

**TOWN OF ORONO  
FINANCE & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2020 AT 4:30 P.M.**

**WATCH ONLINE  
(LINK AVAILABLE AT [ORONO.ORG](http://ORONO.ORG))**  
*Comments can be submitted via email prior to  
the meeting start time at [info@orono.org](mailto:info@orono.org).*

**MINUTES**

**1. Roll Call**

Present: Tom Perry (Finance Chair), Cindy Mehnert, Meghan Gardner, Laurie Osher, Town Manager Sophie Wilson and Finance Director Connie Thorne.

**2. Police Radio Purchase with Asset Forfeiture Funds**

Police Chief Josh Ewing stated the Police Department is using portable radios that are 15+ years old (well beyond the 5-7 year lifespan of communication equipment). Officers have experienced both transmission and reception issues, which during critical incidents can become serious officer-safety issues. The Penobscot Regional Communications Center infrastructure upgrade has already selected a vendor, which is Radio Communications of Maine (RCM), and pricing has been set regarding both mobile radios and portables. Staff would like to utilize this sole source vendor and are awaiting a formal quote for 17 new portables (15 for individual assignment and 2 spares). Chief Ewing stated the Town has approximately \$10,100 in asset forfeiture funds that have been previously approved and accepted by the Town Council, and staff is requesting that Council consider utilizing this funding source to pay for the portables. Staff anticipates the 17 portables with programming to cost approximately \$12,000 (there is potential for a current rebate program, which would lower the cost of each portable by approx. \$70). Any costs above the balance in the asset forfeiture account will be paid through the current operations budget (equipment or equipment repair line).

Chief Ewing stated the old radios could be repurposed for use by Public Works employees.

**The Committee agreed to move this item to the next Council meeting for consideration of approval.**

**3. Asset Management Planning and Policy Development**

Ms. Wilson stated an Asset Management Plan and policies would replace the current 5-Year Capital Investment Plan. She noted the plan (and fixed asset list) would have a lifespan for all assets. She explained it would involve taking into consideration the policy statement, priority list and service levels.

Public Works Director Rob Yerxa stated that a good Asset Management Policy gives staff guidance to help plan. This plan would provide a global view of managing the Town's assets.

Ms. Wilson suggested establishing an Asset Management Policy with Council over the next few months and, at the same time, work with staff on the asset inventory and condition analysis. She noted this will be a longer, more comprehensive plan, than the 5-year Capital Plan.

Mr. Yerxa stated an Asset Management Plan would be unique within the municipal world, but is used in the corporate world. **Council supported the idea of an Asset Management Plan and recognized it will take a lot of work.**

#### **4. Debt Refunding and Proposed Infrastructure Bond**

Ms. Wilson provided information on refunding the 2014 bonds (Pine Street parking lot and Public Works Garage) and USDA loan (UCU parking lot). She noted the net savings is projected to be \$651,000 over the life of the bonds. She reviewed the new proposed borrowing of \$2M for public works infrastructure projects and \$250,000 for high speed internet connections and drops in Orono with OTO Fiber Corporation to pay back the funds over time. The Committee discussed the details.

#### **5. Financial Reports - July & August**

##### **a. FY21 Expense and Revenue Reports**

Ms. Wilson reviewed the FY21 expense and revenue reports with the Committee. She noted the Town was in good shape.

##### **b. FY21 Tax Commitment & Prior Year Collections**

Ms. Wilson reviewed the FY21 tax commitment and prior year collections with the Committee.

#### **6. Brief Town Manager Update**

Ms. Wilson provided a brief update on the following:

- Tax billing
- Marijuana Establishments Ordinance public hearing on September 14, 2020.
- Olver Associates to perform pre-construction survey work for the Mahaney Development Drainage and Road Project at a cost not to exceed \$20,000.

#### **7. Schedule Next Meeting - October 8, 2020 at 4:30PM**

## **8. Adjourn**

At 6:05pm, Laurie Osher moved and Cindy Mehnert seconded to adjourn. All voted in favor, 4-0.

Minutes are summary only. An audio recording of the meeting is available on the Town's website at [www.orono.org](http://www.orono.org) under Agendas and Minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy W. Ward  
Executive Assistant