

**Select Board Meeting
Budget Workshop
March 1, 2025 – 8:00 am
Sanford Hall
155 Village Street**

Present: Glenn Trindade, Chair Frank Rossi, Vice-Chair; Todd Alessandri, Clerk; Dennis Crowley, Member; Maryjane White, Member.

Staff Present: Michael Boynton, Town Manager; Allison Potter, Assistant Town Manager; Carol Pratt, Finance Director; Richard Boucher, Director of Information Services; Fire Chief Jeff Lynch; Deputy Fire Chief Michael Fasolino; Police Chief William Kingsbury; Peter Pelletier, Department of Public Works (DPW) Director; Nolan Lynch, DPW Deputy Director.

Chair Rossi called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments – None

Review of Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Operating Budget

Department of Public Works

Peter Pelletier, DPW Director, and Nolan Lynch, Deputy Director

Chair Rossi began by thanking the DPW for all the information they included in the new Town website.

Mr. Pelletier began by telling the Board that he has tried to stay level funded. He has increased the stormwater management line. An EPA earmark is no longer certain. If these funds are not received, he will shift gears and focus on paving projects and implement some stormwater projects at Laurelwood Lane.

The DPW budget adds one person for Cemetery work. It would cost \$86,000 for two people so he is asking for one. This person will do yard cleanup, assist with burials, and fall cleanup. There was a question about the cost to the Town for burials. Mr. Pelletier said that the costs are covered by the fees. Tim Ward, Superior Construction Services, is currently managing the cemetery and that relationship is ending. The takeover is effective July 1, 2025. The Cemetery Division and Parks will be managing the cemetery. The new hire would split their time between the DPW and the Cemetery.

Mr. Pelletier added \$10,000 to the overtime account for the new 37 hour work week, which is part of the new contract. Overtime is mostly used for the Water Treatment Plant and to cover the contract changes. The new Water Superintendent started this week.

There are also solid waste increases in contract services and collections. DPW is planning for DEP compliances to clean up the dump area. A new 2-year contract was signed with Lawrence Waste Services.

Mr. Pelletier said that 5-6 young people are hired during the summer. The cost is \$9,000 per person.

The electricity line reflects \$18,000 in solar credits. Projected rate increases have been accommodated.

Only \$33,000 of tree work funds have been spent from FY25 budget. Mr. Pelletier said they have plans for the remaining funds.

Chair Rossi then asked Mr. Pelletier to review the following DPW Enterprise funds.

Solid Waste Enterprise Fund

Funds are used for composting, chipping brush, and for running Household Hazard Waste Days. The DPW could increase the number of curbside items to accommodate the ending of the service at the Recycling Center but need to do this carefully. The Town will come up with a plan.

A full-time position at the Recycling Center was eliminated and replaced with two part time individuals. There is always a full-time person scheduled at the center but since the schedule includes every Saturday and Sunday, part time people provide more schedule flexibility.

The FY25 contracted services line is underspent. The remaining funds will be spent on brush grinding and spring cleanup.

Fees shouldn't be the only source of funding for capping the landfill. Combined funding from enterprise funds and the general fund will be used. Weston & Sampson will work on testing and oversight of the landfill along with the DEP. The first step is to develop a plan of action which needs to be approved. This should be ready by the end of the summer

Water Enterprise Fund

Mr. Pelletier reported that the systems are running well.

There are cybersecurity safeguards in place, including 2-point authentication. You also must be connected to the Town network to access the system. They may want to hire an expert to test the system.

It was noted that overtime costs are increasing. It was questioned if DPW is going to spend \$80,000 this year and \$110,000 in FY26. Mr. Pelletier said he would be spending these funds on contractual costs, and water main breaks that may occur.

The full design of Holliston Street is ready to go. He is working on the design of other streets, as old pipes need to be replaced.

Behind the new Water Treatment Facility there are a lot of old pipes and debris that need to be cleaned up. DPW has a plan for accomplishing this. They will be reusing the old shop for storage.

A question was asked whether the house by the plant could be used as affordable housing. Funds for purchasing the house came from the general fund. Mr. Pelletier will investigate this.

In FY26, \$1.4M has been budgeted for replacing the water tank. DPW will be spending less because the engineering consultant is not recommending replacement.

Mr. Lynch provided an update of the High School culvert project. The specifications are finished and now they need to buy the culvert. If the Hanlon Field replacement is approved at the Spring Town Meeting, then the main driveway will not be accessible, as there is a capital request to pave the inbound roadway. There are insufficient funds to do the whole road. There is also a drainage issue near the pickle ball courts.

Funding anticipated through the DOT's Small Bridge program has been delayed. The actual culvert will cost \$800,000. They are no longer relying on federal funds.

Sewer Enterprise Fund

Repairs need to be done and the DPW is seeking a new contractor. There are no updates on purchasing capacity from Franklin. Medway currently has a 950,000 gallon limit; 850,000 gallons is average. They would like to take on additional 200,000 gallons to accommodate upcoming projects. The cost would be up to \$1,000,000 to acquire capacity.

The Building Maintenance and Project budget has been increased due to inflation and HVAC system maintenance and elevator repairs.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Jeffrey Lynch and Deputy Fire Chief Michael Fasolino

Chair Rossi acknowledged that this is Chief Lynch's last budget as he is retiring in September. Members praised Chief Lynch's tenure and the improvements he has made in the department.

Deputy Chief Fasolino began the FY26 budget presentation by reviewing the department's 2024 milestones including:

- Purchase of a New Command Vehicle
- New Software for Data Management
- Hiring of a Community Risk Reduction Deputy
- Firefighter hired as EMS Coordinator
- 3 Newest Hires received Paramedic Certification
- Hired an Additional Firefighter Paramedic
- Created an Awards Committee
- 2 New Ambulances Ordered
- Student Awareness and Senior Awareness Programs
- Pedal Program with E-bikes
- Updated Operating Guidelines
- Completed Blue Card Instruction
- Attended a number of Community Events
- Participated in Virtual Trainings

The Department's FY25 six-month budget review indicates that the budget is on target for a balanced budget. The biggest obstacle is the overtime budget because of the department's call volume. Minimum staffing is 5 but there are times that they have 4 staff, so they need to backfill when someone takes a day off.

The vehicle repair maintenance might go over budget. The ambulances are taking a beating and need repairs. The supply line may go over, as well, due to increased call volumes

FY26 Budget

Deputy Chief Fasolino reported that the FY26 budget is level funded except for step increases. At some point the department will need an additional paramedic due to call volume. They are currently averaging 9 calls/day. Many are simultaneous, meaning more than one call is coming in at the same time. 40% of the department calls are simultaneous. Many times the department needs to rely on mutual aid from other communities. The department has enough engines to manage the volume but needs personnel.

Mr. Boynton said he supports the need and is evaluating funding sources. Unfortunately, federal funding is not reliable at this time. Deputy Chief Fasolino said they are seeking a plan to achieve these staffing goals. He acknowledged that recruiting and retaining staff is an ongoing challenge.

The department has specialized training needs. Many of the newer hires are young so many are taking education courses and classes.

Lithium battery fire training is in place.

So far in FY25 the department has received 3,030 calls. Of these, 2,151 have been EMS calls and 8% were mutual aid requests. This represents a 300% growth since 2014 and translates into 151 calls per line staff. The goal is to “double medic” or have 2 paramedics per call.

Insurance write-offs account for less money than is billed through Medicare, Medicaid and private pay. There were 152 runs in January 2025 which amounts to \$77,000 in revenue.

Deputy Chief Fasolino pointed to a pie chart that showed the number of calls to selected establishments in 2024. Both Fire and EMS are dispatched. These calls represent 30% of the total call volume.

In the FY25 part-time salary line \$60,000 is budgeted but only \$2,000 has been spent so far. Deputy Chief Fasolino said the department is working on recruiting more part-timers.

NFPA says communities should have 1 firefighter per 2,000 population. That would mean 28 staff for or Medway.

Ambulance Revenue Fund - In FY25, of the \$900,000 taken from this account, \$700,000 went to the General Fund budget and \$200,000 was spent on equipment.

\$27,000 in stipends are contractual payments for education and are paid all at once.

The department only used \$1,100 from the vehicle repair line. Deputy Chief Fasolino said that more bills are coming including \$7,000 repair bill for an ambulance. Ladder truck maintenance costs are budgeted for the spring.

Deputy Chief Fasolino thanked the DPW for their help in maintaining their building.

The department’s goal beginning in FY27 is to add one firefighter paramedic per year.

Police

Chief William Kingsbury presented the department’s FY26 budget.

There is a 4% increase in salaries and funding for Lt. Watson’s retirement payout

There have been fewer court appearances required so funding is down in that line.

The budget contains funds to address the education requirements for new recruits. Chief Kingsbury moved \$7,000 from overtime to training. He said that there are annual training requirements for 15 years.

Electricity prices are rising.

Police vehicles are hard to come by. The department has been promised two vehicles in FY25 but is doubtful they will receive them.

Police Academy costs are also increasing.

The department has 200 policies that staff need to be trained in.

A Basic Service department is defined as having 25 staff. A full-service department has 33 staff. Medway falls in the middle with 27 staff.

The FY25 training budget is about \$18,000 in the hole and will likely be \$25,000 in the hole by the end of FY25.

Chief Kingsbury hopes to acquire the 2 cars promised in FY25 in FY26. He has included an additional 3 cars in his FY26 budget. He wants to move to hybrids when they become available. The cost of new vehicles has substantially increased.

He has no plans to replace the Crown Victoria but will continue to maintain it, as it has historical significance.

His FY26 budget contains full year funding for a School Resource Officer (SRO). There is notably less juvenile crime in schools with SROs.

The holiday pay line is all spent, and stipends are paid later in the year.

Certification is in process now. The cost is \$1,600/year paid to Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission (MPAC). It will be a year until he knows whether the department has been certified. The department may not meet the certification requirements of the Police Reform Bill. The building may be an obstacle as fire suppression systems are required.

The Board commended Chief Kingsbury on his leadership the of department

Information Systems Department

Richard Boucher presented the department budget.

He stated that, in FY25, equipment was replaced in the schools, including new Chromebooks and a new Emergency Communication System was implemented. Staff devices were also updated.

Regarding cybersecurity, Mr. Boucher said that inbound and outbound traffic is monitored.

He reported 30-35% of IT's service calls are non-ticketed and they logged 2,200 calls in FY25. Vandalism of computer devices is down. The department pays \$20,000 in insurance but insurance fees aren't always collected so they are looking into bringing the service in-house.

Mr. Boucher discussed the challenges of getting staff up to speed. IT needs more staff. The last time they increased staff was 5 years ago.

Staff have been working on the new website.

The Board thanked Mr. Boucher for his leadership of the department.

General Budget Discussion

Medway is receiving a \$161,000 increase in state aid in FY26. The Town needs more state funds to manage rising costs.

School salaries went up 8%, which uses 77% of new revenue.

Carol Pratt will present indirect costs at an upcoming Select Board meeting

All expenses for \$77,000 in VFW building improvements are coming from the Parks and Recreation revolving fund.

The Library's request for an additional part-time marketing position has not been included in the FY26 budget.

A motion to reduce the health insurance line by \$75,000 and to fund the Library position at \$26,500 and an IT position at \$48,500, both effective January 2026, was made by Mr. Alessandri and seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

A motion to approve the FY2026 Capital Improvement Plan as presented was made by Mr. Alessandri and seconded by Mr. Rossi. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Chair Rossi noted that the debt service schedule would be discussed at a future meeting and that Carol Pratt would do a debt workshop for Board members.

A motion to adopt the FY2026 Town budget as presented and send it to the Finance Committee with modifications was made by Mr. Alessandri and seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.

Mr. Crowley told the Board that he is interested in mailing a copy of the Finance Committee report to Annual Town Meeting to every resident. The estimated printing and mailing cost would be \$7,000. A decision was not made, and discussion will continue.

At 1:00 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Alessandri and seconded by Ms. White. VOTE: 5-0-0.