

City Council Budget Workshop Meeting June 3, 2014

Call to Order

Councilor Giunta called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Franklin City Hall. Salute to the Flag was led by Councilor Boyd.

In Attendance

Councilor Dzujna, Councilor Giunta, Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Starkweather, Councilor Barton, Councilor Boyd, City Manager Dragon and Mayor Merrifield (arrived late).

Absent

Councilor Clarenbach, Councilor Feener and Councilor Cournoyer.

Police Department – Section 5

Chief Goldstein announced that this is 6th appearance before the Mayor and Council concerning the Police Department Budget. He presented two grafts showing the activities of the department and the logged calls to the department are over 22,000. Arrests were down slightly and Chief Goldstein stated that is primarily because they are seeing a lot more felonies. He stated one thing is troubling to everyone is motor vehicle accidents has risen. He further commented that much of their equipment has reached its end of life stage. Some highlights for 2013 were four new officers were hired, however, one resigned stating the department works too much; currently there is one recruit in the NH Policy Academy and they are in the process of hiring a certified officer with 9 years' experience. The department now has a K9 Unit and the cruiser has been outfitted. The patch on the cruiser was designed specifically for Franklin. They now have a fully trained undercover police officer with the Attorney General's Drug Task. In 2013 24,925 calls were fielded for service and including the 5 communities the department also dispatches for the total calls were 42,477 and there were over 100,000 telephone calls that were answered this past year. There were 2,341 directed patrols; 141 juvenile complaints; 154

domestic disturbances; 30 fights in progress and 15 where shots were fired.

Chief Goldstein thanked the Council for the privilege of servicing as Franklin's Police Chief and for the honor of commanding the best police department in the State of New Hampshire.

Page 11 – Public Safety/Administration

There is still an unfunded part-time secretary position in the department and hopefully sometime in the future we will be able to fund that position. Ammunition costs continue to rise and the drop shift dates are now out to 8 to 12 months so you can order today and won't expect to see the ammunition for about a year.

Page 12 – Police Building

Chief Goldstein advised they are looking to replace some of the flooring.

Page 13 – Police Investigation/Prosecution

Councilor Starkweather inquired Under Professional Services, film purchased went up 200%, and he asked are we still with film or are we going digital? Chief Goldstein responded they are primarily digital but they still use some film for crime scenes. The issues have to do with the fact that digital is still coming into its own and certain courts we know that digital can be altered and there are still policies and procedures being worked out so that won't happen and we know that it takes a lot more work to alter film.

Page 14- Patrol

Chief Goldstein advised their radio equipment is coming close to its end of life. What we have is consider ancient even though it is only about 14 years old, and in 2018 Motorola will stop supporting anything to do with the department's radio equipment. So we must have functioning radio equipment by that time. In the Dispatch Center there are three consoles

and will be working on replacing two which will be about \$32,000 for the furniture that is required in order to do the job correctly. The bay station itself, the radio equipment is another \$28,000. The primary and backup on Pleasant Street is another \$36,000 which includes the Police Department receiver (\$9,000) and the Fire Department also has a receiver up there. On Flaghole Road there is another receiver that is another \$9,000. Councilor Desrochers commented you are looking at about \$50,000 for radio equipment in less than three years and he asked where would that money come from. Chief Goldstein stated he is working on a grant and it is one of the most complex and in depth grants and it takes about a year to complete the grant and submit it. So far this is the only grant that has been found that addresses radio equipment. Councilor Desrochers asked how much the grant pays for and Chief Goldstein commented it paid for the entire Merrimack County which was over \$300,000. Councilor Dzujna asked if the equipment could be purchased piece meal and would it work with the other equipment and Chief Goldstein responded he believes that it can. Councilor Starkweather asked if we have computers in the cruisers and Chief Goldstein advised they use to and then they get beat up and then to replace them, it has not been worth it.

Planning & Zoning – Section 5/Page 8

Director Dick Lewis advised that a large portion of their budget is taken up with wages, social security, etc. He commented the staff development line did go up this and about \$400 of that is going to pay for in-house training for the new tax maps and the on-line mapping services that will be provided and coordinating all of that with the Assessing Department and the Avitar Program. Other Contractual Services for the past 3 years, this line has largely been dedicated to the mapping work and this project that has been coordinated with Municipal Servicers will be wrapped up by the end of June. Membership Dues is primarily for the Lakes Region Planning Commission; Postage, the amount that is spent largely depends on the number of applications that are received. Director Lewis also commented there is a step increase for his Assistant and she will be crossed trained in the Avitar Program and there will be assistance provided to the Assessing Department. Assistant Angie Carey has also provided a lot of assistance to

many departments in the City on computer issues and she is doing an excellent job in keeping the City website up-to-date and working with all the various departments and putting all their information on there and making sure it is formatted properly.

Councilor Giunta asked for the \$6,100 we pay Lakes Region Planning Commission what do we get and in your opinion, is it worth it? Director Lewis stated that there were times in 10 years with the City when he has thought maybe these monies could go somewhere else. Overall, we use them in more ways than we realize. They have generated for the City in various points in time maps that have been used by Planning and Zoning and MSD. They assist the City with the Household Hazardous Waste Collection and he stated some good cooperative bridges have been established through the Brownsfield monies that the City received and was utilized and ultimately resulted in the EPA Grant for the South Main Street Project. One of the properties that have been taken for tax deeding this year (the old Foundry) we have submitted a nomination form that for some Brownsfield assessment money. Director Lewis also stated with the kind of mapping the City is going to have the City should be able to coordinate with Lakes Region to get different kinds of maps that can be used by different departments. He stated that it is important to stay active on a regional level.

Franklin Fire Department – Section 5

Chief LaChapelle stated this past year 2013 has been a real challenge; however, when you look at the numbers out of the 35 communities in the Lakes Region Franklin is the second busiest Fire Department, number one is Laconia with over 3,5000 calls for service. The Franklin Fire Department responded to 1,640 which are emergency incidents. Most of those would be with lights and siren. Chief LaChapelle quoted the Fire Department's Mission State: "Preserve life and property while ensuring our members safety and providing the highest level of service to our customers."

Chief LaChapelle stated they are in constant review of their mission. Because they are spread very thin and continuously spread thin as the year move on. Preservation and quality of the personnel is always been a top priority for the Franklin Fire Department. Solid relationships with their outside partners and internal partners has been the catalyst of what keeps them moving, what keeps them afloat.

Chief LaChapelle stated they are still running 40 strong, 17 full time with 23 on-call. Over 4,000 hours of training last year on and off duty. There was over \$65,000 in grant funds that provided by the Federal Government for training and Chief stated that has greatly increased their capabilities on special rescue.

The department has 37 certified firefighters, 4 paramedics, 15 advanced EMTs and 2 basic EMTs. Chief LaChapelle advised the ambulance alone responded to 807 EMS transports last year, 341 non-transports, 27 cardiac arrests and 5 of those 27 had a return of spontaneous cardiac output in their care; 5 were transported without change, 17 were dead on arrival after EMS efforts were terminated which is well above the national average as far as what they call the save rate; 15 status one patients which is someone that is on the verge of no pulse or not breathing; 101 status two patients that if we walked away in the next 10 minutes they most likely would die; 549 advanced life support transports and 250 basic life supports.

Chief LaChapelle advised that for the past 6 months, five out of 14 full-time personnel have been out for at least 4 months up to 6 months. He stated when he came back from his surgery he and the Deputy sat down and looked at what type of service was provided during that time. The firefighters live within 5 ½ miles of the Fire Station, they came in off-duty, they came in a midnight, they came out all hours of the day when they were off-duty to make sure they provided the same service that has always been provided and there was no lapse in service during that entire 6 months.

Section 5, Page 16 – Public Safety/Fire Administration

State Unemployment Insurance is down 62% and there is an 80% increase in Professional Services. Chief stated they have made great improvements in technology wherein all the computers at the station are linked to one hub and they all talk on the same program. By virtue of grants the department is moving to an iPad platform and iPhone platform. Also in the vehicle is an EMS reporting system so all the work can be done on the iPad and bring it back to the station. Memberships and Dues are down 20%, the disposal office supplies it is being noticed with our technology the office supplies are going down.

Section 5, Page 17 – Fire Station

The Fire Station is 44 years old and there are blocks crumbling on the outside of the building and they will continue to make improvements on the building to preserve the Fire Station. Other Contracted Services has an increase of 8% but in other lines they were able to make that up. Councilor Boyd inquired as to the number of payment that have been made on the ambulance and Chief advised they are on their third payment. Councilor Boyd asked how much was it and Chief advised \$240,000 and 7 payments. They do most of the repairs and all the painting of the building on their own. Councilor Starkweather asked how the testing came out on the sprinkler system. Chief LaChapelle came out great, much better than they had expected.

Section 5, Page 18 – Fire Suppression

The biggest increase is on the overtime for backfill, shift and career personnel.

Section 5, Page 19 – Fire Suppression cont.

Chief LaChapelle advised the department has been able to put themselves in a very good situation concerning protective clothing for the last 3 years and maintaining that clothing. It allows each member to have two sets of

gear. Councilor Starkweather asked what the cost of a set of protective clothing is. The Chief advised pants and cost are \$2,240; boots about \$300; helmet is \$200; gloves are \$79 and most of the personal gear (ropes, knives, wire cutters) they purchase on their own. Councilor Starkweather inquired as to what the CBA is now. Chief responded \$6,650 and the department has 26 and they will have to be replaced by 2017. The air packets that they wear by 2017 they all need to be replaced. They currently have a grant that has been submitted to the Feds and the department is hopeful, they did score very high. The Chief stated that in other communities who are also applying for the grant their air packs already need to be replaced so that is competition for the funds even though Franklin scored very high. Councilor Desrochers commented that the department has a couple of aging engines (30 years old); instead of replacing an entire vehicle could new tanks and pumps in an existing vehicle. Chief LaChapelle responded the two vehicles are a 1988 Mack and 1985 Mack, the 1985 is in very good condition, however, very tired, the pump was rebuilt last year for \$5,000. NFPA has a standard that a fire truck has a shelf life of 20 years and Franklin is at 30 years with two of them. They have been in the CIP for replacement for 9 years. Councilor Starkweather commented that Engine 4, the newest engine was made by a company that has since gone bankrupt and is out of business for the third time since the truck was ordered. The concern is if anything ever happen to the cabin chassis of that engine and also the ladder truck you cannot get parts for them.

Section 5, Page 22 – EMS Rescue/Ambulance Expenditures Offset by Revenue

Chief LaChapelle stated the revenues have increased. Staff Development is down 33% and Chief LaChapelle commented that the City's relationship with LRGHealthcare is very solid. Chief stated Community EMS is coming and it could increase the business with the ambulance three-fold. He further stated Community EMS what it means is EMS goes out into the field and providing EMS care in the home and leaving so there is no transport of the patient. What it does mean is the fact that there should be some

decrease in costs for supplies, wear and tear on the vehicles but there will be higher demands on the personnel. Fuel has gone down as the City has a single source supplier and has been able to get a cheaper rate by signing an annual RFP with Winnisquam, and the City has a new fuel system coming. Machines and Equipment has increased due to the last payment of the defibrillators (\$38,000).

Section 5, Page 23 – Emergency Management

Chief LaChapelle stated the time and energy that is put into emergency management is about 50% of his job. They have worked with the school and assisted in improving the school's safety.

Councilor Starkweather requested the Chief offer information on the Wet Team. Chief LaChapelle stated they are making very good progress. This team started as a regional rescue team with Tilton/Northfield Fire Department and Sanbornton and Belmont. The participation at the State level has increased and now the State is actually using the Franklin program as a State-wide awareness program for water rescue. Franklin provided training to 85 firefighters for the City of Concord and we are moving toward a regional team of the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid and have one water rescue team that can respond State-wide.

Chief LaChapelle advised they are very close on working a strong relationship on paper (MOU) with the Town of Andover. We have agreed that their services that they draw from Franklin there is no mutual feeling about it anymore. They draw quite frequently and upward of 30 times a year, they only do 100 runs a year. What has been agreed to on the MOU is they will pay for each incident that they use Franklin. If Franklin were to do all 100 incidences in Andover it would be about \$30,000 per year. There is no intention on the Town of Andover or Franklin to run all 100 calls. Councilor Desrochers asked how much of Andover is Franklin going to cover. Chief responded that it is a fair statement that East Andover is what Franklin will cover because we have shown some concern about covering their entire community.

Councilor Giunta commented that he would like a little further explanation because to him it seems there are so many communities taking advantage of a situation to a point where Franklin is subsidizing them and frankly we cannot subsidize anybody. With some of the numbers that have been mentioned here today as to what will be coming down the pike with radios and fire engines. Chief LaChapelle responded that Councilor Giunta is right on the mark and when we say we are ahead of the curve this MOU that will be brought forward is something that is not out there at this point.

Section 5, Page 20 – Code Enforcement

Councilor Desrochers inquired about the \$89,000 in Wages for the Code Enforcement Captain and a part time officer and he asked how much of the \$89,000 is for the full-time Code Enforcement Officer. Director Milner responded the full-time position would be approximately \$61,500, the part-time is \$27,500. Councilor Desrochers stated there are some major issues in Franklin and the part-time code enforcement officer does not have enough hours and roughly it would cost the City \$14,000 more for ten hours a week because something needs to be done. He stated he filled out forms just today for seven code violations on one street. Councilor Desrochers stated he will not support any kind of project for Central Street because no matter how nice you make downtown just drive down a side street and see the debris, etc. He also stated in addition to giving the part-time code enforcement officer additional hours the City's codes need to be tightened up, put some big teeth in them. Councilor Starkweather stated he agrees 110% with Councilor Desrochers; we have to muster up the political will to get the property maintenance codes so it has some teeth in it. You have people that have 12 unregistered cars in their yard and the ordinance states you are allowed one unregistered, uninspected vehicle, code enforcement goes down and the guy says I'm a collector. The State Planning Code states if you have parts of two or more vehicles it is classified as a junk yard. We have abandoned mobile homes with trees growing through them and been that way for years. Someone changes the use of their property, it goes from a so-called utility company for a junk yard with some vehicles coming and going each day, you can barely see the building from three sides and nothing happens. People say why should I

City Council Budget Workshop Meeting

June 3, 2014

Page 10

move to Franklin, it's a dump. You look at some of this property somebody should drop the hammer on them. Manager Dragon commented \$14,000 isn't going to fix it, it won't even make a dent in the problem; it isn't enough to increase to a full-time position unless it is split up some different way. The problem is we have a lot of issues whether it is code enforcement, whether it's drugs, whether it's domestic violence, whether it's the fire department and replacing equipment, we have a lot of issues. Every year we look at all those issues and we try to prioritize with the funds that we have available. This past year we have been focusing on the downtown enhancement of codes and the minutes a letter was sent out concerning that issue Manager Dragon got slammed on it. She advised a junk yard issue has to go to Court. One case could take thousands of dollars and a year or more before you come to a resolution if you go to Superior Court. Mayor Merrifield asked what can the City do without going to Court. Manager Dragon commented we have faith in our ordinances, the problem has been there has been a level expectation in this community and that bar has been set very low and we are trying to raise the bar but we are getting a lot of kickback as we go which is why we had the Council adopt a resolution about enhanced code enforcement because we want the political support. What we are doing right now is tomorrow Manager Dragon has a meeting with Chief LaChapelle, Chief Goldstein, the Prosecutor, the Code Enforcement Officer and Attorney Fitzgerald because we are trying to get a process in place and simplified these things will go to the Prosecutor and he will handle it which will cost a lot less. There is a need to iron out some things with the Prosecutor and Code Enforcement to make sure they are working in conjunction with one another. Mayor Merrifield asked if the two Code Enforcement Officers fine these people as there are limits to the City's enforcement capabilities without going to court. Manager Dragon responded many of things we get solved is by written letter, it is only the people that don't pay any attention are the ones that take the most time. Chief LaChapelle advised that when there is a complaint, the person complaining should fill out a form and that is the first documentation that there is a problem. Code Enforcement goes out into the field and they always look for compliance first, it is very often that generally speaking five out of ten times it is a neighborhood dispute. Manager Dragon stated we are requesting that people fill out the complaint/request for service form

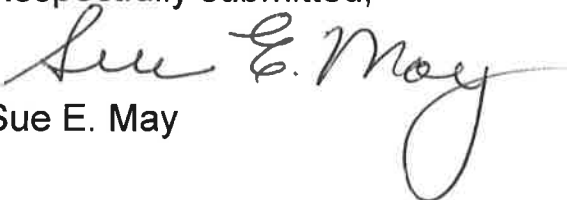
which gives us starting point and this provides a means to track it. Chief LaChapelle commented that we do need to remember that Code Enforcement also does fire inspections, health inspections, plumbing inspections, occupancy inspections; he is the building official and the fire inspector, some communities have three people doing what 1 ½ people do here in Franklin. Councilor Desrochers asked Chief LaChapelle if 10 hours a week make a difference and why do we require a written complaint. If a Code Enforcement Officer drives by and sees this stuff. Chief LaChapelle stated they do have a regular route that they travel and generally speaking the routes are the ones that are the ones most dumped upon. Manager Dragon stated that one of the reasons we use the complaint form is because she stated she gets slammed with you are paying attention to this property but you are not paying attention to this one. Chief LaChapelle stated the one that is complaining needs to make the complaint and that brings success in the Court. Councilor Desrochers asked again would the 10 hours a week make a difference. Chief LaChapelle stated his answer would yes and no. Any extra hours is potentially more that you can do, however, if you want to see immediate results, 10 hours then is probably not enough. Manager Dragon commented there is a couple of problems because he is retired the hours are limited that he can work but perhaps he were to do extra once in while that might work.

Section 5, Page 43 – Assessing

Manager Dragon advised Assessing will stay the same. The bottom line they are down 1%.

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Barton, seconded by Councilor Starkweather; all in favor, meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sue E. May