

Board of Selectmen

January 14, 2020

Present:

- Board of Selectmen: Mr. Joe Fisher and Ms. Mary Power
- Michelle Monsegur, Assistant Town Administrator

Call to Order: 7:03PM – Ms. Power

Public Comment - none

Plaza Azteca - Request for a Change of DBA: Ms. Maria Bravo, General Manager and Mr. Ali Syed Hashaum, Operations Manager

Ms. Bravo stated that she would like to change the name of the restaurant from Plaza Azteca to Vida Mexicana. Ms. Monsegur confirmed that all the licensing paperwork was in order. Police Chief Olsson said he had no issues with the change. Mr. Fisher asked if the name was the only thing that was changing. Ms. Bravo confirmed that was the case. She also confirmed that the change would take place immediately.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the request of Plaza Azteca Hingham, Inc. for a Change of DBA from Plaza Azteca to Vida Mexicana; subject to the approval of the Alcoholic Beverages Control Commission. Ms. Power seconded. All were in favor, 2-0.

Budget Hearings

Building – Mr. Michael Clancy presented

Ms. Monsegur stated that the Building Department's FY21 requested budget includes \$233,938 for payroll, \$14,378 for expenses, and \$1,582 in additional expenses for a total request of \$249,898.

Mr. Clancy stated that the Building Department falls under the Massachusetts Department of Public Safety and that they enforce a series of fourteen international codes. He said that building officials are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

He said that, as of Dec 30, 2019, they had issued 4,553 permits. He added that the department had collected \$214,753 in revenue from Electrical, Plumbing, and Gas permits and \$699,497 from all other inspections and permits. He said that the Building Department had conducted a total of 8,620 inspections for Building, Sheet Metal, Electrical, Plumbing, Gas and Zoning/Complaints.

He went on to discuss some key initiatives and ongoing projects including the following large building projects that are nearing completion:

- 230 Bean Street 220 Units – Alliance LLC
- 10 Shipyard Drive 77 Units – Brio
- 276 Whiting Street 90 Units – Penniman Hill/LCB Senior Living LLC
- 73 Abington Street – Little Sprouts Day Care
- 6 Station Street – Falconeri Construction/6 Station Street LLC
- 31 Otis Street – Bathing Beach Bath House/Concession Stand
- Derby Street Shoppes – continuous renovations
- Lincoln Plaza – continuous renovations

Mr. Clancy explained that this year he has an additional request of \$1,582 for a clothing allowance in an effort to outfit inspectors with clearly identifiable Town of Hingham apparel. He said that this would assist the public in identifying inspectors when they are working on private property. He said that this would be paid for as a split between the general fund and revolving fund

Mr. Fisher thanked Mr. Clancy for his service to the town. He also commented that he approved his additional request for uniforms.

Ms. Power commented that she appreciated that the department was putting the townspeople first and foremost and she thought that uniforms were a great idea.

Mr. Fisher asked if they ever have home visits where they bring the Police along. He responded that they do and that they often work closely with the Police Department.

Police – Chief Olsson, Deputy Chief David Jones and Administrative Lt. Ryan O’Shea presented

Ms. Monsegur stated that the Police Department is requesting \$5,758,049 in salaries for FY21, in addition to \$399,150 in expenses, with an additional request of \$118,209, totaling \$6,792,767. First, Chief Olsson commented, regarding the Building Department’s request for funds for uniforms, that he felt that any Town employees that are going on private property should have some sort of uniform that is clearly marked as the Town of Hingham.

Chief Olsson spoke about some of the core values of the Police Department including Integrity, Service, Excellence and Leadership. He also stated that there had been a significant increase in calls this year, over 26,031.

He went on to give some court and traffic statistics from the past year. He said that the Police Department also offers many additional services such as:

- large-scale event planning (such as the July 4th events, road construction projects, athletic events, school events, voting/elections, Christmas in the Square, Taste of Hingham, Bare Cove Park Remediation Project)
- permit review: 65 (42 one-day liquor licenses and 25 road races/events)
- fingerprints
- solicitor permits
- firearms licenses
- site plan reviews (planning & Zoning)
- safety and security assessments (schools, interfaith, business)

He stated that the department has 53 full-time officers but for the past several years they have had a need for an additional police officer. He said that they are adding an additional request of \$78,209 for a new police officer. He went on to say that police officers are spending more and more time out on calls, including mental health issues, drug issues, and public safety issues. The Chief said that a main focus of theirs is to educate the public in an attempt to help people avoid incarceration. He added that the department now has a social worker who has been working for them one day a week and that has been very successful. He said that right now Hingham shares this social worker with the Town of Weymouth but anticipates that in the near future there will be a need for full-time social worker in Hingham.

He also discussed their request of \$20,00 for overtime, adding that they typically exceed their budget of \$150,00 annually. He explained that unfunded training mandates, large scale events, investigations and reports as well as court obligations all contribute to the rising overtime costs.

Mr. Fisher commented on the importance of the Chief’s insight on Town Boards. He asked about the \$7,000 increase in educational expenses for officers. Chief Olsson explained that the officers, pursuant to their labor contract, receive a stipend if they have obtained certain degrees (Associates, Bachelors etc.) as part of their college degree incentive.

Mr. Fisher also asked about cyber-crimes and scams targeted towards the senior community and what, if anything, the Police Department is doing to prevent them. Chief Olsson said that community outreach is very important in an attempt to educate the public and they do so through working with Linden Ponds and the Senior Center.

Ms. Power asked if the addition of this new officer would alleviate the amount of overtime and shift differential. Chief said that one new officer would not make a significant change. He said that really the only way to reduce overtime is to take officers off the streets and he didn’t advise that. She also said that Hingham is an attractive place for an officer candidate to come and make a career so retention is very important.

Harbormaster – Ken Corson, Harbormaster, and Joe Driscoll, Assistant Harbormaster, presented

Ms. Monsegur began by stating that the Harbormaster is requesting \$198,204 in salaries, \$75,921 in Expenses and an additional request of \$4,226 for Assistant Harbormaster wages, bringing their total FY21 budget request to \$278,351.

Mr. Corson stated off with a brief overview of the department's mission and services. He said that they are responsible for public safety (including protection of the harbor, protection of life and property, and to educate and enforce laws and regulations), harbor management (including mooring management, harbor dredging, boat ramp replacement, five islands, the bathing beach and their annual red carpet event) as well as shell fishing management. He added that, in the past year, there have been 193 calls for service

Mr. Joe Driscoll spoke about the pump-out services that they offer. He said that they had assisted with 400 hours of pump-out services since July 1, 2019 and that 6,000 gallons of waste had been removed from 490 boats. Mr. Corson added that this service is vital to keeping the waterways clean.

Mr. Corson spoke about the mooring plan. He said that each mooring has a specific GPS location which is very helpful in the event of an emergency. He said that there are 1,583 slips and moorings in the harbor and explained the locations of the five mooring areas. He added that their key initiatives include:

- Harbor dredging
- Boat ramp replacement
- Hiring and training
- Port Security grant to replace Marine II
- Continued camera system build out

Mr. Corson gave a brief overview of the recent dredging project. He said that the total estimated cost of the project was \$3,166,324 and that the Massachusetts Dredging Program funded 50% of the cost up to \$2,000,000. He added that 24 hr./day dredging commenced on October 4, 2019 and ended in early November. They removed 64,355 cubic yards of sediment. He added that, because all the moorings have been removed from the harbor, he would like to remap the inner harbor mooring field at this time.

He then explained the \$75,000 in expenses:

- Fuel (for three boats and two vehicles)
- R&M grounds (managing the grounds around the waterfront and the Town pier, maintenance on the islands)
- R&M vehicles (bottom painting, winterizing and compound waxing of three boats and two vehicles on land)
- Mooring info (online service that they use to manage the moorings)
- Use and occupancy (rent at the Shipyard)
- Utilities

He said that they have an additional request of \$4,226 for Assistant Harbormasters. He said that he felt that this feels like an appropriate request due to the increased boat traffic on the harbor.

Mr. Fisher asked how much revue comes into the department. Mr. Corson said that revenues are approximately \$320,000 and that they do exceed their expenses. Mr. Fisher thanked Mr. Corson for his help getting the grant money for the dredging project. He also asked about how they break down the cost of fuel for each vessel. Mr. Corson said that they used to break it down by vessel/vehicle but they have decided not to do that anymore. Ms. Power asked if the increase in budget was rate driven and Mr. Corson said that it was.

Ms. Power also asked if the amount of cubic yards of material actually removed from the harbor during dredging was close to their estimate? He said that it was slightly less than the estimate. Ms. Power commended Mr. Corson on his success in securing the \$2million grant. She also suggested that, since the harbor needs to be dredged every 10 years, the Town may want to consider setting funds aside for the next time that the Town needs to dredge.

Ms. Power thanked Joe Driscoll for his help with the increased availability of the pump-out boat. She said that she felt this was a very valuable service that is helping to keep the harbor clean.

She asked Ms. Monsegur to explain tonight's vote of a 4th Amendment to the Town's contract with Foth Engineering. Ms. Monsegur explained that this amendment would allow Foth to provide engineering assistance to the Harbormaster to look at some possible options for the future of the mooring field in an attempt to optimize use of the harbor. Mr. Corson also commented that he hopes to have room for

four more moorings which would allow for increased revenue and a decrease in the mooring waiting list. Mr. Fisher asked if he had been satisfied with Foth. Mr. Corson said that Foth Engineering is very experienced and that the Town has worked with them in the past. He said that they were in an excellent position to help us reach our goals. Mr. Corson explained the process and the various approvals that he would need to obtain.

Ms. Power asked if he would be doing community outreach to other mooring holders both private and public. Mr. Corson said that public outreach would be a large part of the process. There was some additional discussion about the expenses that go along with dredging and engineering. Overall he felt that they were on target with their expenses.

Mr. Fisher also asked about the bathymetric survey. Mr. Corson said that this study measures the depth of the water and to see if depth has changed since the last survey.

Ms. Power echoed Mr. Corson's feelings that it would make sense to evaluate the mapping of the mooring field while the moorings are out of the harbor.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to authorize the Town Administrator to sign Contract Amendment #4 with Foth Infrastructure & Environment to perform additional services as they relate to the Hingham Harbor Maintenance Dredging project. Ms. Power seconded. All were in favor, 2-0.

Animal Control - Leslie Badger and Chief Olsson presented

Ms. Monsegur stated that the FY21 budget request for salaries is \$67,986 and \$6,200 for expenses totals \$74,186.

Ms. Badger said that her mission encompasses:

- Finding lost pets
- Capturing loose horses, cows, goats, etc.
- Capturing sick and injured wildlife
- Overseeing the coyote program
- Monitoring the off-lease program at Bare Cove Park
- Handling animal hoarding cases
- Working as the animal inspector

She said that a lot of her calls now are mental health related and that she also gets calls from people with service and comfort dogs. She said that she works closely with Veterans Services and with Elder Services.

She went over some metrics and benchmarks. She added that, as an animal control officer, her aim is educating and having a warning system rather than issuing citations. She noted that she has very few repeat offenders because of this approach.

She stated some of her key initiatives, including the coyote program through educating and outreach to different neighborhoods. She educates adults and children about the coyote population.

She said that she plans on working with the new community that is being built next to Bare Cove Park to educate them on the off-leash rules for dogs at Bare Cove Park. She stated that she has been asked to go to Black Rock and Linden Ponds to educate those communities on leash laws as well.

She also said that she has been working with the Health Dept. on animal hoarding issues. She also works with Veterans and educates through visiting classrooms. Chief Olsson said that Ms. Badger will soon be training in the "chemical capture" of animals.

Mr. Fisher asked if the coyote situation is ongoing and if there have been many more incidents. She said that they continue to receive emails about sightings but luckily the Town has not had any serious incidents involving people. She said that she keeps open communication with the Environmental Police and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Chief Olsson also said that they have been recommending people not to have food sources that attract coyotes, like open outdoor composts in their backyards.

Ms. Power thanked her for everything she does around the Town.

Fire Department: Chief Murphy and Deputy Chief LaChance presented

Ms. Monsegur stated that the Fire Department is requesting \$5,592,549 in payroll and \$459,767 in expenses with an additional \$70,030 in payroll and \$23,026 in expenses for a total Town Administrator recommended budget for FY21 of \$6,145,372.

Chief Murphy gave a brief overview of the mission and services of the Fire Department. He wanted to talk mostly about things that are different from last year. He pointed out the purchase of the Quint 1 and said that it has been very successful. He added that they have been approved to purchase a new ambulance and that he is hoping to have it in service next month

He said that they have been awarded a grant through FEMA and are in the process of purchasing seven thermal imaging cameras. He spoke briefly about other grants the department has obtained.

They have had two retirements in their department. Since then they have been able to hire four firefighters, three of which have completed their training. He also said that they have another five who are awaiting training at the Academy.

Deputy La Chance added that call volume for both Fire and EMS both increased, up to 4,600 calls for service. He also stated that they provided 2,000 ambulance transports. He said that their calls at Linden Ponds have increased as well. He said that Fire Prevention was very busy in 2019 issuing permits (900 calls), including home inspections for resale. In 2019 they conducted 569 of these inspections.

Chief Murphy spoke about their key initiatives, including:

- Continue to fill open vacancies but that they are limited by civil service requirements.
- Increase training with the Massachusetts fire academy
- Succession planning amongst the ranks
- Increased usage of the C.E.R.T. for large-scale events like the 4th of July Parade and Christmas in the Square
- More visibility within the community
- Emergency Management – Strengthen our capability
- Increased public education / Community CPR
- Developing a home safety inspection

He said that currently they have two people who can cover for another staffer while on vacation or out on injury. He said that this has greatly increased their overtime budget. He added that this year they are asking for an additional \$74,055 for another firefighter/paramedic because he thinks it will be the alleviate their overtime issues.

He also stated that there are no contractual raises included in this budget because labor contracts will be renegotiated this summer, which accounts for the fact that their budget stayed fairly flat.

He said that the Fire Department is currently meeting the needs of the Town with the current their three fire stations but if there is any more significant development in Town, specifically in South Hingham, then they would not be able to successfully meet the Town's needs. He added that they may need to open a fourth fire station.

Chief Murphy discussed in depth some of the department's additional expenses, including \$14,000 for promotional exam expenses. He said that they would have an outside company assess candidates for promotion through the administering of written exams.

They also are requesting \$5,000 for emergency management expenses. He said that Hingham is the only town in Plymouth County without a budget for emergency management. The Chief said that the expenses for this would cover training, to support the operation center for staffing and food for the people, etc.

He also commented that they have had to increase their building and maintenance budget due to the age of several of the stations. Mr. Fisher said that he was able to take a tour of one of the stations and he said that improvements were needed.

Mr. Fisher asked about the increase in education budget. Chief Olsson stated that while they have had some retirements in the department which decreased longevity payments, but they are hiring more candidates who are meeting the education requirements of their college incentive program.

Ms. Power commented that she would like to thank Deputy Chief Powers who recently gave her, in her capacity as the Selectmen liaison to the Water Supply Committee, a lesson on the intricacies of the Town's fire hydrant system.

Public Safety Utilities

Ms. Monsecur stated that the Public Safety Utilities budget consisted of \$407,750 for emergency water and \$105,000 for street lighting for a total FY21 budget request of \$512,750.

Chief Murphy explained that emergency water is a fee charged by Aquarion for hydrant usage during training and actual fires. He also said that this includes \$10,000 for emergency repair of the Town's 900+ fire hydrants.

He also stated that the street lighting budget funds 2,300+ streetlights in town through the Hingham Municipal Light Plant.

Dispatch (SSRECC)

Deputy LaChance stated that, for the past eight years, SSRECC has provided the dispatch services for Hingham, Hull, Norwell and Cohasset. There have been a lot of benefits of having them in Hingham including obtaining grants which have helped pay for new mobile data terminals in all police cars and other new technology. He added that last year they received 75,000 calls for service from Hingham, Norwell, Hull and Cohasset.

Mr. Fisher asked what percentage of the overall SSRECC budget Hingham pays for and whether it was determined by usage and/or population. Chief Murphy said that the amount is determined by number of residents and number of calls. Deputy LaChance stated that Hingham is responsible for 55% of the overall SSRECC budget. Ms. Monsecur added that some of the SSRECC budget comes back to the Town in the form of rent and financial services. Mr. Fisher asked if Chief Murphy was happy with this percentage and he said that they are looking into it. He added that they are looking into adding new communities to the SSRECC with some incentives from the State.

Chief Murphy also said, in regard to the proposed GIS mapping position, that GIS mapping is very important in helping the Fire Department in finding locations and said that, should there be a large emergency, GIS could work with Public Safety and Public Works and said that a full time GIS person would be very helpful.

One Day Liquor License: Ms. Power asked Chief Olsson if he and Lt. DiNapoli were satisfied with the event preparations that have been taking place at the Armory.

Vote: Mr. Fisher made a motion to approve the issuance of three (3) Special (One Day) Wine and Malt Beverages licenses to Virginia Walsh on behalf of Hingham Community Center for Cabaret 2020 to be held at the Hingham Armory on January 30, 31, and February 1, 2020 from 7PM-11PM. This approval is contingent upon the inspection and approval of the State Building Inspector. All were in favor, 2-0.

Selectmen and Town Administrator Reports

Ms. Monsecur read the following announcement on behalf of Karen Johnson:

"I am sorry that I could not be with you this evening but I wanted to take a moment to recognize the passing of a very fine citizen, John McHugh. An absolutely delightful soul, John spent his retirement caring for others. A Navy veteran, he was an active member of the Veteran's Council and a volunteer in the Veterans Services Office. He served as a member of the Foss Committee helping to honor the memory and legacy of Hingham's Medal of Honor recipient. He was a resident of the Lincoln School Apartments and a leader in that community. John was an ordained Deacon affiliated with St. Paul Parish and in that role leant counsel and comfort to the sick, the imprisoned and just those in need of a friend at places like the Pat Roche Hospice House, the Commander Anderson House and the Old Colony Correctional Center. For me, John was always the bright light in the room. I will miss his warm smile and his enthusiasm for life and I will make every effort to exemplify his commitment to and passion for those in need. Godspeed, John. From Karen Johnson."

Ms. Power commented that tickets are now on sale for Cabaret.

She asked Ms. Monsegur to communicate with our Department Heads asking for the amount of grants that they have received over the past year because she thinks it is important to acknowledge the efforts of our Department Heads in bringing State and Federal money to our town.

Mr. Fisher made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Power seconded. All were in favor, 2-0.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:23PM

Documents: A complete meeting packet of supporting documentation is on file and available for public review in the Board of Selectmen's office.