

**RTM FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING ON
June 23, 2020**

AGENDA ITEM 1: Request of the Personnel Director, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Westport and the Westport Police Local 2080, Council #4, AFSCME AFL- CIO granting changes to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement effective July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

MEETING:

The Committee met on Tuesday, June 23, 2020 in an online Zoom meeting at 5 p.m. In attendance were Jeff Wieser (Chair), Jessica Bram, Stephen Shackelford, Richard Jaffee, Seth Braunstein and Kristin Schneeman, RTM 9. Also in attendance were Westport Personnel Director/ Human Resources Director Ralph Chetcuti, and Finance Director Gary Conrad. The RTM Finance Committee reviewed and voted upon the following:

DISCUSSION: The 3-year contract between the Town of Westport and Westport Police Local 2080, Council #4 is due to expire on June 30, 2020, and currently up for renewal. Westport Director of Personnel Ralph Chetcuti explained that by mutual agreement, the Town and Union have agreed upon a Memorandum of Understanding to postpone collective bargaining of a new 3-year agreement for one additional year, due to the current COVID-19 pandemic. The parties agreed that electronic meetings are not optimal for collective bargaining, and wish to avoid health risks to parties participating in face-to-face meetings.

Under this Memorandum of Understanding, unionized employees will receive the 2½ percent annual wage increase called for in the expiring contract. There will be no changes to OPEB or any other contract amendments. Finance Director Gary Conrad noted that this wage increase equates to approximately \$175,000 in additional costs to the Police Department's budget of \$8 million for union-represented employees. This increase was taken into account in the calculations of the Town's most recent mill rate.

According to Mr. Chetcuti, the 2½ percent wage increase is in line with the last two to three years' increases. These have ranged from 2¼ to 2½ percent. It is also in line with other municipal police departments.

A benefit of this 1-year extension is that it will provide the Town with the opportunity to proactively begin collective bargaining of a new 3-year contract to take effect July 1, 2021, before this extended contract expires on June 30, 2021. This will avoid the common occurrence of negotiating new contracts past expiration of the prior ones, which results in retroactive wage increases once new contracts are in place.

COMMITTEE ACTION:

Seth Braunstein made a motion, seconded by Richard Jaffee, to recommend to the full RTM the approval of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Westport and

the Westport Police Local 2080, Council #4, AFSCME AFL- CIO granting changes to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement effective July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Submitted by Jessica Bram, RTM Finance Committee Member