

## **ENFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE (EBC) MINUTES (approved 13Dec2012)**

**Saturday, December 8, 2012  
DPW BUILDING 8:30AM**

**Members Present:** Annabelle Bamforth, Fred Cummings, Sam Eaton (Vice Chair), Shirley Green, Gayle Hulva, Gail Malz, Paul Mirski, Doug Pettibone (Chair), Lori Saladino, Janet Shepard

**Others Present:** Steve Schneider (Town Manager), Richard Martin (F.A.S.T. Squad Chief), David Crate (Fire Chief and Fire Ward), Jim Taylor (DPW Head).

The meeting opened at 8:35 AM.

### **Administrative:**

A motion to approve the draft November 15, 2012 minutes was made and seconded. The minutes were approved as written.

### **New Business: Departmental Spending Plans Reviews**

#### **Public Safety**

4215 Ambulance (2012 Budgeted, \$83,900; 2013 Request, \$112,400, up 34%). EMS Chief Richard Martin answered questions on 2012 spending and presented the 2013 draft spending plan.

For 2012, it was noted that the cost of supplies to outfit the squad are still on the rise each year. It was also noted that the 2012 budget has been overspent by about \$8-10,000 to date because of an unexpected upgrade needed for the Zoll defibrillators, the paid On-Call (see below), and increased payments to EMS personnel for standard calls (\$19,092 to date vs \$14,000 budgeted).

The bulk of the requested budget increase (\$20,000) for 2013 is for the paid On-Call time that was instituted in June 2012 in order to improve member participation during the periods when Lebanon is not covering the ambulance service for Enfield (i.e., 12 hours nightly and weekends). Two EMS members are now paid \$3.50/hr during these periods after scheduling ahead of time for On-Call commitment. Ninety per cent of the On-Call periods are now

committed to in advance. Chief Martin noted that since paid On-Call went into effect the average response time (i.e., time needed to leave for a call) was reduced from 10.4 minutes to 4.9 minutes because of greater preparedness. It also appears that with paid On-Call, and the availability of a new member to respond during the daytime, the percentage of the responses conducted by the Enfield F.A.S.T. squad vs. Lebanon has increased to about 60% from about 50%. It is therefore also anticipated for 2013 that there will be greater numbers of calls responded to by Enfield. The more calls responded to by the Enfield squad results in lower payments to Lebanon for their contracted mutual aid service. Soft billing for insurance and Medicare reimbursement, also instituted this year, is expected to cover most or all the added costs for the paid On-Call.

A request to make repairs to the F.A.S.T. squad building on Depot Street was made and a quote to do the work for \$12,300 was received from Bruce Monmaney Painters, LLC (not including some electrical work needed as well). This would not likely come under the purview of the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) plan because the total cost of the work does not meet the CIP's criteria as a capital expense.

4220 Fire. (2012 Budgeted, \$84,490; 2013 Request, \$110,875, up 31%). Chief David Crate answered questions about the 2012 spending to date and presented the draft 2013 spending plan.

The Chief was asked about the new transport truck that was purchased in 2012 for \$27,000 when only \$20,000 was approved by the CIP Committee, the Budget Committee, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting. The approved amount was intended to be for buying a used vehicle, as agreed to by the Fire Department during the budget discussions last year. The Chief responded that when they began looking into used vehicles it became clear that used vehicles in the \$20,000 range were already 6-7 years old with many miles on them and so it made better sense to buy a new vehicle with the warranties etc for an additional \$7000. The Board of Selectmen approved the purchase of the new vehicle. The Chief however was unable to explain where the extra \$7000 came from within the Fire Department's budget and what 2012 equipment purchase or function was not funded as a result. Steve Schneider said he would get an answer for the committee. The Chief assured the committee that it was not the intent of the Fire Department to purchase a new vehicle all along when a used vehicle was recommended. It was recommended to the Chief that in the future better planning be done with regard to pricing of requested equipment before the annual budget discussions take place.

Details were not available as to why the line item "Repairs and Service" (4220-630) has been overspent by \$4600 (\$7112 vs \$2500 budgeted) although it was suggested that this was for fire hose and pump testing, an annual expense. It was also unclear as to what "New Equipment" (line item 4220-740; 2012 budgeted \$15,000) was purchased for the \$9227 spent to date. A question was asked regarding the duties of the Fire Wards and the justification for their salaries. The Fire Wards are elected officials and are each paid \$363 yearly. Chief Crate explained that the Fire Wards function to run the Fire Department much as the Board of Selectmen functions to run the Town's business. The Fire Wards do not hold regular business meetings, but rather hold ad hoc informal discussions. No minutes are taken to document these meetings. How and why the historical decisions were made to set up the Fire Ward system in Enfield in the first place versus other options was unclear to the group. Discussion ensued that management of the Fire department under the Town Manager position, like the Ambulance Department, may be desirable. Finally, a question was asked as to the appropriateness of the same person acting as Fire Chief and Fire Ward. There appears to be no policy against this dual role. **(Post Meeting Note, /u>: A request has been made to the Chief to provide to the committee the information regarding the unanswered 2012 spending questions. Also it was requested that in future years that the Chief provide to the Town Manager and Budget Committee the draft budget request by the end of October when the rest of the departments submit their budgets for initial consideration).**

For 2013, the main drivers for the increased spending requests were increased payroll (\$36,000 vs. \$30,000 for 2012) based on projections for more calls and an increase in the "New Equipment" line item (\$28,135 vs. \$15,000) as detailed by the Chief. The bulk of this amount is for a replacement of a failed thermal imager (\$14,000), an essential piece of equipment that allows for the detection of hot spots inside of and behind building walls. (Post Meeting Note: This latter piece of equipment may meet the criteria of the CIP purview because of its cost - >\$5000 - and if it has a lifespan > 5 years).

**Public Works (DPW).** Jim Taylor (DPW Head) presented the 2013 draft spending plan.

4194 Gen'l Government Buildings (2012 Budgeted, \$150,850; 2013 Request, \$174,250, up 16%). Spending to date in this cost center is overspent by about \$8000 due to unexpected generator repairs at Whitney Hall and the Police Station and unspecified work done at the Union Street Fire Station which Steve Schneider will look into. For the 2013, the main drivers for the

increased request is paving at the Union Street Fire Station parking lot and repairs at the F.A.S.T. Squad facility as noted above. Paving the drive leading to the DPW (\$30,000) may also be proposed which would then raise the total request about 30% over 2012.

4311 Highway Administration (2012 Budgeted, \$481,123; 2013 Request \$552,543, up 15%). Spending to date in this cost center is on budget. For 2013 an increase of about \$70,000 is requested, almost all of which is for full time employee salaries. The salary costs for 2012 was artificially low because of an unusual temporary reduction in overall staffing hours (turnover, parttime/fulltime fluctuations) which translates into the considerably higher request in 2013 by comparison. The staffing salary costs requested for 2013 reflects an expected full staffing and is up 5.8% vs 2011 largely reflecting the 2% merit increases each year.

312 Highways and Streets (2012 Budgeted, \$509,200; 2013 Request \$543,700, up 6.8%). Spending for this cost center to date is generally on track to be on budget although \$18,000 more than budgeted has been spent on 'aggregate and fill' because of greater road maintenance costs during the unusually bad 2012 mud season.

4316 Street Lighting (2012 Budgeted, \$18,000; 2013 Request, \$18,000, level funded). In keeping with the last couple of years, spending so far this year on street lighting has been significantly reduced in part because of the new LED lights (about 24 total) that have been installed. The request for level funding (vs. a reduction) in 2013 is due in part to the greater costs of additional new lighting for the Shaker Bridge (also LED).

4321 Sanitation Administration (2012 Budgeted, \$79,140; 2013 Request \$85,277, up 7.8%). 2012 spending is slightly overspent so far this year by about \$2,000 largely because of needed overtime. For 2013, the increase is due largely to higher salary costs including an up to a 2% merit increase. Also, the increase in salary costs is artificially inflated in comparison to a lower 2012 salary baseline when a 'workfare' individual reduced those costs. A similar workfare scenario for 2013 cannot be expected.

4323 Solid Waste Collection (2012 Budgeted, \$190,500; 2013 Request, \$190,500, level funded). 2012 spending to date is on budget and 2013 spending request is level funded. The largest line item is the contracted trash pick-up (\$160,000). The Board of Selectmen are currently reviewing options to reduce costs for solid waste collection and disposal. They currently favor going to a semi-monthly curbside pick-up of both trash and, separately, zero-sort recycling. While this option may initially increase collection costs, the

weight reduction of trash going to the landfill would substantially reduce tipping fees which in 2012 was budgeted at \$125,000. It is projected that this option, if adopted, would start in 2013 and produce an overall significant net savings to the Town not reflected yet in this draft budget. Plainfield uses this option for trash removal and it works well there. Enfield residents would always still have the option of dropping off household trash at the transfer station.

4324 Solid Waste Disposal (2012 Budgeted, \$160,000; 2013 Request, \$157,500. down 1.6%). 2012 spending to date is on budget and the requested spending for 2013 is down slightly due to projected reduction in recycling costs at the transfer station.

**Old Business: None**

**Public Comment: None**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 AM. The next meeting is on Thursday, December 13, 2012 (6:00 PM at the DPW building). The following department's draft spending plans will be reviewed: Police Department and Regional Associations. Other future meetings include the Board of Selectmen to discuss the 2013 CIP plan (Monday, Dec.17 6:00PM @ DPW) and a regular EBC meeting (Thursday, Dec. 20, 6:00PM @ DPW).