

FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Minutes

Date: March 3, 2012

Time: 8:00 a.m.

Present: O'Connor, Girard, Kupcinskis, Gauthier, Bartosiewicz, Hebert

Absent: None

**Meeting called to order at 8:00 a.m.**

**Brian Turbitt, Finance Director, and Bob Spain, Town Manager, was in at 8:00 a.m.**

**Mark Moore, Acting Police Chief, was in to discuss his budget at 8:00 a.m.**

Michael O'Connor: The report that you provided us with the statistics and facts for your department is like a breath of fresh air.

Bob Spain: There are two budgets in his packet. One is his original and one is the manager's budget.

Mark Moore: The department is in a transitional stage. We should have 24-28 officers to run the department. I know that realistically, this cannot happen in one year, but it would eliminate some of the overtime. We should have a court officer, five days a week. This would free up personnel. We need to have a detective position for the 4-12 shift. We are trying to address some deficiencies. We are prioritizing what needs to be done right now. We do need some equipment replacement. The phone system needs to be replaced. The interview room needs an upgrade. We are supposed to be recording all of our interviews. That is not happening because the equipment is not working. We have some concerns with vacation time and how it is earned. We are changing the way this is earned. Due to the manpower that we have, we may only have 2-3 people handling a shift. Many calls have been answered with only one person, when there should be two. We are looking at a lateral transfer to help replace some retirements. If we go with a new officer, they need to attend 6 months at the academy and then ride with another officer for another 6 months or so. It takes about 12-18 months to have them completely on their own. We have 16 people right now. If retirements were to happen right now, you would be down to 13 people until we get people trained enough to be out on their own.

Michael O'Connor: We did a comparison over the past few years on the number of officers before and after the Mall went in. We are down officers even with income coming in from the Mall.

Bob Spain: The plan is to increase each shift by one person to allow for time off without increasing the overtime. State Aid is over \$1 Million less than 2009. It is the same with Free Cash. The intent is to get back to our historical level of 20 officers. We would like to have a lieutenant's position in the department. We would also like to reinstate the School Resource Officer.

Michael O'Connor: Could you get away with replacing one cruiser and using the dollars for the other cruiser to pay for the repairs/replacements of some of the other items that are needed?

Bob Spain: I don't want to get in the habit of only replacing one cruiser instead of two.

Mark Moore: We have a grant from the Justice Department which has been dedicated to the purchase of vests. We have the vests. Our computers need to be replaced. We have contacted the Justice Department to see if we can use some of the grant money for a new phone system and try to replace the computers. They said that they are okay with that. We still have about \$13,000 left in the grant.

Donald Gauthier: How are we doing in the overtime account?

Mark Moore: We are very close. We may not make it until the end of the year.

Bob Spain: There has been a lot of IOD this year.

Donald Gauthier: I think we should lease a street sweeper instead of buying a new one and hire two new officers.

Bob Spain: That won't work. It would work short term, but will cause problems in the long run.

**Mark Moore left at 9:20 a.m.**

**Matt Belsito, Fire Chief, was in to discuss his budget at 9:20 a.m.**

Matt Belsito: I am not really asking for much this year. I have level funded the budget.

Bob Spain: There are two increases in the budget. The Board of Fire Engineers put them in. The capital outlay is to move a piece of equipment to another station.

Matt Belsito: It is not as easy to move the equipment to Station 2. There are four pieces of equipment at Headquarters. We need to move one piece of equipment to another location. The hose truck was to be moved to Station 2. The addition to that station is much more extensive than anticipated. We cannot do what was originally planned because the area that was to be added to is not as structurally sound as we thought. We are way behind on Public Safety. We will eventually need to have a full-time fire department.

Steve Hebert: Are there any cost figures on that?

Matt Belsito: It would probably be a couple of million dollars.

Bob Spain: I don't have a funding source for anything more than what we already budgeted. We will also need to address the structure of the Headquarters building soon.

Michael O'Connor: When do you think you will be ready to request a public safety building?

Bob Spain: There is a committee working on that. We need to figure out where we would build it. I am figuring 1-2 years. We are looking at about \$10Million. It hasn't even been engineered. This is only in the feasibility stage. We don't even know where it is going to go.

**Matt Belsito left at 10:00 a.m.**

Motioned by Gauthier, seconded by Kupcinkas to accept the minutes of February 13, 2012 as written. Unanimous.

Michael O'Connor: The public hearing is rescheduled to March 19<sup>th</sup>. The announcement will be going in the paper on Thursday.

**Finance Department**

Brian Turbitt: The Town Audit came in at the same amount. There are no increases in that budget. We may be able to lower it. There are no changes in my office. The Assessor's Office budget is down. The new person just started on Thursday. The only change is in Computer Operations. We are upgrading/replacing a significant portion of the computers within the next 3 months. Whatever we don't replace this year, we will replace next year.

Michael O'Connor: Is the IT Consultant a flat fee?

Brian Turbitt: It is. His amount is included in that line along with a few other items. We have 2 off-site backups in addition to our on-site backup.

Michael O'Connor: We were lucky to get someone in the Assessor's office that can at least have a couple of years to get acquainted with Millbury before the next re-val.

Brian Turbitt: It looks like he will be a good fit to the Town.

Donald Gauthier: Do we have another project coming off the debt in 2015?

Brian Turbitt: There is a debt exclusion coming off, but it will not affect the tax rate.

**Rob McNeil, DPW Director, was in to discuss his budget at 10:30 a.m.**

Rob McNeil: The Tree Warden was very busy this year after the October storm. We are still dealing with the after affects. We are looking at a 3.95% increase in that budget. The DPW Administrative budget has a 28% decrease. We have not hired anyone to replace the retiring DPW secretary. We incorporated some of the work between my secretary and the Sewer Department Clerk. I have repositioned some of the line items. The Maintenance and Operations is up 11%. We replaced the clerk with a medium equipment operator. There are some pending raises. We haven't negotiated with the union yet.

Michael O'Connor: Do we get periodic audits from DEP?

Rob McNeil: No, we do not. The Highway Budget is down about 3% over last year. This comes from the Capital Outlay line. The equipment lease is in its last year. The Snow and Ice Budget was used mainly on the tree work from the ice storm. We should be reimbursed by FEMA. We have not had to purchase any sand this year.

Bob Spain: We need to use the additional \$5,000 from this budget to supplement the cemetery budget.

Rob McNeil: The Street Light Budget remains the same as last year.

Bob Spain: Based on the previous contract, this would have gone up considerably. We have gone to Constellation for the electric rates.

Rob McNeil: The transfer station has an increase just under 4%. The Sewer Department has a 6% overall increase. Most of this is from the Upper Blackstone Apportionment. The Parks Operations and Maintenance is basically the same as last year. The cemetery should be at \$47,620. We need to replace the maintenance shed at the Central Cemetery. We have 2 part-time people now. We have had 3 in the past. The Gasoline/Diesel is up due to adding the Senior Center vehicles to the town Gasoline Account. The Friends of the Senior Center will be reimbursing the Town.

**Rob McNeil left at 12:10 p.m.**

Motioned by Gauthier, seconded by Kupcinkas to allow the town Manager to approve expenditures in excess on the appropriation in the Fiscal Year 2012 Snow and Ice Account as allowed under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 44, Section 31D. Unanimous.

### **Town Manager Budgets**

Bob Spain: The only changes in the Town Manager's budget are for salary changes. The Town Clerk is up about 3%. The Ambulance Budget went down. We are in a new contract.

Michael O'Connor: Will there be a warrant article for spill testing at the Asa Waters Mansion?

Bob Spain: There is no article this year. There should be enough in the account this year. Veteran's Services will be close this year. The big change in Employee Benefits is the Health Insurance cost. The increase is due to more people taking insurance. The rates actually stayed the same. We had anticipated an 8% increase. Retirement Benefits from 2007-2013 is up 7%. This is a considerable increase.

Michael O'Connor: When will you have the detail changes ready for us?

Bob Spain: I should have them either Monday or Tuesday.

Michael O'Connor: When will we have a preliminary warrant?

Bob Spain: I hope to have it earlier than April 3.

Michael O'Connor: Is there any chance that we could have it before March 19?

Bob Spain: That is a possibility.

Michael O'Connor: The public hearing is scheduled for March 19, 2012. Dan cannot make the meeting. If everyone can be here on the 26<sup>th</sup>, we can start voting the budget. The Board of Selectmen will close the warrant on April 3. This still gives us two meetings to vote the warrant.

Motioned by Gauthier, seconded by Girard to adjourn at 12:50 p.m. Unanimous.