



TOWN OF ADAMS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, March 24, 2016 – 6:00 PM

ADAMS VISITORS CENTER, 3 Hoosac Street, 1st FLOOR, ADAMS, MA 01220

On the above date the *Finance Committee* held a joint workshop with the *Board of Selectmen* at the **Adams Visitors Center** at **6:00 p.m.**

Chairman Timothy Burdick presided the *Finance Committee* meeting. Present were **Vice Chairman Leon Parrott** and **Members Jeffrey Lefebvre, John Cowie, Sandra Kleiner, Paul Demastrie, Charles Foster, Joan Smigel, Mark Chittenden, Matthew Pitoniak, and Craig Corrigan.** *Members David Allen, Brian Johnson, Rachel Tomkowicz, and Amy Giroux were absent.*

Chairman Richard Blanchard presided the *Board of Selectmen* meeting. Present were **Members Joseph Nowak, Arthur Harrington and John Duval.** *Vice Chairman Jeffrey Snoonian was absent.* Also in attendance were **Town Administrator, Tony Mazzucco, Library Director, Holli Jayko, Police Chief Richard Tarsa, and Forest Warden Richard Kleiner.**

The Finance Committee Workshop was called to order by Chairman Burdick at 6:00 p.m.

The Select Board Workshop was called to order by Chairman Blanchard at 6:00 p.m.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS DISCUSSION

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Library Budget Presentation

Library Director Holli Jayko gave an overview of the services the Library provides to the community. She gave the boards an outline of the Library Staff and provided comparisons of the July through February Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016. She noted that the Friends of the Adams Free Library had funded an item return bin and other items to support the Library and reviewed revenue sources.

Fiscal Year 2017 Budget

Reductions include a 19% labor decrease, and the elimination of microfilm. Though the Library will no longer be receiving the Berkshire Eagle microfilm, it will maintain the equipment.

Personnel Services

With the loss of the Cataloguer position, a staff member may move into a new position vacated by the promotion of the Children's Librarian, and would do the cataloguing in this position.

State Aid

The first half of state aid has been received and is calculated by size and population.

Building Structure

There are no roof leaks; there was a toilet overflow, and a leaky lead pipe was changed to copper. The boiler needs replacement, and there is hope that Green Communities money can be used to update this. The mural on the 2nd floor could also be restored. The downstairs rooms are used for meetings and are very active for exercise programs, trainings, and meetings.



TOWN OF ADAMS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

New Concepts

Discussion took place about the Wifi at the library and having a café. If the concept was able to come to fruition it would need to be determined where to put it, how to staff it, and whether to have someone else staff it or have the Library run it. It could be a self-service location starting small and being built with a solid business model. Some restaurants in town may be willing to make the coffee. Ancestry.com subscription card holders can go in and access it without cost, as well.

Veterans Services

Town Administrator Mazzucco did a brief presentation on Veterans Services. He explained the state law requirements and how the full time Veterans Agent serves several area communities to provide cost savings through sharing. He briefly reviewed some of the services that are provided, such as groceries, rent assistance, medical assistance, fuel and heating help. The Liaison for veterans in the community assists also with VA and GI Bills, housing, training, and finding a job. The Veterans Agent also connects people to services such as Soldier On, and is a great resource for Veterans. It is provided by a formula which spreads out the costs. The total budget for Fiscal Year 2017 includes office space. The Veterans Agent will be taking over managing the flags for the Town and can get flags cheaper.

Public Safety

Chief Tarsa gave a brief overview of the Police Department budget, which includes the following line items: Police, Police Station, Emergency Management, Animal Control Officer, Forest Wardens, Hazardous Waste, and Parking Ticket Department.

Personnel

A review of the costs was made. It was explained there is now full staffing and still a decrease of personnel costs this year. In the next five years several staff members are eligible to retire, which will take salaries off the top of the scale as new employees enter in at a lower rate. A recommendation was made to schedule the transitions to keep from losing a large amount of knowledge all at once. The Detective will be shadowed by another officer, as an example. There could be an opportunity to hire three reserve officers, which can be used as either desk officer, dispatchers or street officers. Lateral transfers provide opportunities, and Officer Onorato was given as an example of being a good fit for the community since he was able to begin teaching forensics to students at the Hoosac Valley High School. Regulations for Reserve Officers are strict and may change to require up to 800 hours of training for a part time job to allow for equal training of all officers. Overtime costs could not be compared because of the Reserve Officers covering hours, but their reasons were reviewed as being primarily contractual obligations.

Dispatch Services

The Fire District and Adams Ambulance are working to fund one dispatcher. Having a Reserve Officer working the dispatch desk would be a lower rate than a dispatcher. The Town is eligible for \$22,000 for two years to absorb the cost of the transition to the Sheriff's Communication Center. Alarm systems are connected by hardline to the telephone line and cannot be eliminated as a cost. Information technology costs will assist with making the transition. Regionalization will reduce \$150,000 in salary and legacy costs. The state goal is to condense and reduce Public Service Answering Points (PSAPs). The long term goal is to have one single Berkshire County PSAP. There is a 911 "local tax" on telephone bills that funds the state 911 dispatch services. The total cost to the Town for the regionalization will be \$23,600 per year.



TOWN OF ADAMS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

A 3% increase is an estimate but historically there have been no increases to the towns already served by the regional dispatch center. Radio communications were discussed and it was noted that communications were not perfect because of the terrain. The regionalization to Sheriff's Control Dispatch Center will bring about anticipated better communications. There is a radio tower on Mt. Greylock that could be looked at should a need arise. The State Police utilizes an 800 MHZ radio system.

Insurance and Worker's Compensation

Insurance costs were estimated to increase and were noted as being out of the Town's control. The Town Accountant was praised for always being on the lookout for cost saving options. State law does not allow police or fire departments to have worker's compensation, and the rates of worker's compensation are based on the profession.

Equipment

Bullet resistant vests were discussed. They have a five year maximum life cycle because Kevlar decomposes with body heat. They cannot be upgraded because of this and must be fully replaced. Cost is vendor dependent and range currently from \$700 to \$1,100. Vests are a contractual obligation.

Four Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) are old technology. Windows XP is no longer supported and they need to be compatible with the Sheriff's Communication Center. They are more expensive than a typical laptop, because they must withstand heat and cold. The pros and cons of dash cameras and body cameras were discussed including reliability, cost, and being outdated.

Vehicle Costs

Battery costs have gone up, but a reduction of gas costs is projected. Cumberland Farms gives a discount on fuel, and the fleet card may be used there so the department can pay less. A cruiser replacement in Fiscal Year 2017 is in the budget for \$36,000 but will realistically cost \$37,000 with incidentals. Quotes and package contents were reviewed for cruiser replacement, including discussion on radar, video recording systems, and the Department of Public Works handling the conversions to help manage costs. A review of pictures of two cruisers in line for replacement took place, and their maintenance history was discussed. Replacing one cruiser per year gives a 6 year replacement cycle, which will take a several more cycles to be on track. It was noted having 100,000 miles on the first line unit is a lot, and there was a review of the maintenance schedule. The old vehicle would be transferred to the Wastewater Treatment Plant to save the Town money. There is additional cost for All Wheel Drive, requiring four tire replacement rather than two. New vehicles come with all- season radials for passenger cars, which are not sufficient.

Animal Control

There are mandatory training and certification requirements for the Animal Control Officers. Animal Control cannot use private vehicles due to liability to the Town, but their vehicles don't need front line reliability.

Dog Pound

Board of Selectmen Chairman Blanchard, Vice Chairman Snoonian, and Member Harrington were acknowledged for their work in repairing and cleaning up the Dog Pound. It was power washed, painted and a heating unit was replaced.



TOWN OF ADAMS

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Grants Received

911 Training is required, and continuing education credits are now mandated. Additional costs are due to the reduction of cost coverage in mandated training, requiring more from the Town. A savings will take place as the Town regionalizes the dispatch center.

Opiates and Heroin

An overview was given of the local opiate and heroin issue. Adams Police picks up syringes but it is a Board of Health issue. The Adams Police Detective, the K9 Unit, the Officers and Sheriff Bowler were praised for their work on this issue.

Forest Wardens Budget

Forest Warden Richard Kleiner was introduced and gave a brief overview of the Forest Wardens and their vehicles. He noted that the Forest Wardens are attempting to get a truck through Emergency Management. Their current brush truck is a 1975 with a host of problems including a leaking tank and a blown Power Takeoff. They currently try not to take it out of town due to its unreliability.

A suggestion was made to have the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen visit the Forest Wardens in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion made to adjourn by Member Cowie

Second by Vice Chairman Parrott

Unanimous Vote

Motion passed

The Finance Committee Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Deborah J. Dunlap,
Recording Secretary

Timothy Burdick, Chairman