

**CITY COUNCIL BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETING  
JUNE 5, 2012**

**Call to Order**

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

**In Attendance**

Councilor Clarenbach, Councilor Boyd, Councilor Trudel, Councilor Feener, Councilor Desrochers, Councilor Cournoyer, Councilor Dzujna, Mayor Merrifield and City Manager Dragon.

**Absent**

Councilor Sharon and Councilor Starkweather

**Drug Task Force – Page 32 of 43**

Mrs. Traci Flower, Director stated this is a five year grant and we are coming up at the end of the second year of the grant and the third year begins at the end of September. The grant is \$125,000 per year of Federal funds and a match is required in kind which so far has been going very well. Mayor Merrifield stated he has a question about a line of revenue associated with the grant and he stated if he remembers right the answer was that it was a presentation of the in kind and he stated he does not get that. Director Milner explained on the in kind piece we are allowed to consider volunteer services in kind, we have to show on the expenditure side an in kind expenditure (dollars expended) for the Federal Grants. Since these were donated hours, there is revenue for those, she stated it does not affect the budget, the rental piece is handled the same way.

**Public Safety/Fire – Page 16 of 43**

Chief LaChapelle stated professional development is down 17%, last year \$1,200 was budgeted and only \$900 expended so this year it is shown at \$1,000 with the

hope that he and Deputy Goodearl will make it down to the National Fire Academy for some national emergency management training programs. The medical line on the default budget it was \$12,500 but that has been decreased down to \$9,080 (27% down). The department made a change in their provider and is now with LRG Healthcare who came in much lower than the previous provider, \$400 compared to \$700 and the Chief commented that the physical is of much better quality and they are done in Franklin. Machines/Equipment is up 20% and Chief LaChapelle stated they have a new copier/lease program. He advised they are able to scan documents with this copier and have noticed that paper usage is way down with the use of scanning documents. Uniforms are up 36% and explained they budgeted knowing that Chief Smith was retiring with himself being promoted and a new Deputy.

### **Fire Station – Page 17 of 43**

Chief LaChapelle stated they have seen with the end of this fiscal budget that a great deal has been saved by changing out that Fire Station boiler in energy cost and heat, it is down 13%. A large increase is in Building Maintenance for the Fire Station roof of \$61,000 and he stated he wants to come to the Council with a discussion on this roof in the near future. Councilor Desrochers commented that he wished there were funds to put a pitch roof on the building but he realizes there just isn't the money for that. Chief LaChapelle commented the \$61,000 was a quote last year for a new membrane over the entire roof. Councilor Trudel inquired if Brian Barry has looked at the roof and Chief Lachapelle advised that Brian has looked at the roof at least five times and has taken measurements and he is working hard to put a pitched roof on the Fire Station because he does not want to have to deal with situations with a flat roof again. One estimate for a pitched roof was \$300,000 but the Chief commented it is felt that it could be done for less.

Councilor Desrochers stated what we need is some solid numbers on the cost for a flat roof and a pitched roof.

**Fire Suppression – Page 18 of 43 and 19 of 43**

Protective clothing is down 14% and Chief LaChapelle stated he feels \$12,000 is sufficient. Capital equipment is down because 1,600 feet of hose that was under warranty that had gone bad and was replaced at no charge. There are still some hoses to be replaced and old appliances.

**Code Enforcement/Health/Fire Prevention – Page 20 of 43**

Miscellaneous supplies are down 40%.

**Fire Alarms Dispatch – Page 21 of 43**

Lakes Region Dispatch has had a change of administration and were able to bring the fees down and this is the second time for a decrease in fees. Fuel for the bucket truck is down 50% because the truck is shared with MSD for the fuel and repair costs.

**Public Safety-Ambulance EMS Rescue-Ambulance Expenditures offset by Revenue – Page 22 of 43**

Fuel/Oil is up 7% which is fuel for the ambulances, Rescue 1, and the boat due to the rise in the cost of fuel/oil. Councilor Clarenbach questioned the fact that the expenditure for this year shows only 3,687 and Director Milner responded they have had some problems getting signatures on the fuel reports so they could be entered into the system so the figure shown is actually only through December, 2011.

Councilor Desrochers inquired why Worker's Comp has increased quite a bit in the different departments, have we had a lot of claims? Director Milner advised there was a 9% increase from the carrier and the City's experience rate went from .79% which is excellent to .86% which is still very good and it is also based on wages so the increases pushed it up.

**Public Safety – Emergency Management – Page 23 of 43**

Chief LaChapelle advised an adjustment has been made on the Emergency Management and requested Director Milner comment. Director Milner advised the emergency management stipend for the emergency manager is \$2,000/year and what was done in the past was have the Medicare and the NH Retirement system employer expenses come out of the Administration Budget even though the \$2,000 and to make it less complicated these pieces of Medicare and the Retirement away from the Adm. Budget and into the Emergency Management where the stipend is budgeted.

Chief LaChapelle advised they received a call from NH 911 and Fairpoint and there was a concern that the phone line had been removed where the City is required to have one hard phone line through Fairpoint and the bill is paid to Fairpoint and right now the entire City phone system is on Bayring. That phone had to be installed at the Police Department two months ago which will bring about an increase in the phone bill. There are two Fairpoint phones that the City pays for, one being the pay phone in City Hall and now the emergency management one.

Chief LaChapelle commented on Machines and Equipment on Page 22 stated the department is in very good shape with the rescue equipment. The water rescue resources have been increased to the point they are outfitting 10 of their rescuers and have been able to generate some revenue from the rescues that have been performed to pay for the equipment instead of paying for it by taxation. So the line has been decreased by 34%.

Concerning revenues Councilor Clarenbach asked when the last time an ambulance increase was done for rates. Chief Lachapelle responded two years ago. He further asked if Medicare has allowed an increase and Chief LaChapelle responded he would get that information.

Director Milner stated on the ambulance billings the former auditor for the City, Robbin Grill, and she checked those rates to make sure the City was billing above

the Medicare rate and Director Milner stated she knows the City was billing above the Medicare rate right through the last fiscal year.

Chief LaChapelle advised the New Hampshire Fire Academy received a 4.5 million dollar grant for rescue training and the Franklin Firefighters have jumped on that opportunity and most are taking training. All of the labor is paid for, the cost of the training is paid for, and the backfill is also paid for.

Chief LaChapelle advised they have billed out quite a few arson fires in the last month and he is hoping that in conjunction with the school system, this can be slowed down.

### **Police Department**

Chief Goldstein and Lt. Clough were both in attendance. Chief Goldstein advised this is his third budget and he offered the following comments. He stated he has been a police officer for 33 years and the Franklin Police Department without a doubt is the best police department in the State today. He stated what the department does with what they have is incredible.

Chief Goldstein presented a graph concerning police activities, the first one being log in entries which the department in 2011 had 44,564. And those calls are usually a sergeant and two patrol officers on the street. Arrests and offenses have dropped where as motor vehicle collisions have increased. In arrests there have been an incredible number of felony cases and they are quite high now. With the increase in motor vehicle collisions the traffic enforcement suffers. He also commented that Franklin has one of the highest volumes of domestic violence in the State per capita.

### **Public Safety-Police – Page 11 of 43**

No questions

**Police Building – Page 12 of 43**

Chief Goldstein advised they do have a HVAC system that is troublesome and at some point will probably fail.

**Police Investigation/Prosecution – Page 13 Of 43**

Chief Goldstein advised law enforcement is one of the very few in any municipality that if the job is done correctly more overtime is generated. That usually happens with arrest, investigations that keep an officer beyond their regular work day plus court time. What happens the courts will schedule the police and go to court at 8:15 am, the judge comes in at 9:15 am and then if lucky the case will go at 1:30 pm. There is a 3 hour minimum. The professional development line is for the prosecutor so he can continue his education to remain a lawyer and also bar dues.

**Patrol – Page 14 of 43**

Chief Goldstein stated they tried to level fund as much as they could and there are some decreases. Councilor Clarenbach inquired the two vacancies in Patrol, and he asked if that is a temporary thing or has it been a long standing issue. Chief Goldstein commented it has been long standing but he would like to think of it as temporary. He advised they just hired a new Patrol Officer. He advised that they now have a full staff in Dispatch; however, the Dispatch supervisor is out on sick leave for about 2 months so one of our Patrol Officers who is certified in Dispatch is now spending a lot of time in Dispatch.

**Patrol continued – Page 15 of 43**

Fuel is increased as the vehicles run 24-7. Most of the fleet is running on 80,000 to 100,000 miles. The supply line increase is for chairs for Dispatch. The chairs they are currently sitting in for 8 hours or more were purchased from Staples and they want to purchase 2 chairs although 3 are actually needed. They are

expensive but badly needed and they have a 6 year warranty. Councilor Cournoyer stated if you break the cost down over the 6 year warranty it's not that bad and comfort/seating is important with the kind of stress the dispatchers deal with.

Councilor Clarenbach commented on the vehicles that there is a 3-year lease and now going for a 4-year lease, what is the difference in finance cost between a 3-year and a 4-year lease. The financing for 2 units was \$13,000; \$2,000 more in finance cost for a 4-year lease. Manager Dragon commented that if this budget is approved, they will look into a possible better deal if one is out there.

### **Other Business**

Manager Dragon commented the next meeting we have is with the school wherein they will present their budget. She stated at the end of the budget meetings, if the Council would like to begin filling in the columns and making decisions.

Manager Dragon advised concerning the Animal Shelter, she has received two additional proposals, one from Concord/Merrimack, \$9,000 and one from the Birch Hill Kennels, \$13,000 and the one from Meredith is \$15,000 and the basically all do the same thing. She stated she also has had a follow-up meeting with the animal shelter and they have inquired if the recommendation could change if they only ask for \$20,000 instead of \$30,000. She also commented that the Council agreed to pay their electric bills and they never submitted them. Manager Dragon requested that the Council make a decision on the animal shelter the night of the outside agencies. Mayor Merrifield commented he would imagine that on the 19<sup>th</sup> when the outside agencies present there will be a lot of people coming for the animal shelter will public commentary be allowed. Councilor Clarenbach commented that volunteers that give their time in Franklin might feel they are not valued by the City if not allowed to speak, perhaps have a 20 minute time limit with 3 minutes allowed to each one.

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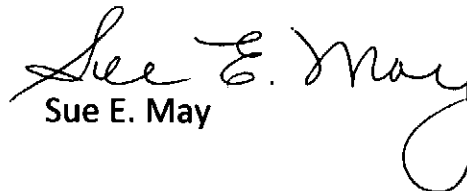
Councilor Desrochers stated he agrees with Councilor Clarenbach in letting them have their say but maybe limit it to 10 speakers and they must be a Franklin resident.

Manager Dragon commented she would like to let the animal shelter know that a vote will be taken that night of the 19<sup>th</sup> on this issue. Councilor Clarenbach stated he would like to have the proposal from Northfield prior to the 19<sup>th</sup>. Manager Dragon stated she will provide them with copies of all three proposals.

Councilor Feener suggested that Franklin residents be allowed to speak and that 15 minutes be allowed for comments.

***Motion to adjourn make by Councilor Feener, seconded by Councilor Desrochers.  
All in favor, meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

  
Sue E. May