

**Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, January 14, 2009**  
**7:00pm Town Hall**

Chr. Larry Wahl called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Present: Chairman Wahl, School Board Rep Helen Maldini, Darin Sabine, Gail Klanchesser, Tom Benson, Selectman's Rep Jack O'Reilly, Liz Taccetta, Russ Cooke, AA Beatrice Marconi, Police Chief Jon Tretter and Police Commissioners Paul Kent and Jackson Hoyt; Fire Chief Roy Greenleaf, Assistant Chief Dale Sylvia, Secretary Sarah McQuade, Engineers Ruth Fletcher and Steve Sabine, FF Mark Lamprey, Mark Merrill and John Klanchesser. *(absent John Lamson and Gail Pare)*

***J. O'Reilly moved to accept the minutes of December 10. G. Klanchesser seconded. Motion passed*** with Russ Cooke and Helen Maldini abstaining.

**Police Department 2009 Budget Request** \$ 1,236,440 *passed*

***G. Klanchesser moved to tentatively recommend a Police Budget of \$ 1,236,440. Helen Maldini seconded.***

Chr. Wahl began the evening questioning the calculations of the Salary line based on what was spent last year plus C.O.L.A. G. Klanchesser agreed. Sarah McQuade reminded the committee of the 27 vs 26 payrolls which answered the uncertainty. Police Clerical is included this year in the salary line.

Equipment Contract line increased due to an upgrade for back ups.

Fuel & tires line were added to for 2009. They went over on fuel due to the price last year.

Misc line is used for reimbursing petty cash and misc needs. They used over \$8,000.

D. Sabine asked for more detail on the Animal Control Officer regarding calls. Selectman O'Reilly gave a brief presentation based on the ACO report for the Town Report. Chief Tretter will have more detail with him at the Public Hearing.

The heat tape project was done last year.

***The Chair called for the vote –Motion passed.***

**NH State Retirement Funding Concerns**

Chr. Wahl spoke of the ramifications should someone retire who exceeded the 125% rule adopted earlier this year. Until the Legislature fixes the problem, the problem exists. Currently Chief Tretter has 5 eligible employees who could retire bringing the liability for his department to \$ 283,995. The Fire Department has no one eligible in 2009. Since this liability must be funded, Chr. Wahl will suggest placing \$100,000 in the Cap. Reserve for Employee Severance as we can't take the chance until the problem is solved in Concord.

**Fire Department 2009 Budget Request of \$ 1,182,501** - *passed - with revision expected @ Public Hearing*

***G Klanchesser moved to tentatively recommend a Fire Dept budget of \$ 1,182,501. T Benson seconded.***

Chr. Wahl asked the Engineers if there was a written pay scale policy. Engineer Ruth Fletcher stated that they have an approved pay scale but not necessarily an adopted policy. The Chair questioned why the Fire Chief was making more than deemed top step in the pay scale. Ruth answered that he was given a \$2,000 merit pay. J. O'Reilly noted that the Chief's base is \$ 71,097 and the difference was the Merit. Ruth went on to say that merit pay is a pat-on-the-back for the individual in which case the scale is not adjusted. In the end, it was suggested that the pay scale be adjusted when necessary.

*Call Personnel* – 2 are residents plus the Warden. Total of 8 currently. The call personnel line had to drastically be decreased due to budget constraints. Originally the Fire Dept asked to fund that line with \$ 40,000. Right now, after Selectmen suggested cuts, it stands at \$ 7,500 which will cover monthly training and emergencies. D. Sabine asked what was needed to adequately fund the call line and the Chief replied \$40,000 would certainly help. Asst. Chief Sylvia stated that if that line was increased, call members could be utilized as a 3<sup>rd</sup> person shift member, but they must have their training.

*Over time* at \$124,000 is doable however the actual number should be closer to \$137,000. Sick and vacations drives OT up. We do have the Call people, per Chief Greenleaf, however it is difficult to use them all the time as most of them work.

The Chr. noted that *FICA/MEDI* could be reduced due to the over time line reduction. Fica should be closer to \$10,544.

\$803 could be an adjustment in the *retirement* line.

Regarding *Call Uniforms* (\$1,000), H.Maldini asked it if was enough. Asst. Chief stated it will take care of current staffing (\$225 p/person) Full time people are budgeted for 3 sets.

*Training*-Not everyone has gone to Ship Board training. The Chief stated that 4 people are yet to go and that last year, due to inevitable budget over spending, he had to cut the final 4 or things would have been worse. He hopes to get props provided by the State to continue on.

*Physicals* – The Chr questioned this line. Asst. Chief Sylvia said that the numbers on this line are figured on ages – as required by NFPA. L. Wahl still thought this line could be cut in half.

The Asst. Chief stressed that he is concerned with liability. If the Town did not follow the recommended standards, the exposure heightens. L. Wahl continued on by stating that the call people could come in to baseline, not necessarily based on age. Perhaps \$2,000 could be cut here.

*Ambulance Billing Fees* – Engineer Fletcher feels this line should be funded by the Selectmen, not the fire dept as the income goes into the general fund. A comparison was made to the Rec Dept paying for the purchase of movie tickets and the proceeds going to the Gen. Fund. R. Cooke felt it should remain under the Fire Dept.

*Leased Equipment* – Computers. These were renewed 2 years ago.

*Computer Expense* – L. Taccetta noted that historically this line has been under spent and wondered if they should consider cutting this line before reducing physicals. The Chief hoped to buy a battery back up this year and would have spent more last year, but again had to curb spending to preserve as much of the bottom line as possible.

*Ambulance Supplies* - Spending was post poned til year's end. Asst Chief Sylvia mentioned that that last 3 weeks in December were high spending weeks due to watching the bottom line all year.

*Postage* – Rather than buy or rent their own postage machine, the Fire Dept has been invited to utilize the Town Hall machine and will be billed for postage.

*Equipment Maintenance* – Asst. Chief felt this line was important as they utilize this line to fix older components to prevent equipment purchase.

*SCBA* - The packs were purchased. Fit testing is mandated annually.

*Radio Maintenance* – Changing frequencies brings a cost.

It was discussed and determined that the *Fire Dept Radio Cap Reserve* NOT be dissolved as originally thought.

*Vehicle Maintenance* – It is only 14 days into the new year and 1/4<sup>th</sup> of this line is all ready spent. The Cap Res. may have to be utilized before year's end per the Chief.

*Protective Clothing* – Hoping to purchase 2 sets this year. The Chief stated there is a big need as some are 9 years old.

*Alarm Maintenance* - Various boxes will be repaired tomorrow. The old fashion type fuses are needed and are costly.

Selectman O'Reilly suggested that with the previously mentioned savings of \$ 3,807 from fica and 802 from retirement, it totals \$ 4,609. Take \$2,000 out of the physical line. Now we have \$6,609 to move around. \$6,135 could be added back to Call and \$469 to Fica and you'll be close. The bottom line has not changed.

The Fire Department's original request was \$ 1,254,530. It was reduced by \$ 72,029 by Selectmen. Darin Sabine asked if this presentation was doable. The Chief felt they potentially could, however one emergency could set the whole budget back. The Assistant Chief felt a more realistic budget would be adding \$ 39,000 back, which would then bring his bottom line to \$ 1,221,501 which is 7.4% over last year.

The Chair wanted to know before any adjustments are made as to which lines what money is going to fund. Engineer Sabine asked if it should be bottom line only rather than which lines.

It was suggested that the Budget Committee tentatively recommend what was presented earlier this evening as far as a total and that the Fire Engineers/Department come to the Public Hearing on Feb 7<sup>th</sup> with line adjustments. (new figures to come 1 week prior to public hearing for committee)

***Motion passed at \$1,182,501.*** D. Sabine abstained.

### **Warrant Articles**

The Board of Fire Engineers are proposing a Warrant Article to fund 2 new fire fighters/emt's for the last half of 2009 in the amount of \$ 61, 036.38 (includes all costs & benefits). For the first 6 months, they will be working days as the Department did not want to pay them for sleep time and wanted the Chiefs around to teach and observe.

Protective Clothing Warrant Article to establish cap res. After discussion, it was determined to not present this article this year but to budget for the need as it really doesn't qualify as a cap res.

Warrant Article to establish cap res. for large diameter hose. After much discussion, it was determined that the best place to put this request is under Capital OutLay and Selectman O'Reilly will ask the other Selectmen if they concur.

The Fire Department will not be asking for a new vehicle in 2010.

Regarding Mutual Aid, Chr. Wahl would like to know how many times we were on the receiving end of Mutual Aid.

And at 9:40pm, G. Klanchesser moved to adjourn with J. O'Reilly seconding. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectively Submitted,

Beatrice Marconi  
Administration Assistant