

To: School Committee
From: Lemma Jn-baptiste, Director of Business & Finance
Date: June 9, 2022
RE: In-House Electrician

This memo requests authorization to transfer up to 80K from the Facilities contract line for building maintenance into a Facilities salary line, in order to establish a position for an in-house electrician.

It has not been the recent practice of the Westwood Schools to employ staff in the trades. However, we have reviewed our needs and concluded that:

- We can acquire these services in a more cost effective manner
- Our need for electrical work has been steady
- We want to ensure we do not lose the talent that is currently available

For the past several years, the Westwood Schools and the Town of Westwood have established a joint contract with a company that can provide on-call electrical services for townwide needs. In FY'18 through FY'22, Sanibel Electric won the bid for this contract and has provided excellent service to both School and Town Facilities Departments. In a typical year, 80 percent of the Sanibel Electric expenditures have been incurred by the Schools, and 20 percent by the Town.

Tom Carey, and Ken Aries before him, have recommended that we hire an in-house electrician. Tom Carey has supervised a unit with trade licenses in his work at the Museum of Fine Arts and believes that the Westwood Schools would benefit from having this position in-house.

Chris Coleman, our Town Administrator, and James McCarthy, Town Facilities Manager, have both expressed support for this effort. We have determined that an 80/20 cost-share and time-share for the position would allow both parties to retain services at the current levels for all departments. Our intent is to fully employ the electrician at the Westwood Schools. While his employment contract will be with the Westwood Schools, we have a mutual understanding that 20 percent of his time will be dedicated to work at the Town and paid for by the Town.

The hourly rate that Sanibel Electric charges us is 100/hr, with 120/hr for overtime. Over the last three years, FY'20 - FY'22, the Westwood Schools labor expenditures in the on-call electrical contract with Sanibel Electric have been 100 - 153K, representing 20 - 30 hours a week. We propose to budget for the full-time position at 85 - 90K. If we are able to reach an agreement on the employment contract, we will incur a lower effective hourly rate and benefit from the dedicated availability of a skilled electrician.

We intend to retain funds in our Building Maintenance contract line for contracting on-call electrical services on an as-needed basis for projects that require additional labor or expertise.