

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD & ADVISORY BUDGET
COMMITTEE BUDGET WORKSHOP**

November 27, 2018

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Board & Committee members present: Chairman Brown, Selectman Bugbee, Selectman LaCourse, Chairman Thomas Murdoch, Brian Burke, Rebecca Hawthorne, Pat Barbour and Alice MacKinnon.

Others present: Town Administrator Julie Glover, Deputy Fire Chief Jeff Liporto, Chief Nemet, John and Anne Tappan, Bambi Miller and Chris Lemelin from McGregor Memorial EMS.

1. Chairman Brown calls the meeting to order at 6:59 pm and turns the meeting over to Chair Murdoch. TA Glover asks for a few minutes to talk about the leaky roof in the Annex building. The roofing company that they spoke to today stated that the whole roof needs to be replaced and it would not be cost effective to spend time chasing down the source of the leak. TA Glover states that in 2016 there was a bid process which resulted in bids for \$9400, \$11,000 and \$13,300. That did not include sheathing or insulation. The alternate choice is to put a tarp on it and wait. There is a short discussion. Caron Rossi can try to get as many quotes as possible before making a decision. Chairman Brown moves to re-roof the Annex building the cost not to exceed \$20,000 the source of funds to come from the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Funds. Selectman LaCourse, seconds. All in favor. **Motion Carries.**

2. Caren Rossi, Fair Committee Rep, is requesting \$8000 to be funded in the Recreation Commission budget for fireworks. The people really enjoyed it, there was a great turn out and she received a lot of positive feedback. Ms. Rossi hopes that the Fair Committee could spend the same amount next year and accomplish the same great show. TA Glover indicates that the Fair Fund has \$2384 left in its account.

Caren Rossi, Planning and Zoning Administration, indicates that there is an increase in the budget in the amount of \$700 for legal notices and advertising which is the newspaper costs. This line, however, gets reimbursed into the general fund. The other increase is for \$138 to the Strafford County Regional Planning to bring their total to \$5300. She does not support renewing the Town's yearly subscription to SRPC because they can still perform services for us at a \$10/hr rate more than what we currently get. With the exception of some maps over the last few years, every time Ms. Rossi goes to ask them to do something we have to pay for it. Other departments throughout the State have utilized our \$5000 for their benefit, but the Town of Lee in her opinion does not get its money's worth. She is not advocating renewing and they are fully aware of this. She has met with them. We can always go back if we find that it is a benefit we are missing. Tax map updates now cost us money as well. Ms. Rossi has reviewed the Town Reports to support this decision. The hourly rate may be about \$60/hr.

Chair Murdoch would like to check with Bill Humm, Conservation Commission Chair on his opinion with regards to this issue. Anne Tappan indicates that this has not been a topic of discussion at the Conservation Commission meetings but it can be discussed at the next meeting. As far as she knows the Commission has never been charged by the SRPC.

This item is solely in Ms. Rossi's budget and she does not support it any longer. Every time she needs something she gets charged for it. If there is another department or commission that wants it that is fine, but she does not want it.

Selectman Bugbee asks Ms. Rossi to speak to her legal expenses. Ms. Rossi indicates that she has spent at least \$5k this year. Bedrock Gardens is not winding down and neither is the VRC.

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TA Glover states that Mr. Macdonald has filed something with the court that might resemble an appeal so the Town is just waiting on the court.

Pat Barbour asks about the building activity. Ms. Rossi states that at the end of FY18 they issued a total of 445 building permits which was an all-time record high with a project cost of \$10,457,317. Twenty-seven (27) of these projects were new homes. One was Noble Farm, commercial. This year up until November 27th, they have issued 175 permits with a total construction cost of \$4,130,281. Permit fees so far year to date are \$30,725. TA Glover states that in the most recent full reporting year there was \$81k in building permit revenue. In years prior it was between \$40-45k.

There is a discussion about a quick service restaurant going in at the circle.

3. Chris Lemelin, McGregor Ambulance, reviewed how the rates for each town are developed. The way that McGregor has calculated the appropriations for the last several years is based on three of their fixed expenses: dispatch costs; the station lease and what it costs to provide overnight paramedics to the community. The final number gets divided out based on call volume over the last entire year and Lee represented 24% of call volume in 2017 thus the request is \$20,200. There are three other revenue sources: what they charge patients/insurance companies; the educational programs that they offer; and donations. Instead of purchasing an entire new ambulance, this year they re-mounted an ambulance (replaced the engine) which saved them \$80k. They hope to do this more often. They changed who they outsourced their billing to which resulted in a significant savings.

Pat Barbour asks about the status of their moving. Mr. Lemelin states that they are pursuing a joint facility with the UNH Police and Fire Department. The challenge with that is if McGregor will be able to afford it. Ms. Barbour asks if there is a timetable. Mr. Lemelin states that there is a lot of enthusiasm for it, but it's not going to happen next year. It is moving forward. The location has been decided to be near the new UNH Police Station, near the railroad tracks. His sense is that it will still be 3-5 years out. Their back-up ambulance is still stored at the Lee PSC. One of Mr. Lemelin's goals is to work more closely with partnered departments. Lee Fire is similar to McGregor in how they staff which results in the same challenges, such as volunteers cannot afford to live in these communities. They are in the early stages of looking at subsidizing housing for the volunteers. The goal would be to approach the Cottages/Lodges in Durham to ask them for a discounted rate in housing for their volunteers. Chief Nemet says that they have been having an issue with younger call members who can't afford to live in Lee. They want to live in Newmarket or Dover so they walk downtown and the rent is cheaper. In the past Lee has done a live-in program within the station. Mr. Lemelin reached out to Chief Nemet about recruiting for Lee during their UNH day and the Chief did hear from a few UNH students who were already EMT's from other communities. Chief Nemet thinks it would be a good idea to work with McGregor in looking for prospects.

Selectman Bugbee asks if a commitment would be required. They are still exploring this idea. The details have not been worked out, but Mr. Lemelin would like to work closer with Lee. Chief Nemet has tried joint activities between UNH and Lee to get the members to know each

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other better but it's difficult because there could be such a gap between when you see each other again between calls.

4. Chief Nemet, Emergency Management Director, states that the budget has not changed in the last couple years. Caren Rossi is the Assistant Director. The budget consists of \$1000 for the director wage line and \$600 for the Assistant line and \$6000 for EOC supplies. They recently did a tabletop training exercise with the State of NH on the emergency operations plan. Now they can reach out for an Emergency Management Plan Grant. Currently they are working on the Hazardous Mitigation Plan update. EOC purchases supplies for the kitchen, phones, computers and TV setup for the weather. They would like to get better quality phones in there.

Chairman Brown asks how we are equipped as warming station for example do we have cots or sleeping bags. Chief Nemet states that we have army cots but no blankets. Chairman Brown thinks we should look into this and other necessities. When they do open the PSC up for shelter they usually only see people during the day. Ms. Rossi has been great and organizes cooking meals for people. The few people that needed overnight shelter have gone to Oyster River. Chief Nemet states that we should have the supplies to support our own should we need to. The downstairs meeting room is approved as a shelter and the EOC room and adjacent to that room.

5. Chief Nemet reviews his Fire Department budget which is showing an increase of 18.6% from last year. The reason is the Chief is asking for one full-time firefighter and one part-time firefighter. There is also an additional \$10k for vehicle maintenance and repair. The other lines that have increased are phones, uniforms, water, heat, fuel and gas. Currently he has four part-time firefighters that work 24hrs/week which is two 12 hour shifts. The Chief recently changed his hours from 8-4 to 7-3. This is so the morning person is not alone for two hours. He has a full-time Lieutenant who works 10-6pm. Saturday and Sunday is filled with two part-timers that work 6-6pm. The members sign up for night shifts. It has been working out somewhat, but there are times when there is no one who is a driver. On Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday there is no one on the night schedule. Coverage is difficult to non-existent Friday after 6 until 6 a.m. the next morning and the same for Saturday night.

The call volume is up. The busiest month in 2017 was October with 83 calls. The busiest day is Monday reaching 124 calls in 2017 and then Saturday is the next busiest. Everything is calendar year except the medicals are FY. Chief reviews the call data. Chairman Brown asks how many were structure fires? Chief indicates that there were four structure fires but no houses. Selectman Bugbee asks if the insurance rate has changed at all. Chief states it has not changed. Selectman Bugbee suggests promoting our good rating in the e-crier. Chief Nemet states that they do more mutual aid fires then they do in this community right now. They arrive first on the scene often.

Chief Nemet states that the \$91k increase is mostly from the wages for the proposed new full-time and part-time firefighters which would cost \$76,821. In the past 5 years they have lost 6 part-time firefighters to local full-time departments. They are losing good people who they have paid to train. Fifteen departments in the State over the past year have hired full-time firefighters and some have hired multiple times. Dover hired 8-12 this year alone. He lost a member recently to Rochester Fire and his replacement is already interviewing next week for a

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full-time position elsewhere. The members are looking for that stable job and he is losing employees faster now than 5 or 6 years ago. The last two people that he lost would have stayed if there was a full-time position available. So much time is spent on training new people only to lose those 6 months to a year later. Selectman LaCourse asks if the wage that he is presenting for a full-time firefighter is a competitive wage. Chief Nemet says it is. Jeff Liporto, Deputy Fire Chief, has 35 years of experience at another local department and wants to move into a part-time regular slot working 3 eight hour shifts on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Chief Nemet wants to be able to do commercial inspections which he started 5 years ago when he became Chief. Back then he had a part-time firefighter who was a fire inspector certification but he left for a full-time position. Chief Nemet also wants to do multi-family inspections. The biggest thing that Deputy Liporto can relieve him of is the day to day operations. He can work with the new members. As Chief he wants to do more with the 5-10 year plan.

Rebecca Hawthorne asks why do part-time employees leave. Chief Nemet is finding that the generation that is now wants the benefits and stability of a full-time job. The concept of sharing a full-time person with another town was discussed but the NH Retirement System does not work that way. One town would have to claim ownership so to speak and be responsible for those full-time hours. Fire Districts and Regional Fire Departments are totally different.

Selectman Bugbee wants a spreadsheet that shows all the additional costs for these proposed new positions.

Chief Nemet reviews the proposed increases and decreases to the budget. He would like to purchase iPads for the fire trucks. He explains the software program that they presently use called *I Am Responding* in detail. It costs \$700 per year. Currently they have about 60 commercial buildings in this program. At some point the Fire Department would hope to be able to start entering residential information.

Each new person has to drive each truck for 10 hours before they can get checked off on it so the trucks are getting used more.

Chief Nemet is very happy with where they are at with UNH Dispatch right now. UNH Dispatch is run and owned by UNH Police. Chief Nemet does not wish to use Strafford County Dispatch. There is a brief First Net discussion. First Net is going to be a service provided to first responders which is designed to eliminate the issue of cell phones taking over the towers and the system crashing. First Net will provide 2 lines that first responders are the only ones who can use but you need their phone and programming.

This budget presentation ends at 8:45pm.

6. Selectman Bugbee hands out the TCVC budget presentation materials and give Mr. Tappan credit for creating all of the documents. Selectman Bugbee explains what the documents outline. The plan is to put some money aside for the Town Hall renovation but not include it in the Town Center Project at this time. The Historical Society Building will be relocated but not renovated and the Annex will be relocated but not renovated at this time. The Tool Shed with Tramp Room will not have anything done to it at this time. The municipal building is a new

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structure at 4865 square feet. The Library will have a 3700 sq. ft. addition and the current space will be renovated. The rest confirms other costs such as site developments and soft costs. The last part of the 2nd page shows funding. The total cost is \$4.5 million. It identifies the different funds that may be used such as the Library Capital Reserve Fund, the Library Fund, the Library Foundation and the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. The committee is calculating a possible bond at \$3.75 million over 20 years at 4%. The architect has this document. Planning and Zoning is in this building. The contingency amount is higher when renovating buildings then when building a new building.

John Tappan, TCVC Rep, reviews the building placements. The architect suggested having the parking square to the library rather than the road. The architect was concerned with aisle widths and suggested using a vegetative island rather than painting the asphalt. Mr. Tappan points out two possible locations off the municipal building where 2400 sq.ft. additions may be added at a later date. The same dotted line on the Library indicates a possible 2000 sq. /ft. addition that may be added at a later date. The placement of the driveway is still uncertain. DOT is in favor of a 2nd driveway being placed opposite of Wednesday Hill Road. There is a cemetery behind the proposed municipal building that may be an issue later. The numbers for the renovations will be provided in the future but not part of the Town Center Project costs. Other than one variance the project is meeting all the Town's setbacks. Mr. Tappan reviews the payment numbers.

Tom Murdoch turns meeting back over to the Select Board.

7. Selectman Bugbee moves to adjourn at 9:28pm. Selectman LaCourse, seconds. All in favor.
Motion Carries.

Minutes transcribed by:



Denise Duval, Town Secretary

12/18/18

Date

Minutes accepted by The Lee Select Board and
the Advisory Budget Committee:



Cary Brown, Chairman



Thomas Murdoch, Chairman