

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes**

**February 24, 2014**

Regular meeting of the Finance Committee was held on Monday, February 24, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the Finance Committee Room, #112, Town Hall with the following members present: J. Denneen, J. Burke, D. DiCenso, M. Iwanowicz, D. Crowley, J. Lowre, L. Pitman, D. Bruce, J. McDermott S. Lawson, A. Healy, S. Ahmed, and T. Williams, Absent were C. Lane and P. Hinton. Also in attendance was Town Administrator M. Boynton, Finance Director M. Thompson, and Town Accountant J. Cuneo.

7:30 p.m. – Quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by the Chairman L. Pitman.

### **May 5, 2014 Spring Annual Town Meeting/Budgets**

**Police-** Speaking to this budget was Police Chief R. Stillman. He recapped what the department has been doing for years 2012/2013. Department has been working with the Alcohol Coalition, Coffee with Cops Program (this did not do well, poorly attended), Adopt a school program and provided a liaison that worked with the school staff and the town. Health programs in the middle schools, social media, and they also have a web page. Rape progression program (for women only) Triad which works with elders. They are providing more bicycle patrols and received donations to purchase six bicycles, checked car seat installations, and crime prevention program. Drug take back program is very successful, Senior Citizens Police Academy. They are trying to reach out to the community to find out what the wants and needs are. They have done a citizens survey in order to receive citizen feedback and what the community wants. They will be inputting the data and results will be put on a website. This will provide to them a good sense of what the issues are in town. They also worked with schools on a safety plan.

Personnel Changes – Department is pretty stable in personnel now. They will be hiring an officer to replace a retiree in August. Department will have 40 sworn in officers, one less than the year 2005.

Regional Communication Center – Police received a feasibility grant to look into this, but it did not work out well financially for the town to do this. Dispatch received over 100,000 calls. Department hired another dispatcher last fall and this is working out well. Longview Farms has had a change in directors. They worked well with previous director, and attempting to work out the issues with new director. Water Tank at Old Post Road – Current standpipe holds all the communications for police and fire. Sewer and Water has voted to build a new tank, and it will cost \$150,000 to \$200,000 to move the

communication radio work to a new tank. Chief Stillman will return to the Committee with a firmer amount to do this.

Police Department is working towards 50% certification in order to receive 100% accreditation.

Salaries – Chief requested one additional patrolmen, Town Administrator is not recommending this position.

Overtime- Town Administrators has reduced the line items for Overtime for Sergeants and Officers by \$65,000 and Training in the amount of \$6,000. Chief spoke to the issue with officers out on long term sick time and what the cost benefit if added additional officers. Overtime for dispatcher in the amount of \$50,000. This might be brought down with the addition of a new person. Training of officers comes out of the town's budget and is not subsidized by the State.

Town Administrator spoke to working within the bottom line of salaries and expenses, allowing for the department to move within the line items.

Quinn Bill – State no longer funds this, it is funded by the Town. This creates some problems within the department on reimbursement. He would like to see this dealt with, there is need to encourage education.

Salaries request is for \$4,199,511, Town Administrator is recommending \$4,091,794. \$100,000 difference is needed and if they are unable to make it up, they will need to come back for a Reserve Fund Transfer.

Cruisers, department usually purchase three cruisers a year and don't need to go to Capital for this request, as it is in the budget. In addition they purchase for the police vehicles 50 tires a year.

Gasoline - \$90,0000 trying to manage within the bottom line. Town Administrator would like to see the Town have their own gasoline facility which allow for a cost savings for all town vehicles, but it is difficult to find a location as Walpole is a sole source aquifer.

**Police/Capital** – Deputy Chief J. Carmichael spoke to these items.

Unmarked vehicles go through Capital, not the purchase of three cruisers every year.

Tri-Tech Computer Software \$250,000 – Cost of this item will also be split with Fire Department(share of \$60,000), This software allows the Town to tie into other Police Departments that have this system. Cost includes training to get it up and running, but is basically for the equipment. This will be needed now or if and when the town has a new

police station. Some of the surrounding towns already have the software. Wiring for this is already in place.

Tasers - \$44,000 Town had attempted to obtain a grant for these items. They are looking to purchase 20 this year and 20 next year. . Two or three officers on a shift will have them. Cost is about \$1,000 each. Tasers will hopefully save a person or officers life. Operation of tasers has to be done in accordance with CMR guidelines and a plan has to be submitted to the Metropolitan Police Training Council. They would send two officers to a training program and they will come back to train other officers, training consist of approximately four hours. Tasers don't replace firearms, just provides another available option. Questions came up on the issue of liability and increase in insurance costs. Department would have to be licensed by the MPTC and each officer certified. Towns of Dedham, Canton, Norwood and Foxboro already have tasers. This will need to be run by Town Counsel and costs of insurance looked at.

Mutual Link Controller - \$6500 – allows cell phones, interfaced for intercom) text messaging and video links into the station. This will work in conjunction with Tri-Tech software.

Crash Reconstruction Equipment - \$6,000. This is far a data reporter (black box) it retrieves data and downloads into a system. Town presently has to borrow the equipment from another town and is borrowed approximately once a month.

Office Equipment - \$10,000. They are required to have certain things for certification (gun cabinet, bean bag) once certification is received, cabinets have to be locked. Files are also needed for personnel and medical training files, court files, etc. It is a benefit to the town to be certified, helps the town obtain grants.

Town has difficulty receiving certification on present police station, building is not a police station, and department does the best they can. State failed the town on the cell inspections.

Heroin – Department is working with the Coalition and trying to provide educational aspects. There have been fatal overdoses and the officers carry on them an antidote. District Attorney has to provide the training for this .

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Police Budget in the amount of \$4,559,420, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**Jack Mee, Building Inspector** – Updated the committee on this department. Number of projects has grown, but dollar amount dropped They are up 15% over last year for number of permits. Office completed over 3,000 inspections, not counting plan review. Do regular annual inspections on buildings, day care facilities, liquor establishments, car

dealers, deal with zoning complaints. Staffing includes Building Commissioner,, full time deputy, administrative assistant, and 2 part time inspectors for plan review and also evening inspections. Electrical inspector for 20 hours, plumbing and gas inspector for 23 hours. Change in job position of Zoning Board Secretary (24 hours) will now come under this office and will help out when needed.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by J. Burke for Favorable Action on the Building Inspector's Budget in the amount of \$348,601, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**Weights & Measures** – These services/inspections are now handled by the State. Inspections are done on cash registers, gas pumps and various scales throughout the Town.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Weights & Measures Budget in the amount of \$5,000, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

### **Fire Department**

Ambulance Fund - Balance forward \$1,148,587, plus an additional receipt of fees of \$565,632 of which \$650,000 will be transferred to the General Fund Budget, leaving a total of \$1,064,219. Ambulance from 2009 is scheduled to be replaced (\$250,000) Ambulance is replaced every three years.

Chief Bailey updated the committee on his department. Call volume is consistent, (3,000 calls). Since July 14, there have been a number of serious fires, Staffing has been dropped from 8 to 7 on a shift. Department has three new firefighters of which two are presently scheduled to go to the academy.(In academy approximately 9 weeks) With only seven groups, there is a problem with getting back the recalls. Standard should be to return within 15 minutes. Fire contract reads that firefighters have to live within 20 miles. He will be looking for more people in the future. Firefighters are hired in groups of four. Cost of a new firefighter is \$68,557 which includes benefits but does not include overtime. New fire truck previously approved is on order and anticipates receiving in October, 2014. He has one firefighter out on long term injury and has a provisional firefighter filling in on Step 1. Sick time Buy-Back is contractual and has to do with the amount of sick time used during the year.

In the years 2008-2014, spent \$324,856 for vehicle maintenance for the entire fleet. This is for vendors, work is not done in house. Town's Vehicle Maintenance Department does routine work on the ambulances.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Fire Department Budget in the amount of \$3,329,507, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**Fire Department/Capital** – Hold

**Emergency Management**

Budget is basically same as previous years. Largest item is \$17,000 and is mainly for the reverse 911 system. \$3500 was requested for office equipment, Town Administrator recommending -0-. He does not feel it is warranted at this time. Salaries are \$10,052 for stipend for the director. Stephen is in place of a salary and it covers approximately 5 hours per week. Individual works way more than that and it is a good deal for the town.

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson for Favorable Action on the Emergency Management Budget in the amount of \$30,752, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) Unanimous

**Adjourn:**

**MOTION MADE** by J. Denneen, Seconded by S. Lawson to adjourn at 10:30 p.m, Motion Passed (13-0-0) (13 voting) (Unanimous)

Respectfully submitted,

Clare P. Abril  
Clerk