

FREMONT BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Fremont Town Hall, Fremont, NH 03044
September 19, 2018
7PM

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mary Anderson called the September 19, 2018 Budget Committee meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 PM at the Fremont Town Hall. Present were: Mary Anderson, Gene Cordes, Mary Jo Holmes, Pat Martel, Joe Miccile, Jonathan Starr (arriving at 7:05 PM), Josh Yokela and Brittany Thompson. Also present were Heidi Carlson and Susan Perry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Gene Cordes made a motion to approve the minutes as amended of September 12, 2018. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 6:0:1 (abstention from M.J. Holmes; J. Starr was not yet present).

APPOINTMENT: 4210 POLICE DEPARTMENT (POLICE CHIEF JON TWISS)

Chief Twiss reviewed the requested Police Department budget. Discussion included:

1. Informational packet including process and cost of putting a new police officer on the street (training, testing, background investigation, equipping, retention, etc. – this takes about 9 months); longevity policy adopted 12/7/2017; Comparison done by the Greenland Police Chief of 2017 pay plans from other departments (showing that Fremont's pay rate is below the State and Rockingham County Dept. averages). It was noted that benefits should be considered; Chief Twiss mentioned that benefits are fairly similar among different departments. The packet also included solutions that include shift differentials, step increases, and a shortening of the pay matrix from 10 years from lowest to top step to 5 years, at which time longevity benefits will kick in.
2. Historical retention issues of officers in Fremont, often due to low salary, issues with NH retirement, and a national decrease in people willing to be police officers.
3. After losing 2 officers this spring, two people (out of 16 who showed up for the initial written exam) were sent to academy and will replace the two vacancies.
4. Need for 24-hour coverage
5. New matrix was reviewed
6. Incentives were discussed e.g. physical agility, longevity, shift differential (this is included in the budget)
7. There was discussion about trying to get help from the Hampton Beach officers but they are part-time and use up their part-time hours over the summer (by statute, part-time officers may not work over 1300 hours/year).
8. The Selectmen and Police Department agreed with: \$2.50/hour raise across the board for uniformed officers and shift differentials – this is the majority of the budget request increase of \$45,799.
9. Surplus could be in benefits (2-3 months' worth due to two officers leaving)
10. There was review of the budget lines and related rationale.
11. Ms. Carlson will update and email the 2019 Additional Budget Detail – Full-time Officer Proposal page (Cost per officer wage rate paid should read \$22.77)
12. Cost of living would be above the 2% yearly matrix increase in the effort of being more aligned to average pay scales; upon a year-end good review, officers will move up a Step.
13. Of note: wages are 13 weeks at 2018 rate, then 2% raise if approved.

- 14. Cost to outfit an officer is about \$3,800
- 15. 2019 Warrant Article Proposal for Full-time Officer: the Chief noted that, as mentioned last year, service calls are more serious in nature each year (related to the opioid crisis/overdoses, domestic violence, etc.) He feels Fremont is understaffed and is asking for another full-time officer. FBI police employment statistics for towns of less than 10,000 populations have an average of 2.3 full time officers per 1,000 population, which equals 9.9 full-time officers; North East regional average is 1.9 FT officers per 1000 (12.5). Fremont has 5 full-time and 5 part-time officers for a ratio of 1.2 full time officer per 1,000 population. Chief Twiss distributed a document with crime statistics and staffing.
- 16. An extra full-time officer would help Ellis School with the resource officer service. Ms. Anderson noted that school resource officers help stop problems before they start. It was noted that a school resource officer is a police employee (vs. school) and it is not a full-time position.

TOWN BUDGET REVIEWS – TABLED

4130 EXECUTIVE/SELECTMEN’S OFFICE

4152 REAPPRAISAL OF PROPERTY

4191 PLANNING & ZONING

4210 POLICE DEPARTMENT

4290 EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

4414 ANIMAL CONTROL

4711-4723 – DEBT SERVICE AND INTEREST ON TANS

TOWN BUDGETS DISTRIBUTED FOR BUDGET COMMITTEE FUTURE REVIEW:

4140 TOWN CLERK TAX COLLECTOR – spreadsheet of wage/earnings data for 2017 and 2018 to date as requested; informational packet from Town Clerk Tax Collector

4199 OTHER TOWN GOVERNMENT – TOWN REPORT

4220 FIRE RESCUE – WA additional information forthcoming relative to per diem and night/weekend coverage

4312 HIGHWAY – WA on Chester Road will be forthcoming

4520 PARKS & RECREATION

4520 BUILDING INSPECTION

The updated meeting schedule was circulated for all members.

NEXT MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

ADJOURNMENT

Mary Jo Holmes made a motion to adjourn at 8:50 PM. Brittany Thompson seconded the motion. Motion passed 8:0.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Perry, Secretary

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