

Facilities - Dept. 653 and Building & Facilities Stabilization Fund

Interview with Tom Daley and Ron Collins - 2/15/23
Finance Committee: Nick Athanassiou and Lynn Bruneau

	FY19 Actual	FY20 Actual	FY21 Actual	FY22 Actual	FY23 Adopted	FY24 Proposed	FY19-24 Change %
Salaries + Expenses Total	\$431k	\$464k	\$489k	\$438k	\$571k	\$581k	35%

Beginning in FY19, four changes have occurred: 1) a full-time carpenter was hired; 2) the cost of utilities at the new DPW facility, particularly HVAC, have continued to increase; 3) maintenance contracts (re: new equipment at the DPW facility) have also continued to increase; and 4) at May Town Meeting in 2022, the position of “Assistant Facilities Manager” was established (although the position remains unfilled). The “Salaries” totals includes salaries for DPW/Natural Resources Director Tom Daley, Building & Facilities Manager Ron Collins, Carpenter Seth Pearson and the open position for the Assistant Facilities Manager (FY24 salary \$83.2k). The Salary for Natural Resources Manager Nate Sears is included with the Shellfish/Harbormaster Budget.

Although the Facilities budget was not the primary focus of our discussion with Building & Facilities Manager Ron Collins, it was noted that line item budget for Repair/Maintenance of Public Property continues to increase, largely due to the cost of maintaining a large-sized, “high-tech” building. The cost for the Electric Vehicle Charging Stations at Depot Square has been added to this budget - \$3k to cover the deficit between revenue and expenses for maintaining the charging stations (required per the contract w/ the vendor).

Ron and Tom discussed the charging stations proposed by the Climate Action Committee for installation at Nauset Beach - originally proposed for the new upper parking lot; however, the electric supply at the upper lot would not support the proposed charging stations. An option w/be to install 6 “level 2” charging stations at the lower parking lot that could be used by hybrid vehicles. Each w/ cost \$10k - plus the installation cost, the electric line and re-paving. The overall project “economics” and fee calculations w/ need to consider the vendor fee, on-going O&M costs, bollards to protect the charging stations as well as electricity. TBD whether the stations w/be “weather proof” for winter storms on the beach. The question as well is

whether the Town/taxpayers s/be subsidizing this convenience that w/ largely be used by tourists/visitors. Tom Daley noted that when the beach parking lot is full, the charging station “parking spaces” would likely be used by non-electric vehicles. TBD whether a Warrant Article supporting this proposal will be recommended for Town Meeting - and who will be the sponsor of the Warrant Article (Select Board or Climate Action Committee?).

Building & Facilities Stabilization Fund

Ron reviewed his plans for the use of the \$350k/year Building & Facilities Stabilization Fund for FY24-FY29, reminding us that as priorities change, he reviews any changes during his quarterly report to the Select Board (and more often if needed) to solicit their approval.

The Council on Aging is scheduled for HVAC improvements in FY24 and FY25; kitchen equipment improvements in FY24 and FY24; and then roof replacement work in FY24 and FY25; septic system pump replacement in FY25; parking lot/entrance improvements in FY25 and roof replacement in FY26-FY27. At a recent Select Board meeting, it was suggested that at a “floor risk assessment” be done to determine on-going flood risks to the facility - as well as priorities for continued investment in the facility - and a determination re potential expansion of the existing facility.

DPW/Natural Resources plans include a \$50k commitment each year for work on the Town’s landings - up from a prior number of \$20k/year; however, as noted previously, Fin Comm members expressed a concern re the nature of the work, the commitment to the work (Will work get done each year? Or will it too easily be pushed aside by higher priorities?) and the schedule (what work at what landings when?). Ron and Tom noted that there is no schedule or priority for doing this work. There is also an annual commitment for work at the Town’s ballfields and playgrounds - \$5k/year, rising to \$10k in FY27. Plans also include \$30k for tennis court repairs in FY24 and work on the Pilgrim Lake restrooms/site improvements in FY25-FY26 and Crystal Lake site improvements in FY28-FY29.

For the Library, \$25k for flooring replacement in FY24.

For OES, the plan includes \$15k in FY24 to replace flooring.

Projects for Town Hall include rubber tile replacement in FY26. Also replacement of exterior trim and painting in FY24 and FY25 and again in FY28 and FY29. Mechanical pumps and air handler renovations in FY25-FY26. New roof in FY28 and FY29 - \$200k each year (though why not a Warrant Article?).

Police Department - exterior painting in FY26 (\$25k).

44 Main Street/Old Fire Station - \$50k in FY24 to connect the building to the Downtown sewer system.

Ron also noted that the fire alarm control panel at Town Hall will likely need work. The fire alarm system at the Middle School has new problems that might take \$800k-\$1M to fix (a School District challenge - not directly or immediately an Orleans operating budget issue). If/when that system fails, the School w/ require a 24x7 "fire watch". Ron's example was a "heads up" re the Town Hall fire alarm system.

He also noted that discussions have resumed regarding physical security at Town Hall and other Town buildings with particular concerns raised by the Tax Collector/Treasurer's officer. The Town Clerk's Office is also somewhat vulnerable. At the 2/16/23 Public Hearing on the FY24 Capital Budget and the FY25-FY29 CIP, it was noted that these documents include a line item for Building Security with \$350k for FY25 and "TBD" amounts for subsequent years. However, Interim Town Manager Charlie Sumner indicated that the \$350k would not be on the May Town Meeting Warrant.

We also briefly discussed the status of the traffic light on Eldredge Park Way at the Fire Station entrance/exit. Tom Daley noted that the purchase order for the work to solve the problem was cut last August; however, supply chain problems have delayed delivery of all the parts needed to replace the constantly-blinking traffic light. The contractor has recently changed vendor with the hope of getting the needed missing parts.

Recommendations: As noted above - Fin Comm asked again this year why projects estimated to cost \$100k and more are included in the Building & Facilities Stabilization Fund budget rather than being funded separately through Warrant Articles. If there are one or two of these "mega-projects" in any one or two consecutive years, that limits the amount of "normal" but much-needed maintenance that can be done to the Town's aging buildings and facilities. Fin Comm asked the question at the 2/16/23 Public Hearing on the FY25-FY29 CIP and FY24 Capital Budget - but suggested that perhaps the question could be addressed by the not-yet-formed Long-Term Capital Planning Committee.