

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Town of Becket
557 Main Street
Becket, MA 01223

Meeting Minutes for Thursday, March 22, 2012

Call to Order: 7:08 PM

Present: Ann, Jeremy, Dan, Craig & Select Board: George Fuller, Mark Karlberg, Jeanne Prior (via phone)

Absent: Steve, Chuck

Public Present: Bill Elovirta (Police Chief), Jim Kupernik (Ambulance Director), Amy Lane (Town Accountant), Colleen O'Connor, Eva Birkett, Beth Van Ness (Planning Board), Kathy Hayn, Tax Collector

AGENDA

1. Meet with Jim Kupernik, Becket Ambulance Chief, to discuss budget for FY 2013
Total budget includes a \$5,800 increase in S&W representing 3%, which was not given in FY 2011. Revenue offset estimated at \$80K. Dept will look at most recent monthly trends for revenue to see if \$80K can be reasonably increased.
2. Meet with Bill Elovirta, Becket Police Chief, to discuss budget for FY 2013
The significant increase (\$46K or 26% of LY S&W budget) in the budget reflects a full-time police chief and monies to cover a new 12 AM to 8 AM shift. Bill reviewed the increasing call response trends of the police dept. He also raised awareness that Federal and State policing grants have been cut significantly which provided extra funds in the past for patrolling. Eva Birkett brought up that increased policing hasn't completely deterred crime. Colleen O'Connor brought up that a police presence in areas would seem to avert crime (as it does in other communities such as Egremont and speeding through town) which can be accomplished without necessarily having full time shift coverage. Possibly establishing a random patrolling of areas and times could produce the needed "police presence" without the need to expand shifts a hours.

There was quite a bit of discussion on the FT vs PT and increased shift as this large budget increase is difficult to accomplish given proposition 2.5 and other non-controllable budget increases (energy and health care costs). A full budget will need to be completed before any decisions can be made.

3. Meet with Kathy Hayn, Tax Collector, to discuss budget for FY 2013
Kathy Hayn reviewed volumes covered by the Tax Dept. The main increase discussed was an increase of 29.7% or \$10,208 for the Assistant Tax Collector because this person is doing more than planned when hired. The history is this person was hired last year after it was determined the volumes in the department had increased. The increase was met with heavy disagreement to increase a person this much after 1 year service. A 3% increase was raised as possible.
Other points raised during the discussion was the apparent lack of billing to the Road and Lake Districts for town services. Craig will follow up with the Assessors on this point and also get estimates for the 2013 budget revenues. Jeremy also raised the concept of switching back to 6 month tax billings vs quarterly. It was recommended that this be studied considering the increased volume for many departments this quarterly billing has generated and whether it is worth the extra cost.
4. Review and approve minutes for prior meeting
Tabled
5. Correspondence and transfers
None

6. Town Admin. - Updates

Nothing additional

7. Further discussion on the Budget Timetable, budget assumptions set by the Select Board

Will have full budget for Apr 5th meeting including Road and Lake District And Ambulance estimated revenues.

8. Salary Survey update/timetable to get ready for 2013 Budget

Almost completed.

9. Public Input

No additional

11. Any other business

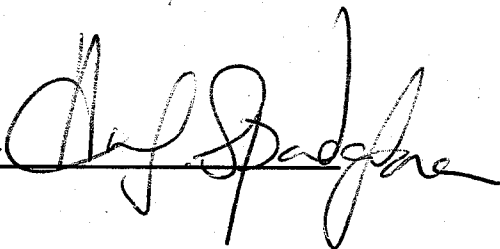
CBRSD meeting with the SB & FC on Apr 11th. Will have a FC meeting following.

Proposal to allow remote dial in for FC meetings; Ann proposed, Dan seconded. Approved

Adjourn: 10:06 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Dan Parnell

Approved: Ann Spadafora, Acting Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Spadafora", written over a horizontal line. The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.