

**MINUTES**  
**NORTH HAMPTON BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2006**

**Attendance**

BudCom Attendees: (1) Terence Conklin - chair; (2) Don Gould (BOS); (3) Henry Marsh (SB); (4) Andrew Hart; (5) David Peck; (6) Paul Marston; (7) Peter Simmons; (8) Larry Miller; (9) Sue Spencer.

Other Attendees: Chief Lambert and Deputy Chief Landry – NHFD; Mike Pardue

Mr. Conklin called the meeting to order at 7:08 PM

**North Hampton Fire Department**

The BudCom had requested to meet again with the FD management to revisit certain issues and to review information requested of the FD and comparison data accumulated by BudCom members Mr. Peck and Mr. Hart. Focus of discussions revolved around:

- Staffing levels vs. like towns
- Lieutenant vs. line firemen weighting vs. like towns
- Overtime (projected at 29.8% of non-exempt staff base pay)
- Shift make up (24 hour) vs. other towns and industry models
- Call back procedures and use of volunteer firemen

Mr. Lambert gave an overview of the current staffing of the department and provided some statistical information on calls > **(a)** 71% of all calls require 5 people or more; **(b)** 52% of the calls occur between 6AM – 6PM; **(c)** 50% of calls relate to EMS; **(d)** mutual aid is received on a ratio of 2:1 vs. mutual aid provided.

The Chief also explained the working shift model currently in effect which provides for 3 firemen always on duty (one Lt. and 2 firemen) > 24 hours on, 24 hours off, 24 hours on and then 5 days off. From 9-5 during Monday thru Friday Chief Lambert and Deputy Chief Landry are also on duty (total of 5 during these hours). Discussion followed regarding alternative staffing strategies and the effectiveness of the firemen for calls at 4AM vs. 10AM when a new shift has begun.

Chief Lambert responded to questions related to analysis prepared by Mr. Hart and Mr. Peck related to staffing, officer make-up, cost per department and cost per resident. He acknowledged NH's high cost vs. other towns and remarked that it was due in response to the voters of NH who demand a high level (and cost) of service.

Discussion shifted to the amount of overtime incurred in the past (and proposed for next year) as it relates to base pay and trends in other towns. Chief Lambert will complete an analysis requested by Mr. Conklin detailing overtime incurred by employee for the past two years. He cited overtime statistics garnered from other like towns in the Seacoast and noted that NHFD was similar.

Mr. Gould informed the BudCom that the BOS was having discussions to having an outside consultant review the staffing needs of the town's PD and FD departments in the first half of 2007. He further encouraged the BudCom not to make significant budget adjustments related to staffing or overtime until such a study had been completed.

Chief Lambert then walked BudCom through two Warrant Articles he has presented to the BOS regarding the purchase of a Command Vehicle (\$43K) and Lease/Purchase of a new Pumper Truck (\$65.7K per year) to be funded by revenues generated by the Medical Vehicle revolving reserve.

### **Town Department Budget Reviews:**

Mr. Gould ran through the proposed budgets for various town departments not previously presented and responded to questions from BudCom members. It was noted that the overall Town Budget presented to the BudCom by the BOS is 7.8% higher than last year. Highlights included:

- Non-union salary increases set at 5% across the board
- Medical insurance cost management (EE's to pick up 12.5% of premium)
- Expansion of receptionist services
- Full time vs. part time Town Administrator
- Town Clerk / Tax Collector combined positions and proposed pay rate
- Legal – current litigation, upcoming contract negotiations and other issues
- Upcoming Reassessment Certification
- Technology upgrade and documentation scanning requirement
- Hydrant costs – Acquarion takeover issues
- Recycling Center

### **Warrant Article Review:**

Mr. Gould walked the BudCom through the various Warrant Articles that were being proposed. Discussion highlights included:

1. Combine two existing reserve funds (Medical Vehicle/Fire Dept. Equip.) – Mr. Miller cautioned on proposed language and the possible need for an additional warrant article.
2. Additional \$100K to be placed in Capital Reserve Building Fund – Mr. Gould gave BudCom a priority list of projects to be addressed.
3. Highway Dept. Garage (\$750K) – to be built on land to be owned by the Town near the airfield. Commercially zoned, on Route 1, with little site work required. Monies will be raised through the issuance of a Bond.

**Other Items**

Next scheduled meeting is for December \_\_\_<sup>th</sup> in the Mary Herbert Conference Room at 7PM.

Motion by Mr. Marston to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 PM , seconded by Mr. Hart. Vote was unanimous.