Present: D. Sampson, M. Miller, B. George, S. Hoctor, C. Holden
G. Dunham, Town Manager; Heather Harper, Assistant Town Manager
Others Present:

Mr. Miller opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES
The minutes of February 10, 2022 were deferred.

PUBLIC FORUM
Margo Critchfield – had a suggestion for a correction to the minutes. She is also here to support Lou Cerrone. She says he is not a political operative, but a political activist. He has been involved in the Town and she believes he would be great in volunteering to help the people in this Town with civil rights complaints to the Barnstable Human Rights Commission.

Paul Houlihan – is here to support Lou Cerrone as a member of the Human Rights Commission. He has had experience as a Human Rights Commissioner investigation and resolving issues of human rights in the County. The Commission also did a lot of public education to students and adults. Mr. Cerrone has the qualifications to serve as the Town representative. He has the experience to address issues that come before the Commission.

Jim Dever – wants to support Mr. Cerrone as a member of the Human Rights Commission. He says he is passionate about human rights. Mr. Dever gave a few examples. Related to equality, last evening the Planning Board vice chair proposed a name change from vice chairman to vice chairperson; this was approved. He wants to challenge other Town Boards to do the same.

TOWN MANAGER REPORT
1. Meetings: Because of school vacation there will be no Selectmen or Finance Committee meeting. The following Tuesday, March 1st, the Finance Committee will be talking about the golf course project, which has been being worked on for a while; hopefully the Board will hear it the following Thursday. At some point, the school department will address its capital requests. March 8th Chief Wack will be in to talk about the police budget and the dispatch request. Also Roger Fourget from Upper Cape Tech will be in on March 8th.
2. We received a letter from the EPA regarding Holtec, the company overseeing the decommissioning of Pilgrim. Much of it supports what the Selectmen already sent.
3. We met with DEP and Converge this week. Mr. Dunham provided them with a copy of the five-town grant application and hopes the regional DEP will support it. The question is whether any of the capital work on the project be eligible for State revolving fund money; if eligible for that, we would be eligible for the Cape and Islands Water Protection Fund grant. John Gorgio issued an opinion that there would be eligibility and he confirmed it with bond counsel that provides advice to the State. The Cape Cod Commission staff reviewed and supported it. Would like this in writing from the DEP. Converge will not get the paper work to turn over at the Base until March or April, but won’t physically begin work for two months after that. Because of the delays, we will not have complete information on which to decide how to go forward. The grant will be looking at the disposable capacity at the Base. Mr. Dunham believes that the EPA will be supportive but might need to consider different technologies. If we were to have to take over the disposal ourselves, we would need much more land than what has been designated. Figuring out something at the Base would be the most cost effective.

4. On Tuesday, we submitted the largest permit filing for the boardwalk, a unified permit with MEPA.

Mr. Hoctor questioned whether we need to begin permitting now for the wastewater project for the schools because of the necessity for crossing Rte. 6. Mr. Dunham said that we are a municipal entity, and it would probably be less stringent than other entities. The high school plant is a repair, so permits are probably not an issue. Wright Pierce has been involved and planning is occurring for a number of different issues. We may need to use the WIIF to supplement funding.

CORRESPONDENCE/STATEMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Miller responded to Mr. Dever’s comment about changing the name of the Board. The Board wanted to be sure a name change did not violate the Charter or State law. Mr. Dunham said that a Town would need to change it through its Charter process. Mr. Holden zoomed with the Cape and Islands Selectmen and Counselors’ Association; the presentation was by the Housing Assistance Corporation CEO and she was complimentary about our by-laws regarding additional dwelling units. He also provided the names of the Superintendent Search committee members. There were six proposals developed for connecting to the Service Rd. bike path and a lot of interest. Mr. Miller talked about the meeting with the girl Scouts last week; it was recorded and will be available.

STAFF MEETING

Barnstable County Human Rights Committee – Lou Cirrone

The Board has received letters of support for Mr. Cirrone in addition to those that spoke tonight. Mr. Cirrone spoke of his interest in the Commission; he has virtually attended meetings over the past couple of years. The Commission changed its ordinance in 2019 to reflect that it is the Commission itself that receives resumes of interest, does interviews and then forwards them to the County Commissioners. The ordinance created a liaison position from every Cape town. The position is a non-voting position and involves contacting town committees and interacting with them about possible issues and offering to assist. He originally was under the impression that he did not have to attend the Board meeting in order to get appointed as the
liaison and is here tonight to respond to and clarify some of the comments made previously. He considers himself to be a political activist, however he has served on the planning Board and other committees in town and believes he serve in a non-partisan way. He is also a member of a group that has been meeting with Chief Wack and others about issues related to community policing; the goal is to listen respectfully to each other, learn more about each other’s issues and help the police become more visible to the community. Mr. Sampson then reflected on and clarified some of the comments he had made at a previous meeting. **Mr. Holden moved that the Board appoint Mr. Lou Cirrone to the Barnstable County Human Rights Advisory Committee as a non-voting member. Seconded by Mr. Hoctor. Approved unanimously.** Mr. Miller mentioned other organizations in Town that are involved and hoped that Mr. Cirrone would be in contact with them.

**Fire Chief JJ Burke and DPW Director/Town Engineer Paul Tilton**

**7:30 PM Public Hearing – Ambulance Fees and Charges**

Mr. Miller read the hearing notice. **Mr. Holden moved to open the public hearing. Mr. Sampson seconded. Approved unanimously.** Chief Burke presented rate changes for 2022; the rates are in line with average rates. He explained that the billing goes to insurance companies and Medicare; if not covered, they are charged off and not billed to residents. Mr. Dunham explained that the increase in the rates should cover the requested $100,000 transfer from the Ambulance Fund to the overtime account. The average income to the Ambulance Fund is $2 million. Approximately $350,000 to $400,000 is not reimbursed. Related to contributions from most used agencies, Cape Heritage is private, so they pay; Spaulding contributes annually; and nothing is received from Cape Cod Health (Stoneman). The consultant will look at some of this. No input was received from the public. **Mr. Holden moved to close the public hearing. Mr. Hoctor seconded. Approved unanimously. Mr. Sampson moved that the board approve the 2022 calendar year fees as recommended. Mr. Holden seconded. Approved unanimously.**

**Fire Department FY'23 Operating Budget Recommendations and Overviews**

The operating budget represents level funding, but this might change with salary negotiations. Chief Burke presented a picture of the overtime issue. Factors that affect overtime include negotiated time off, recertification, and staffing. He is asking for $250,000 to be put into the operating budget with $100,000 coming from the ambulance fund. The allocation of $750,000 for overtime is not sufficient as it actually costs approximately $1.2 million. The goal is to maintain a staff of 11 per shift but he can only do 10. He and the consultants have looked at adding to overtime versus hiring new staff and it is less expensive to add to the overtime. Slides in the presentation included a historic picture of overtime. He also discussed statistics for calls and transports; most of the calls involve advanced life support. Both cost recovery plans and cost reduction have been implemented. The department belongs to the Medicare CPC program, which assists with recovering all eligible funds. Cost reduction strategies include retaining personnel, hiring EMTs instead of paramedics (salary differential), reducing ambulance call backs, holding down expenses and addressing equipment replacement. The department keeps five staff in Town for standby. There is no call back until the third ambulance is called. The need for mutual aid has decreased. He has replaced an engine with a combination engine/ladder using money from the ambulance fund for a down payment. He is not replacing the tower
truck. Both Cotuit and JBCC have offered loaner engines and our mechanic provides service for them. He is looking at diversifying fuel with a gas ambulance. The department has given vehicles to other departments. The new ISO report, last done five years ago, has an improved score. This is mainly due to combined dispatch, opening station two, and maintaining ten firefighters at start of shift. The lack of hydrants is a disadvantage. The improved ISO affects insurance rates for businesses and residents. Chief Burke says that the consultant thinks outside the box. The report will be available in April.

Questions/Comments

Mr. Miller asked whether other department staff (e.g., inspectors) come in if needed – The priority is the ten at beginning of shift, but everyone responds if needed. He also asked about the ambulance fund – There is enough in the fund to replace an ambulance if needed. Mr. Hoctor asked if there is any other equipment ready to fail – No. Mr. Holden asked about mutual aid – The department belongs to a rapid intervention program that has an automatic mutual aid feature. Mr. George asked about adding monetary incentives for retaining personnel – Chief Burke responded that the new stations, change in living radius, incentive for college, and less restrictive holiday policy has greatly improved this. Hiring is a challenge because we cannot compete with larger departments on salaries and benefits. It takes approximately nine months to fully train a firefighter and meanwhile overtime is affected because someone has to fill the position while training is occurring. The department does not go by civil service, but there is an annual interview of potential candidates that generates a list of potential hires. Recall has become a problem because of a cultural shift in willingness or lifestyle factors, so there is more emphasis on number at beginning of shift. Most of the overtime is related to shift work and not recall.

DPW Operating Budget Request

Mr. Paul Tilton provided an overview of the disposition of the $6 million road bond approved by Town meeting. It has been depleted except for a reserve for the boardwalk. The department accomplished an incredible amount of work, and he is grateful for the support. He is asking for $650,000 to be added to the operating budget, which will improve and maintain the life of the roads. Adding to the operating budget allows for a dedicated amount annually and facilitates planning. The consultant’s report recommends $2.6 million annually to keep up. A lot of infrastructure needs repair or is getting beyond its useful life. Construction costs have increased markedly over the past ten years, but funding sources have not essentially changed. Additional funds will provide a dedicated fund for planning and keeping roads in good shape. Additionally, it will provide money that can be used for matching grants, such as the State TIP program, which will provide construction funds, but not until the Town has done the design.

Questions/Comments

Mr. Tilton said that there is an estimated backlog of $20 million in projects; the bond provided for $4 million, so approximately 20% of what would be needed. There was a question about why some jobs could not be done in house – the department has purchased some paving equipment but does not have the large machines to do all projects, especially those requiring excavation. Mr. Hoctor wanted to remind people that contracted jobs must be paid according to prevailing wage, which is higher than what a local contractor would be able to do for a similar project. In addition to requiring specialized equipment, small staffing levels would not
permit the larger jobs. Mr. Sampson commented that maybe the $650,000 annually would not be enough to keep up with what is needed. The funds are for Town roads and not private roads. Mr. Miller said it is important to be able to plan ahead. Mr. Dunham reminded the Board that many years ago the estimated cost for getting roads to appropriate condition would be $16 million; with the $4 million bond we have reached about $8 million, or about half of what was needed.

Late January 2022 Storm After-Action Thoughts
Mr. Tilton reported that the DPW can manage small snow events but is not staffed to keep up with plowing during large events. The number of plow contractors has greatly decreased, making it difficult. There were about 300 complaints during the last storm about roads not being plowed, or not being plowed well. The DPW is considering some strategies to improve the situation – incentives for plowing contractors, parking bans, and changing materials from salt to brine for better pretreatment. There was discussion about factors that have contributed to losing plow contractors, including salary, insurance expenses and timing. Preapproved contracts might help or paying for part of the insurance. There were also questions about equipment and the DPW building. Mr. Tilton said that the department has been purchasing large dump trucks on an annual basis, but they have got more expensive. A plan is to buy trucks using the State bid. During the last storm the generator failed, which interrupted communications; that will be replaced. The DPW building has rust and other issues and the consultant is looking at options; there is a possibility for addressing the DPW building and the fire substation at the same time. When asked what are the most important factors for the DPW, Mr. Tilton responded staffing, contractors, and additional people for dispatch. Some of this might be addressed by adding a dispatch supervisor who would be connected to the Emergency Management Operations.

OLD BUSINESS

FY '23 Budget Update
There is no change from last week.

Update on Current Building Projects
CAL has weekly meetings; last week was onsite. Mr. Dunham would like to arrange a tour for the Board of the CAL and 100 Rte. 6A for next week.

Other Matters Not Reasonably Anticipated for Old Business
Ms. Harper pointed out that regarding Ms. Critchfield’s previous comment about the minutes, Mr. Critchfield’s suggestions were reported in the February 3 minutes, which were already approved. **Mr. Sampson moved to approve the minutes of February 10, 2022. Mr. Holden seconded. Approved unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

Acceptance of 2021 4th Quarter Donations
Mr. Hoctor moved to accept the 2021 4th quarter donations as presented. Mr. Sampson seconded. Approved unanimously.