member
Steven Sciascia, Member

MINUTES

May 7, 2020

A meeting of the Committee of Ways & Means was held Remote via Zoom Webinar, on Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 6:00p.m.

Councilor Boericke was in the Chair.
Clerk of the Council, Susan M. Cimino conducted the roll call.

All votes were taken by Roll Call Vote.

Present: Meredith Boericke, Chairwoman
Charles Ryan, Vice-Chair
Donna Connors, Member
Julia Flaherty, Member
Steven Sciascia, Member arrived @6:10pm due to technical difficulties

Also Present: Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff
Ed Spellman, Finance Director
Shawn McGoldrick, Town Auditor
James Arsenault, DPW Director
Nelson Chin, Director Parks & Rec
Christopher Griffin, Asst. Director Parks & Rec
Mike McGourty, Facilities Director
Jeffrey Kunz, Trash & Recycling Director
Ben Hulke, Assistant Director
John Morse, Assistant Town Engineer
Lou Dutton, Superintendent of Water & Sewer
Cynthia O'Connell, Storm Water Manager

Approval of Minutes

- None

Old Business

- None

New Business

- 20 038 Mayor: FY2021 Operating Budget or take up any action relative thereto

Chairwoman Boericke asked if there was a Motion to take off the table Order 20 038.
 Councilor Ryan made a motion to take off the table Order 20 038.

Motion: by Councilor Flaherty to take off the Table Order 20 038

Second: by Councilor Ryan

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

The following Departments were in attendance to present their proposed FY2021 Budget:

<u>APPENDIX F</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Department of Public Works®	59-77 (James Arsenault, DPW Director)
Sewer	89-95 (James Arsenault, DPW Director)
Water	96-106 (James Arsenault, DPW Director)
Storm Water	116-121 (James Arsenault, DPW Director)

Committee members asked each department many questions about increase/decrease line items.
 Some of the questions/answers are below.

Please find all FY2021 budget questions/answers posted on the town website at
<https://braintree.ma.gov/449/Fiscal-Year-Budgets>

Nicole Taub, Chief of Staff explained the MWRA water rates have been re-negotiated and reduced by \$381,200. The average residential rate would have been increased by 5.9% but the average increase will drop to 4.48%.

Department of Public Works®

James Arsenault, DPW Director stated this department puts a lot into their jobs. The employees work hard for the residents. We are trying to address all the new regulations. We have reorganized to strive to meet the needs of the community. The FY2021 Budget request is \$8,973,466.

Councilor Ryan asked what the major changes are we will see this year.

James Arsenault stated one change is the Town Engineer position got combined with the Traffic Engineer position. With those savings we were able to get an electrician and a custodial person. We have been asked to maintain Pond Street, the Art Center and Eldridge School and there will probably more facilities as well.

James Arsenault stated we decreased where we could and we did increase the line items for Maintenance in Parks & Facilities. James Arsenault stated another increase is in the Solid Waste. Recycling costs have increased tremendously and there is no way we could keep it at the current level. This is very complex. It has a lot to do with international trade of recyclable materials.

Councilor Ryan stated he is concerned that the Traffic Engineer position will not be funded but understand that money will be used for other positions as in an Electrician in-house.

James Arsenault stated right now that is not our critical need but down the road we may look at that again.

Councilor Connors asked how DPW was budgeted and how it was decreased, if any by the recommended 5%.

James Arsenault stated this budget began by adding in all the necessary increases including COLA and required other items. We then looked at line items where we could decrease and did so.

Ed Spellman stated we asked each department to take the FY20 budget and add in the various contractual increases including COLA and step increases for those not at their top step rate. Glasses, work boots, clothing are new to the contracts which added to the increases. That was the base point. From there we originally asked departments to cut 1%. We then came back at a later date and asked them to cut an additional 3%. Director Arsenault's budget has increased a bit because of the additional responsibilities and facilities this department will be responsible for.

Councilor Connors asked where in the budget shows the cost savings to hire in-house electrician.

Mike McGourty stated we spent approximately \$120,000 in the last year on electrical fees. \$63,000 was spent on labor alone. We rely on an electrician on a daily basis. It holds up a lot of our work if we need to call one in. Building repairs happen mostly after hours so we are hoping this overtime decreases.

Councilor Sciascia asked why decrease the Summer Events at this time. Is it a sure thing?

James Arsenault stated if we need to look at this again and re-evaluate and add new different events we will re-visit this at a future date and do so.

Chairwoman Boericke asked about overtime in general. It seems we are consistently under budgeting for it.

Nicole Taub stated the reality the overtime needs of the departments vary greatly. The Mayor had stated he would like to address the insufficient funding of department overtime. We are moving closer to funding for the overtime costs.

Chairwoman Boericke asked about Chapter 90 State funding.

James Arsenault stated we get that money and it has to be used towards improvements on the roadway.

Jeff Kunz stated we have no startup date to reopen the trash and recycling center. We will work with the State and the Mayor's office to do this.

Sewer

Lou Dutton, Superintendent Water & Sewer states that we balance the rates every year to make sure everything is covered/funded. The FY2021 Budget request is \$11,558,418.

The MWRA decrease helped save/lower our rates.

Councilor Connors asked for a list of rates for the past years.

Lou Dutton read the rate increases for the following years:

2017 was 4.86%, 2018 was 8.28%, 2019 was 5%, 2020 was 7.08% and 2021 is 4.48%. The 4.48% is a combined Water & Sewer rate. Larger Commercial users will pay at an increased percentage.

Water

The FY2021 Budget request is \$20,911,856.

Councilor Connors asked why 4 new positions.

Lou Dutton stated we have a lot of water main replacements to be completed. We have a brand new vacator that should be going out every day to clean the sewer mains. These positions will help get a lot of the maintenance done we need to do.

Councilor Connors asked about revenue.

James Arsenault stated with the new Treatment Plant coming we are slowly trying to fund that project instead of all at once.

Councilor Flaherty asked about an increase of \$70,000 on page 96 of Engineering Services costs.

James Arsenault stated this is costs associated with having to pay for consultant work on projects.

Councilor Sciascia asked about page 96 Insurance increase lines.

James Arsenault stated the increase in positions increase the needs for insurance.

Councilor Ryan asked about the line item for Stand by that is budgeted for \$55,000. Lou Dutton explained that is for one person to be on Stand by for the week and they get paid \$1,000 per the Union Contract.

Councilor Connors asked about the Intern line item for \$30,000. James Arsenault explained this was moved from Engineering into the Water & Sewer line where most of the work is being done. We usually have two interns.

Storm Water

The FY2021 Budget request is \$907,455.

Cynthia O'Connell, Storm Water Manager gave a power point presentation. She explained Storm Water is rain and snow that falls and goes into our Storm Water drains collecting along the way debris, dog poop, car oil and litter. The storm drains collect the water, and send it through pipes. The pipes outlet at the nearest wetland or water body without any treatment. This pollutes the natural habitats for various species. There is a new approach which includes: Improve Public Health and Safety, Cleaner water, Less flooding, Safer roads, Improve access to local businesses, More aesthetically pleasing, Less beach closures, Make water swimmable/fishable, Improve the habitat of our local wildlife and Meet all the requirements of the Clean Water Act- 2016 MS4-Stormwater Program.

There are brochures that have gone out in the Water/Sewer bills and are available at the Town Clerk's office.

Chairwoman Boericke asked about Drainage Rehab line item. Director Arsenault stated in the past the Highway department maintained those treatments and now it has been moved into Storm Water. Councilor Ryan stated seeing the additional employees being added when the budget is tight but after hearing from Director Arsenault that this is part of the overall plan to incrementally build up the staffing for this department, I can support this.

Motion made by Councilor Ryan to TABLE Order 20 038 to the Committee of Ways & Means meeting on May 11, 2020.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Table Order 20 038 to May 11, 2020

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

- 20 039 Mayor: FY2021 Budget – Community Preservation Committee or take up any action relative thereto (**Presented by Christine Stickney on May 18**)

This item will be discussed at the Budget meeting on May 18, 2020.

Motion made by Councilor Ryan to TABLE Order 20 039 to the Committee of Ways & Means meeting on May 18, 2020.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Table Order 20 038 to May 18, 2020

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

- 20 040 Mayor: FY2021 Budget - Revolving Accounts or take up any action relative thereto (**Revolving Accounts will be presented on the date Department Head presents Budget**)

5/5	Library®	(R3, R4)
5/6	Golf®	(R8)
5/7	Department of Public Works® - Recycling	(R5, R6)
5/18	Dept. of Elder Affairs®	(R1)
5/18	Municipal Licenses & Inspections®	(R2)
5/19	Education®	(R7)

Chairwoman Boericke asked if there was a Motion to take off the table Order 20 040.
Councilor Ryan made a motion to take off the table Order 20 040.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to take off the Table Order 20 040

Second: by Councilor Sciascia

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

Revolving Account R5 and R6 DPW was voted on this evening (May 7, 2020) and referred to the full Council for favorable recommendation.

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 040 R5:

R5. That the Mayor be authorized to use a revolving fund in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws chapter 44, section 53e 1/2 that may be spent by the Mayor, in conjunction with the recycling coordinator, without further appropriation during the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2020, for the purchase of home composting bins, curbside recycling bins, recycling bags and for the collection of fees and payments for recycling materials, including hazardous waste. The recycling revolving fund is to be credited with all fees collected during fiscal year 2021. The Mayor may spend up to \$2,000 in revolving fund monies during fiscal year 2021.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 040 R5

Second: by Councilor Connors

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

Motion read by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 040 R6:

R6. That the Mayor be authorized to use a revolving fund in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws chapter 44, section 53e 1/2 that may be spent by the Mayor, in conjunction with the recycling coordinator without further appropriation during the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2020, for the collection of fees and payments from the collection of revenue-generating materials and to use the income to promote town recycling initiatives and events, including household hazardous waste events. The household hazardous waste revolving fund is to be credited with all fees collected during fiscal year 2021. The Mayor may spend up to \$50,000 in revolving fund monies during fiscal year 2021.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan for favorable recommendation to the full Council Order 20 040 R6

Second: by Councilor Connors

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

Motion made by Councilor Ryan to TABLE Order 20 040 to the Committee of Ways & Means meeting on May 18, 2020.

Motion: by Councilor Ryan to Table Order 20 040 to May 18, 2020

Second: by Councilor Flaherty

Roll Call Vote: For (5–Boericke, Connors, Flaherty, Ryan, Sciascia), Against (0), Absent (0), Abstain (0)

It was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:55p.m. by Roll Call Vote.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan M. Cimino
Clerk of the Council

Documents provided for Meeting

- 20 038 Mayor: FY2021 Operating Budget or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 039 Mayor: FY2021 Budget – Community Preservation Committee or take up any action relative thereto
- 20 040 Mayor: FY2021 Budget - Revolving Accounts or take up any action relative thereto
- Braintree Storm Water Power Point Presentation