EASTERN ESSEX DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS SERVICES
Board of Directors Meeting
Meeting of April 7, 2021

The Eastern Essex Veteran's Board of Directors participated in a remote meeting utilizing Zoom in accordance with the governor's March 12, 2020 order suspending provisions of Open Meeting Laws and to promote public health and social distancing.

Board Members present: Robert Snow, Chair, Rowley; Linda Alexson, Ipswich; Douglas Dawes, Georgetown; Michael Doyle, Newbury; Michael Flynn, Essex; Robert Janes, West Newbury

Staff present: Karen Tyler, Veterans Services Officer

Also present: Eileen Page, Recording Secretary; Karen Summit, Treasurer

Discuss Budget Shortfall

Gary Cheeseman (Chair, Wenham Select Board) reported that following two (2) resignations, he is the sole member of the Wenham Select Board. A special election will take place on April 8, and on Tuesday, April 13 there will be a meeting in which a vote will be taken for the Town of Wenham to withdraw from the Eastern Essex District to join the Cape Ann District. Mr. Cheeseman thanked Ms. Tyler for her years of service to Wenham.

Ms. Alexson asked why Wenham has decided to withdraw. Mr. Cheeseman reported that transferring to the Cape Ann District will reduce costs by about 30%.

Mr. Snow stated that because FY22 budgets have already been finalized, the Board must now decide how to proceed given the new nearly $27,000 shortfall.

Ms. Summit reported that the Board's options are: a) cut $27,000 from the budget, b) utilize retained earnings to cover the shortfall, or c) partially fund some items with retained earnings, while cutting other items.

Ms. Tyler reported that the surplus from FY20 was deposited into retained earnings, and suggested using some of those monies to fund the FY22 budget. Mr. Doyle agreed that this is the best course of action, and would allow for more time to plan the FY23 budget without Wenham's contributions.

Ms. Alexson asked if any benefits are provided to the staff through Wenham. Ms. Tyler confirmed that all benefits are carried through Ipswich and Newbury.

Ms. Tyler identified the following items as sources of saving money in FY22:

- After negotiations with Quick Books, Ms. Tyler achieved a $400 discount for the year
- In-person conferences have been canceled, saving $640
- Retirement has already been paid in full, saving $700
- If legal services are unneeded, $1,700 can be saved
- Ms. Page has offered to volunteer her services for FY22, saving about $1,200

Ms. Tyler also noted that although the budget anticipated a 7% increase in health insurance costs, this was only a projection, and the actual numbers, once received by Ipswich and Newbury, may be lower.

Ms. Summit noted that anything not spent in FY22 will also be deposited back into retained earnings, and may aid in FY23 funding.

Ms. Alexson asked if any other communities were planning on leaving the Eastern Essex District. All representatives responded in the negative.

Ms. Tyler thanked the Board for their support through a second year of unexpected departures.

- *Vote: Mr. Flynn moved to use retained earnings to fund the $26,829 budget deficit for FY22. Mr. James seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*

- *Vote: Mr. Doyle moved to adjourn. Mr. Flynn seconded. The motion carried unanimously via roll call.*