



# ***CITY OF EASTHAMPTON***

## **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

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### ***Minutes***

#### ***City Council Finance Committee Meeting, 2/8/2023***

##### **Attendees:**

##### **Finance Committee Members:**

Councilor Dan Rist, Chair  
Councilor Tom Peake, Clerk  
Councilor Koni Denham

##### **Other Attendees:**

Mayor Nicole LaChapelle  
City Treasurer Jessica Hebert  
City Council President Homar Gomez  
Police Chief Bob Alberti  
Fire Chief Chris Norris  
Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Benson  
City Auditor Hetal Patel (remote)

Meeting was called to order at 5:15 PM.

- 1) Approval of Minutes: On motion made by Councilor Rist and Seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to approve the minutes of 1/25/23
- 2) Mayor's Communication: None
- 3) Public Speak: None
- 4) New Business

Prior to discussing the items on the agenda, City Auditor Hetal Patel presented briefly on the free cash balance for the year. The unreserved undesignated fund balance lies at \$5,522,026.00 It started at \$4.37 million, but after accounting to appropriations, liabilities, and CARES accounts, it ended up at \$5.52 million.

- a) **\$73,390.70 for Police Dept. retirement & new hire expenses & FY '22 medical bill:** "To cover the payout of DLT Popielarczyk's Retirement effective 7/16/22, the cost of sending two recruits

to the Police Academy (medical exams, mandatory clothing and equipment and tuition), uniform expense for one new hire, and the cost of an FY22 IOD medical bill dated 9/14/21. **On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

b) **\$194,000 for various Fire Dept. personnel & expense appropriations:** For:

**“Miscellaneous professional and technical services** – third party billing agency costs for EMY revenue collection, \$25,000

**EMS Supplies** – cost for supplies on ambulances, \$35,000

**Maintenance Agreements** – Service contracts for EMS equipment as requires by state ambulance license, \$13,000

**Education** – Contractual requirement for tuition reimbursement, \$3,500

**Sick Leave Incentive** – Cost for sick leave buy out – retirement Dave Safron, \$38,000

**Repairs to Vehicles** – Work needed on 2003 Engine 1 to bring in safety standards & Ladder 1 controls in bucket and aerial platform, \$35,000

**Firefighting Equipment** – Purchase of new gear for 2 new firefighters being hired and replacement of ballistic protection equipment, \$37,000.” EFD recently did an active shooter drill and discovered that the ballistic vests were expired. The use of these vests is becoming the standard.

**“Building Repairs** – Installation of locks on doors, diesel exhaust removal system annual service and annual service Vision 21 system in Fire Dispatch, \$7,500.” The diesel exhaust removal system removes exhaust from the vehicle bay from when the vehicles are running prior to departure.

Chief Norris also noted that Engine 1 was going to be due to be replaced in the coming years. He noted that the engine is safe to operate for the time being. **On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

c) **\$20,000 to supplement the FY '23 Legal Services Budget:** “For expended legal budgets for current fiscal year.” Councilor Rist noted that this line item tends to be budgeted conservatively. Mayor LaChapelle noted some of the ongoing items which have required extended legal review. **On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

5) Old Business

a) **\$3,000,000.00 from Free Cash to Stabilization Funds:** For:

General Stabilization \$1,200,000

Capital Stabilization \$1,500,000

Tax Rate Stabilization \$300,000

Mayor LaChapelle noted that a “cliff effect” was anticipated as state and federal funds from the pandemic are spent down. Funds are generally moved to stabilization later in the fiscal year, but given the amount of free cash, Mayor LaChapelle felt that it was appropriate to do this now. She also stated that she had to say no to some departmental free cash requests, but that she felt comfortable that the remaining free cash could cover the necessary free cash requests for the remainder of the fiscal year. Some capital stabilization funds may be spent on vehicle fleet purchases that in prior fiscal years might have been paid for out of free cash. **On motion made**

**by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to recommend the appropriation to the full Council.**

6) Continuing Business

a) **Quarterly fiscal reports from the City Auditor:** This was not discussed tonight.

b) **Quarterly Report on Covid-19 grant funding and spending:** Mayor LaChapelle noted that the CARES report is already on the city website, and that the ARPA money report would be up soon.  
**On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, it was voted 2-0 to recommend the appropriation to remove this as a regular agenda item.**

**On motion made by Councilor Rist and seconded by Councilor Peake, the meeting was adjourned at 6:07 PM**

Next meeting: 2/22/23