

BOARD OF FINANCE
SPECIAL MEETING
February 20, 2016 8:30 am
Town Hall
MINUTES

Members Present: Chairman David Scata, Meghan Bruce, Kevin Cwikla, Diane Malozzi, and Michael Nintean (Alternate), Stephen Salisbury (Alternate), Vin Shea (Alternate)

Members Absent: Phillip Johnson & Elizabeth Charron

Also Present: Recording Secretary Laurie Bergeron

A. **Call to order** – D. Scata called the meeting to order at 8:30 am

B. **New Business**

1. **Discuss the following FY 2016-2017 operating and capital budget areas. After each discussion there will be an opportunity for public input**

Dept 422 Lebanon Volunteer Fire Department

Brian Green, President
Mark Elliott, Treasurer

No major increases – Last year the budget was increased to reflect an ending grant. Hose replacement each year. Currently do a hose test and each year have to replace some. – up against issues with equipment that is more regulatory unfunded – air bottles have a 15 year life span – Have 40 bottles that are reaching the end of their life span; tires on trucks are being replaced at 1 truck per year; tanker is a 10 wheel axle; 7 years recommended but have been able to push it to 10 years – continue replacement of helmets – this will fall under operating expenses. For the town audit, it will be under Capital Equipment. Quote for exhaust system for trucks came in considerably less than expected. Overhead doors are continued issue. Looking to use monies that were originally slated for exhaust system toward overhead doors. No additional monies being sought. – can we add to monies that were originally allotted for exhaust system? D. Scata – Ladder truck is at the age of replacement. It is 30 years old. Grant was mailed in December – we won't hear until June or September. Grant is specific to towns that already had a ladder truck. Caveat to grant is that it must be a new truck. Grant split is 90/10. Town has allocated up to \$100,000. Hours used is less than Willimantic, Norwich or New London. Currently sitting in 20/21 budget cycle for replacement.

Ambulance is always given a zero operating budget – operate under what is received from Insurance. Ambulance is slated for next budget cycle for replacement. Has about 60,000 miles on it now – in year 7 now. Ambulance is the most used apparatus in town. Last ambulance was \$185,000 because we purchased a demo.

Difference in operating budget is due to paramedic billing with the town and Windham Hospital Paramedics. Town share is none. We receive about 28,000 over last year - \$20,000 was put into as self funded retirement program. Fire department always received the excess that paramedics received. Fees are different now.

Dept 446 Paramedic Program

There are a few concerns regarding the new billing program set up. Currently, the Town of Lebanon would support paramedic services to the townspeople. Monies received always supported the paramedics servicing townspeople. Monies were paid directly to the hospital from town.

Hospital will bill insurance. After billing Medicare at \$50 per call and paying hospital \$200 there is a \$150 deficit per Medicare call. Fire department is paying \$250 per call. The \$37,000 represents the \$150 per call deficit. If town could cover paramedic charges to fire department of \$250 per call \$37,500 versus \$41,000 allocated last year. This is based on historical data plus 10%. This would cover the shortfall from insurance.

What is the towns position in supporting the Paramedic Program? Windham Hospital Paramedics are the best around. Willingness to support the paramedics but not a willingness to support other towns share due to their shortfall. Middlesex and American both take a pass thru amount. Whatever we get for insurance, the excess is what is sent to them and they are satisfied with that amount. American is not used for whole town due to response time.

Dept 449 Switchboard Dispatch – went down \$50,000; difference is due to not having to pay an early withdrawal fee from KX. Have a 5 year contract. All fees locked for 3 years.

Dept 407 Tax Collector – Absent – Rescheduled for 2/27/16

Dept 409 Town Clerk

Sue Coutu

Mary Ellen Wengloski

Only increase requested is in salaries. Mileage is down because State mileage rate was decreased. Use grant money as much as we can. Some years, grant has been as high as \$7,000. This year's grant is \$3,000. Will be micro filming minutes and putting into binders – Filming Finance now and will do Planning and Zoning next – M. Bruce asked if there are any capital needs with micro filming? None

Dept 410 Town Assessor

Emma Sousa

Budget has no changes except for salaries. M. Bruce discussed getting ready for new evaluation in 2018. E. Sousa responded that first payment will be due in 2017. This payment is usually about 1/3 of total bill. This will cover RFP, software, evaluation and results. RFP will be sent out in early 2017 with a contract awarded in May and work started in June, July or August. Actual payment will not be requested until 17/18 budget. Under Misc dues – lines are blank – no longer interested in memberships

Dept 420 Resident State Trooper

Collin Konow, Resident State Trooper

No changes to budget. Money requested in capital expense budget for new cruiser. The 2011 cruiser has approximately 40,000 miles. No money was added to the vehicle expense budget, but if capital expense is not approved, will need to add to vehicle expense to cover repairs on the 2011 cruiser. The 2008 cruiser is used as a backup vehicle. Not safe to drive day to day at police capacity. The 2011 cruiser was not purchased as police capable. It is not pursuit rated. Not a lot of high speed chases, but it is a big town.

Concerned that there is only one bay to house the cruisers. Would like to look into purchasing a building to house cruiser so that it is free from the elements and mice. Town of Marlborough just purchased new cruiser for \$55,000. It is approximately \$10,000 to purchase a building to house the cruisers. Question is where to put building? Public works is looking to put in for new building, maybe old building could be used to house vehicle. It appears as though a new cruiser is purchased for the town every 4 to 5 years. Police services budget went down due to salary from previous resident state trooper was a higher salary. Body cameras do not apply to town police. Salaries are the same – no part time town police at this time, but in case one is hired wanted to make sure monies would be available.

Dept 439 Cemetary Commission

Howard Wayland, Chairman

Only increase is in salaries. \$10,000 requested in capital expense for property on Synagogue Road. RFP should go out in the next week or two.

Need to remove trees on Liberty Hill – removed trees on the West side of Trumbull Cemetery. Need to restore the Hearst House on Exeter Road. It needs new sill. A new roof was put on 4 or 5 years ago.

Dept 425 Building Department

Jason Nowosad

Building Department is already at \$64,000 in revenue as of September. No way to know if this will stay the same. Permits given now will be worked on thru the next year. Building Department is looking to give more hours to the Building Official. Currently, they are at 12 hours per week. Would like to have 15 hours per week. Board of Selectmen suggested they request up to 19 hours per week. Probably going to go over budget by \$1000 due to hours. Would also like to ask for one more week for the temporary secretary. Volume of work is very high – currently the secretary has 3 weeks' vacation.

Salaries increase represents additional hours and more hours for temp secretary. Permit reviews are occupying more time; increase in permits, per Jason, are attributed to additions, renovations, decks, solar projects. Permits are usually seasonal. Permits did not slow down during winter as anticipated. Still trying to do eight inspections per day – Tuesday and Friday. This is four to six more than Columbia who allots fifteen hours per week. Permit reviews are up to date. Enforcement actions are not getting done. There is no time. Have a responsibility as a town to get these done. What is the time frame for an inspection from permit? If they call on a Tuesday may not get inspection until Friday. Sometimes he comes in on Thursday and decreases time on Tuesday and Friday. Fifteen hours would enable time to get all things done.

Dept 423 Fire Marshal

Scott Shuett, Fire Marshal

Asking for less money this year due to monies that were allocated for a complete change in the books program for the Fire Department and Fire Marshal has not been completed. Spoke with the Fire Chief and President and they have assured him that it will take place this year. Reflective coat in need of replacing for Fire Marshal and deputy.

Dept 436 Solid Waste Commission

Jan Van Woerkom, Chairman

Slight increase in salaries. Would like to replace used plow truck – currently have to contract out for snow plowing. If they were able to reuse one from the DPW, they wouldn't have to pay for a plowing contract. Completed capital project – rebuilt walls, put in compactors, fixed the grading up top, four loads of millings for free to try and stabilize upper area. Looking to get more millings from the State. Getting less into the compactor than anticipated. 4 compactors now. Lease on compactors is approx. \$225/month. Put in safety railings where compactors are. OSHA inspection recently – only written up on extension cord to compactors. Using payloader less now because they are using compactors - should get another 10-15 years out of loader.

Fund 213 Library

Cathe McCall, Chairman

Increase of approx. 16,500 due to increase the town suggests for salaries and medical and dental insurance. Most other expenses are pretty flat – slight increase in misc expenses – Bibliomation increase in fees. Increase in dues payable. Slight decrease in income – little less from grants from State. Decrease in misc income due to decrease in book fines. Will lose approximately 70% of their income during renovations. K. Cwikla asked for percent increase each year for medical benefits. Town estimates 15 to 28% increase each year. Will still have to staff 2 floors, amount of new acquisitions will continue at the current level. No decrease in staffing due to needs and services provided even though smaller facility. Actual cost to town is \$279,843. M. Bruce commented why some line items are going up even though services will be decreased. No way to estimate some costs so left items flat.

Working with Architect refining design – project went out to bid and selected different firm from architect that did original plan. Upgrades need to be done to Community Center before they can move in. Funding for Library upgrade will cover transfer of materials and improvements to community center.

Fund 235 Amston Lake User Fees (information only) - Cancelled

Fund 236 Amston Lake Assessment Fees (information only) – Cancelled

C. Adjourn: M. Bruce MOVED to adjourn meeting. M.Ninteanu SECONDED. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie J. Bergeron
Recording Secretary

Please see the minutes of subsequent meetings for the approval of these minutes and any corrections hereto.