

Approved 10/10/2013

I. CALL TO ORDER at 5:30 pm in the main floor of the Fremont Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Brett Hunter, Gene Cordes, and Leon Holmes Sr; Town Administrator Heidi Carlson; and Police Chief Jon Twiss. All rose for the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

This meeting was moved from the regularly posted Thursday evening October 3, 2013 due to lack of a quorum. The meeting time and date were updated and reposted on Monday September 30, 2013.

III. LIAISON REPORTS - None

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Members had not been able to review the minutes of 26 September 2013. Hunter made a motion to table acceptance until the next meeting. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

V. SCHEDULED AGENDA ITEMS

At 5:30 pm Selectmen met with Police Chief Jon Twiss to review the 2014 Police Department and ACO budget proposals.

Selectmen reviewed the ACO budget. The ACO Department request is \$11,368 and is essentially the same as 2013. There was some discussion about line items to be spent through the balance of the current year. A trailer hitch will be purchased for the ACO truck as the Police Department Ford Expedition has been taken out of service due to rust and other service issues. With some further discussion, motion was made by Holmes Sr to recommend \$11,368 for Animal Control. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Carlson provided some updates on current expenses for the Police Department. Twiss then began to review the line items in the budget, particularly highlighting the ones with changes.

Twiss focused on the investigations line item and explained to the Board a proposal to hire an Investigative Supervisor (Lieutenant) with a newly drafted job description, in place of the former Deputy Chief position. He outlined the need for a seasoned investigator for a wide variety of cases that the Department has and is dealing with, and that additional training would be a benefit to other officers who work here. The Town's most recent investigator left for full-time employment elsewhere and there is not another officer to take his place in that role. Holmes Sr said he had been told by a resident recently that Chief Twiss had done a thorough and detailed review in his processing of a recent scene.

Twiss said there is a need, even in a small department for someone to concentrate on investigations who has some experience and is not sharing the job at the same time they may be on patrol. There are sensitive investigations going on and they require specific attention and skills.

Twiss mentioned outstanding sexual assault cases, where it is not convenient for the officer in a uniform who is also answering calls, to be interviewing people at the same time. He said that they will get better results over time with an experienced individual in this role. Due to Reese Bassett's retirement and subsequent personnel changes, there has not been a dedicated individual in this role. There are matters related to investigations that need specific attention.

Another area Twiss felt the Department needed to focus on was the rate of pay for clerical help. The Administrative Assistant is underpaid compared to similar agencies in the area, and he has included a pay increase request of 5% to get to \$13.68 per hour. It was discussed that this topic had been highlighted by Chief Janvrin for many years, and by Interim Chief Wood last year as well.

There was discussion about the pay matrix for uniformed officers, and a copy of the matrix will be included with the budget proposal when it is provided to the Budget Committee. It was explained for the benefit of Selectmen Cordes and Holmes Sr who were not on the Board when it was adopted, that the matrix is considered as a contract obligation by the Town and is included in the default budget.

Many office expense lines are the same as prior years, using similar amounts from year to year. The equipment line also covers monthly rental of the copy machine and computer tech support.

Twiss outlined an approximate \$5,900 upgrade cost for the IMC systems that would provide far greater efficiency for the officers and add backup to a centralized system at Rockingham County. This upgrade is a one time increase in cost and saves \$2,000 annually in the maintenance costs for the IMC system (thus will pay for itself in three years and be more efficient for officers in the time entering their reports and call information). The Board would like to consider this upgrade with remaining funds from the 2013 budget. Carlson and Twiss will work on the forecast for expenses through the end of the 2013 budget year.

Discussion then moved to cruiser replacement. Twiss is proposing a warrant article for two replacement vehicles, including trade in of four vehicles (one older cruiser, the Ford Expedition, and the former DARE car). The Ford Expedition has been taken off the road due to rust problems that have made it less roadworthy. The maintenance lines for the Expedition and the Honda Civic DARE car have been removed from the budget because they are proposed to be traded in. He further explained the purpose to purchasing the Ford Interceptor Sedan Police Package. These vehicles are a V6 engine, all wheel drive, and run more efficiently than the current cruisers.

Twiss expressed concern about the current condition of the aging fleet and the increasing maintenance costs. Selectmen discussed the possibility of having enough money this year to purchase one car within the current budget, given that the investigator position has not been filled most of the year, and other items have been delayed in being completed due to the interim chief position at less hours per year than previously budgeted.

There was continued discussion about training, needs and the different types of training that are required and what the standards are.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. DRA announced today that they are not setting tax rates until November 7, 2013 (see NH DRA Technical Information Release 2013-008) based on statutory changes that the NH DOE has not properly prepared for in a timely fashion. The Town will therefore be forced to borrow money in anticipation of taxes, and tax bills will be delayed due to the rate setting process delays. The Treasurer has been asked to contact the Bank and begin the borrowing application process. Meetings are pending yet this week to see if DRA can move the process along quicker.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. The Board reviewed the accounts payable manifest \$589,030.29 for current week dated 04 October 2013. Motion was made by Holmes Sr and seconded by Cordes to approve the manifest. The vote was approved 3-0.
2. Selectmen reviewed bills and invoices for payment.
3. Selectmen reviewed the folder of incoming correspondence.
4. Budgets were reviewed as follows:

4151 Financial Administration Other Department Request \$21,060
This budget consists of the Treasurer's requested budget of \$7,810; which is \$1,000 more than the current year. The Treasurer is requesting a \$600 increase in her salary; and a \$300 increase in the Deputy stipend. The Board reviewed the Treasurer's rationale, and Carlson further explained the excess work being done by the Selectmen's Office that the Treasurer formerly did. The Treasurer currently spends approximately two hours per week at the office on Thursday afternoons. She is available on call if other things come up during the week that needs attention.

Additionally this budget includes the annual audit cost. The Town will be in year three of a three year contract with Plodzick and Sanderson for the 2013 audit (in 2014). The cost is \$10,500. In 2013 this line is well overspent due to the Tax Collector resigning in February 2013; as well as additional time spent reconciling those records.

It includes the Trustee of Trust Funds Stipends and expenses (\$700 total); and Budget Committee expenses (\$2,050 total).

Motion was made by Cordes to recommend \$6,810 for the Treasurer's portion of this budget, reducing it to the 2013 level. Holmes Sr seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Motion was made by Cordes to recommend \$700 for the Trustee of Trust Funds portion of this budget. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Motion was made by Cordes to recommend \$12,550 for the audit and Budget committee portion of the budget. Hunter seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

4445 Direct Assistance Department Request \$17,000
Selectmen reviewed the budget information to date, and the August meeting with Welfare Coordinator Herb Tardiff was discussed. Motion was made by Hunter to recommend \$14,850; with the \$2,000 stipend and \$12,850 in general assistance. The Board understands the Town's obligation in this regard. The motion was seconded by Cordes and voted unanimously in favor. There was discussion about the lien process when assistance is granted.

Twiss left the meeting at approximately 7:10 pm.

VIII. NON-PUBLIC SESSION NH RSA 91-A

The next regular Board meeting will be a work session, to be held on Thursday October 10, 2013 at 6:00 pm.

IX. ADJOURNMENT – by 7:00 pm due to Budget Committee meeting scheduled.

Approved 10/10/2013

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm by Hunter, who needed to get down to the Planning Board meeting. Cordes seconded and the vote was unanimously approved 3-0.

Cordes and Carlson were leaving to attend the Budget Committee meeting when Charles Kimball came in to the room to say that the Budget Committee did not have quorum because two members were missing, and that Cordes would only make the fourth member this evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson
Town Administrator