

## AMENDED 3/4/14\*

### 2014 BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2014 POLICE/DISPATCH/FIRE/EMS

**Members Present:** Mike Waddell, William Jackson, Terry Oliver, Robert Demers, Glen Eastman, Reuben Rajala, Dan Mccrum

**Excused:** Terry Rhoderick

**Police Department:** Chief P.J. Cyr presented his 2014 Police Budget: Chief Cyr started by explaining there were changes to the printout that was currently presented to the Budget Committee. Changes to page 14, Line Item 1-4210-1-150 – Holiday line – should be \$20,703.00 instead of the previously listed \$19,225.00 which is an increase of \$2,135.00. The overtime line was off on the previously submitted information. **Bill Jackson wanted to remind everyone that the Selectmen's Budget has not yet been approved by the Selectmen.** The Police Dept's budgeted bottom line is \$456,230.00. This is an increase of approximately \$8,850.00 Chief Cyr said this figure comes from his proposed budget and the 2013 budget. This figure includes the union negotiated 2% raise that was approved in 2013. Even though there was an increase to the bottom line, they made staffing changes that actually decreased the town appropriation by approximately \$26,271.00. This is detailed in the staff comparison packet which includes 6 FT officers and 2 PT-Permanent officers. Bill Jackson would like revised updated information that reflects all the figures presented. Glen commented this budget is still up! The committee is aware that they are reviewing the Town Managers Budget at this time, not the Selectmen's. Glen asked what the maximum vacation time that officers can accrue. The Town Manager responded it is 5 weeks after 15 years of service. He wanted it to be known that he did not agree with the maximum vacation time of 5 weeks after 15 years of service for town employees.

**Dispatch Budget:** There is an increase of \$3,376.00 in the permanent position line and an increase of \$820.00 in the permanent part time line. This is attributed to the 2% wage and longevity increases for 10 years of service. Benefits for the part-time dispatchers and part-time patrolman are the same.

A new Capital Reserve request was submitted to help with the repeater building and associated costs on Pine Mountain. The new repeater requires a generator, better antenna, and other improvements.

A question was raised about the possibility of a new contract with Shelburne. The Town Manager stated that no negotiations have been made this year. A question was asked regarding the \$50.00 revenue in the animal control line. Chief Cyr will look into this with the Finance Director.

**FIRE DEPARTMENT:** Chief Rick Eichler presented his 2014 proposed budget noting line increases. A question was raised regarding internet charges of \$420.00 for the Fire Dept. & EMS, because the costs seemed rather high. A question was also asked regarding the Fire Department fuel charges being combined with EMS fuel charges. The committee would like to have a four year average breakdown of the above items to review.

Questions were asked regarding fees the Fire Dept. is being charged by the Water Dept. Glen Eastman stated he wanted it known that he did not agree with the charges and that the town should have an arrangement with the Water Dept. to help the tax payers in the Town of Gorham.

A question was raised regarding charges for responding to motor vehicle accidents (MVA). Is the town reimbursed by insurance companies? Chief Eichler answered the town is not reimbursed in most circumstances. Glen Eastman stated

that the town needs to be compensated for these services. Questions were raised regarding the Cascade Fire Department and operational costs. It was suggested that Chief Eichler speak with the current mill management to see what their feeling are about having trained first responders in the mill and having the fire station located there. The building and the land are currently owned by the mill and have been leased to the town for a nominal amount. It was noted, that the response time from Gorham to the mill is approximately 7-12 minutes. There are 3 people who currently live in the Cascade area that would respond to the Cascade Fire station. There were members of the Gorham Fire Department who were on hand and wanted to speak why they believe the town needs to keep the Cascade Fire station open. The Chair allowed them to address the issue.

**AMBULANCE:** The EMS Director presented the 2014 ambulance budget. He presented an overview to the board. The EMS currently has 3 Full Time employees and 17 Part-Time Volunteer employees. He stated his budget includes a revolving fund which includes revenue and expense. He stated that the current outside contracts with Randolph, Shelburne and the County are in aggregate approximately \$40,000.00. A question was asked what the fee is if a Gorham resident calls for the ambulance. He answered it varies on different levels regarding the level of service. He stated there are 6 different billing rates depending on the service or the nature of the call. It was also noted that there is a \$17,150.00 increase in the "Current Positions Line". The EMS Director stated the increase is for wages that he would like to give to his two full time hourly employees whom he feels are being underpaid. Selectman Jackson stated that the Selectmen are the body that decides on wage increases and asked why this had not been brought before the Selectmen in the correct manner? It was also asked if any other department heads or assistants were getting any increases. The Town Manager stated the proposed increase for Cagney Hatch would come from the savings of discontinuing ComStar Billing Services and that Hatch would be taking over the billing responsibilities. The board asked the Town Manager if there were any other individuals or town employees receiving pay increases. The Town Manager stated there was another individual that was up for a proposed pay increase, but she did not elaborate saying she needed to discuss it with the Selectboard first.

**\*The EMS Director reported there were 635 calls in 2013 and 102 transfers.**

The Chair informed the EMS Director that their 2014 budget was not detailed enough for the Budget Committee. The Chair requested that the director have a better breakdown of his proposed changes. At this time the Director had still not gotten to the operating side of his budget and the hour was after 9:00 pm. The director agreed to continue his presentation and to provide a more detailed budget to the committee. The Chair also requested that he bring a breakdown of the permanent position line so that it is more understandable. The Chair also requested that the proposed "revolving fund account" be explained with a more detailed budgetary explanation.

At this time because it was running late the Chair asked the board if they wished to continue or ask the director to come back at the next meeting. The consensus of the board was to have the EMS Director come back to the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 14, 2014.

Motion to adjourn made by William Jackson with a 2<sup>nd</sup> from Terry Oliver. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.