

**NEWINGTON BUDGET COMMITTEE**  
MEETING MINUTES  
JANUARY 16, 2002

Present: *Budget Committee Members (BUDCOM)*  
Alfred Smith (Chairman), Dennis Acton, Leslie Brock, Laura Coleman, Kay Akerley, Will Gilbert

*Board of Selectmen Representative (BOS)*  
Jan Stuart

*Police Chief*  
Brad Loomis

*Police Commission Members*  
Leonard Thomas, Douglas Ross, James Marchese

Budget Committee Chairman Smith called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review the Police Department Budget proposal.

Chairman Smith asked that the minutes of January 9, 2002 be read. Kay Akerley made a motion to accept the minutes; seconded by Leslie Brock. Motion carried with none opposed.

**Police Department Budget**

BUDCOM Chairman Alfred Smith asked Chief Loomis about the 4 new pages of the budget that were submitted. Chief Loomis said he had a problem with the computer and the operator, but the bottom line was less than the previously submitted proposal. Chairman Smith asked if that was the net budget; Loomis said yes.

BUDCOM Chairman Smith asked the committee if they would accept the proposed operating budget of \$922, 080. BUDCOM member Laura Coleman made a motion to accept; motion seconded by Dennis Acton.

Chairman Smith questioned why the 3% COLA was at 3.1%. Chief Loomis said there was an internal agreement with the Administrative Assistant (AA) that brought it up to 3.1%. BUDCOM member Kay Akerley reminded the Chief of the AA's \$2000 p/yr. Annuity agreement. Coleman then asked if the AA continued to process the town's payroll. Chief Loomis said she was but that it should stop soon with the hiring of the new AA in the Town Office. There was further discussion regarding the merits of the AA's performance.

Chairman Smith questioned the increase for part time officers. Chief Loomis said that it was for the Animal Control Officer. Commission member James Marchese said the position had been moved from the town budget to the police department budget.

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Regarding Overtime Salaries, Kay Akerley questioned the increase. Chief Loomis said the department was down one man due to his attending the police academy. Akerley said she thought officers had already gone to the academy when they were hired. Commissioner Marchese explained that an officer must be employed by a department in order to attend the academy. Akerley further questioned what the line item for "Other" was for. Chief Loomis explained that it was pay for leave, buyouts, and retirement, etc. Marchese said that the figure was quite low, and they had tried to keep it that way.

A discussion took place about Longevity Pay as requested by Chairman Smith. Chief Loomis named the personnel that qualified for longevity, which was almost everyone on the department.

BUDCOM member Leslie Brock asked why, if the salaries were up \$8,000, social security wasn't up. Chief Loomis said that he hoped that the difference of the money not spent in the previous year would keep the figures realistic.

Dennis Acton asked the Chief when concern for overtime costs would justify bringing in a part time person. Chief Loomis said that a part time officer would be cost-effective over the long-term, but currently, shifts needed to be filled on a temporary basis. To further clarify overtime costs, the overtime needed for OEM exercises, court appearances, and sickness coverage were discussed.

Leslie Brock asked why Holiday pay was low compared to the budget amount. Chief Loomis said the figure was incorrect. Marchese noted that the columns were reversed and all were in agreement.

Kay Akerley noted that employees have a built in pay increase because of the rising cost of health insurance. BOS Stuart inquired about COLAs and step raises. Marchese said the officers were getting a COLA, but not step raises; the officers were aware and understood. Marchese further added that the commission hasn't completed looking at how to handle steps. He said they were looking at the step grid relative to COLAs and felt that steps had to have merit.

BUDCOM Chairman Smith asked about communication equipment and why the 2002 budget was at zero. Chief Loomis said that he felt the equipment was not needed this year because of the current equipment.

BUDCOM member Akerley asked about repairs and why, if they didn't spend what they had last year, were they asking for more. Chief Loomis said the money was for the radios, radar, and fax in case something goes wrong.

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Regarding "lease", Kay Akerley asked if pagers were leased and, if they were, should they be purchased. The overall comment from the table was that it would be too costly to purchase them.

Chairman Smith asked about rifles. Chief Loomis said the department was to purchase an MP5 for use with the Seacoast Emergency Response Team. Loomis said that it is important to make the purchase because if anything goes wrong, it reduces town liability. Loomis further commented that the team has been receiving donations so the purchase may not have to be made from the budget.

Alfred Smith asked if uniforms were up because of the special vests that had to be ordered. Chief Loomis said no, it was because there was a part time slot to fill and if eligible retirees don't retire, they will need an outfitting allowance. Smith also expressed concern over the lease of equipment figure being cut in half. Chief Loomis said the previous year's figure was for the postage meter and identi-kits. The department has stopped using the identi-kits.

Chairman Smith confirmed with Chief Loomis that only one (1) MP5 was to be purchased. He also requested confirmation that the original draft of the budget proposal had split advertising and testing costs and now the costs were combined. Loomis said yes. Chief Loomis also gave a breakdown of line 1072 (General) and said that it was for boarding animals, etc. He said costs add up quickly with unexpected services.

Regarding contracts, Chairman Smith asked why costs were way down. Chief Loomis said the County Attorney's office could no longer prosecute cases for the department and since the department has a good prosecutor, it makes more sense to use him.

Replying to Chairman Smith's concern over the increase in firearm costs, Chief Loomis replied that ammo costs were increasing because of the training of new officers and the need for them to "qualify". Commissioner Marchese added that, after 9-11, the officers had side arms, but they needed rifles. He felt this was more appropriate for Newington and noted that having rifles would add to the increase in ammo costs.

Chairman Smith asked why equipment on line 1085 had quite a jump and if it was for weapons. Chief Loomis said no, it was for equipment needed in the fitness room. Marchese added that they were bringing exercise equipment from the school as the core.

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Smith asked the budget committee to look at encumbered funds and the total revenue from detail salaries and to note that it was a real wash...very reasonable for what the town has. He then asked if there was any further discussion.

Kay Akerley said she was not sure if the town should be paying for exercise equipment. Discussion took place on the merits and Chairman Smith said the need has come about because of the physical requirements demanded of the department personnel. Akerley said it was a perk and Marchese said no, that the State has mandatory physical requirements. Smith added that if it is a State requirement, personnel should be given the opportunity to meet that requirement.

The Chairman asked if there were any more questions, called for a vote, and the motion to accept a Police Department Total Operating Budget in the amount of \$922,080 carried with none opposed.

Discussion continued about Capital Expenses. Chairman Smith asked if there were two (2) new cruisers scheduled for this year. Commissioner Marchese said that was the plan if approved and they would be getting rid of the oldest cruisers with the most miles.

When Chairman Smith asked what the \$500 building expense was for, Chief Loomis said it was for the fitness room wall and studs. Dennis Acton's question regarding the availability of Federal Funds for emergencies was addressed by Marchese. He said there were possibilities for funds but that it was important to see if funds were of benefit and worth to the Town.

**Office of Emergency Management (OEM) Budget**

BUDCOM Chairman said he needed a motion to accept the Proposed OEM Budget in the amount of \$16, 584. Motion to accept by Leslie Brock; seconded by Selectman Jan Stuart.

A great deal of discussion took place on the OEM Budget, how OEM reimbursement works, and who the road agent and OEC staffers would be. Chairman Smith voiced the concerns of the table to Chief Loomis, which included the conflict of personnel being compensated twice for one drill.

At 8:10 p.m., Commissioners Ross and Marchese asked to be excused from the meeting since they were not involved with Emergency Management.

Chief Loomis continued to clarify OEM compensation and to address Kay Akerley's statement that personnel should not be compensated with stipends. Chief Loomis reiterated that OEM personnel were not actually issued a check.

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The Budget Committee expressed their confusion with the OEM Budget because they had never seen it before. Selectman Stuart asked Chief Loomis to confirm, which he did, that personnel were not paid money and that the money comes back to the Town. Chief Loomis added that they were paying in-kind and that the money has to be raised to get the grant. Chairman Smith said that the reason the line item has to be included is so that you can expend the money.

The Chairman called for a vote to accept the OEM Budget in the amount of \$16, 584. Motion carried; none opposed.

Chairman Smith thanked Chief Loomis for his Budget presentation and asked if there were any more questions. Kay Akerley made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Selectman Stuart. Meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan M Newcomer  
Administrative Assistant