



CITY OF EASTHAMPTON **OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Easthampton Municipal Building
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Minutes

City Council Finance Committee Meeting, 4/12/2023

Attendees:

Finance Committee Members:

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

Other Attendees:

City Treasurer Jessica Hebert
City Auditor Hetal Patel
Mayor Nicole LaChapelle
Council President Homar Gomez
Fire Chief Christopher Norris (remote)
Superintendent Allison LeClair (remote)
EPS Director of Business Services Nicholas Bernier (remote)

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM.

- 1) Approval of Minutes: On motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of February 8, February 22, March 8, and March 22.
- 2) Mayor's Communication: None
- 3) Public Speak: None
- 4) New Business
 - a) **\$2,895.00 for purchase of a public records tracking database:** For "acquisition of a public records tracking database to assist in the day-to-day handling of public records requests... Proposal covers initial set-up for the database and three months of maintenance and support.

Annual fee going forward is \$595.00/year”. **Motion made by Councilor Denham and seconded by Councilor Peake. Motion passed 3-0.**

b) **\$2,402.00 for a City Attorney FY '22 “old bill”:** “to pay prior fiscal year bill for City Attorney out of current fiscal year.” Councilor Peake asked why the city was getting so many unpaid bills. IT Director Karin Camihort said that the current financial system does not alert the city when bills are unpaid. **Motion made by Councilor Denham and seconded by Councilor Peake. Motion passed 3-0.**

c) **\$30,000.00 for FY '23 legal costs:** For “legal costs billed for FY23.” Mayor LaChapelle noted that there have been some challenges tracking which legal expenses were accruing to which projects, but that there were efforts to improve this. She expressed optimism that this would cover the rest of the fiscal year. **Motion made by Councilor Denham and seconded by Councilor Peake. Motion passed 3-0.**

d) **\$90,000.00 for upgrades to audio visual equipment & technology in the Public Safety training room:** To “Upgrade audio visual equipment and technology in the joint training room for public safety, community room, and conference room for other city department training. AV equipment and technology in this room is over 15 year and the ability to get replacement parts are non-existent. This room serves as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for the entire city to enable communication for larger scale emergencies throughout the city. The requested amount is based on a quote received in coordination with the city IT department as well.” Fire Chief Christopher Norris pointed out that the meeting was used by the fire, police, and DPW among others. He noted that the space had been used as an EOC as recently as the March 13th snowstorm. **Motion made by Councilor Denham and seconded by Councilor Peake. Motion passed 3-0.**

e) **\$200,000.00 to cover a deficit in the School Department Vocational Tuition Account:** “To cover a deficit in the school Department Vocational Tuition account.” This is less than the \$560,000 that the schools expected to be short. One reason for this is that they have had difficulty hiring for some of the positions they had hoped to hire. Superintendent Allison LeClair stated that Director of Business Services Nicholas Bernier had restructured the finances so that the overage went to the vocational tuition account, which was more predictable, rather than transportation funds. He noted that there were several other line items that were ultimately underspent. **Motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham. Motion passed 3-0.**

5) Old Business

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:** This was not discussed tonight.

By motion made by Councilor Peake and seconded by Councilor Denham, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM

Next meeting: 4/26/23