

Minutes
STOW FINANCE COMMITTEE
February 8, 2011
7:00 PM
Town Building
Approved

Call to Order

Vice Chairman Ann Deluty called the meeting to order at 7:07pm. Present were,
Members: Richard Connelly, Christopher Sarno and Peter McManus (7:25)
Associates: Richard Rollins, Bruce Walbridge and Eric Sears
Secretary: Elizabeth Tobey
Guests: Marcia Rising, Michael Clayton, William Bosworth and Rachel Belanger

Correspondence

- The Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project, notice of public meeting

Meeting Minutes

After a review of the minutes Richard Connelly moved to approve January 25, 2011 minutes as Amended. Christopher Sarno seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (Sarno, Deluty and Connelly)

Reserve Fund Transfer Request

Board of Health – Municipal Solid Waste Removal - \$1,200.00

The amount requested is to be used for the removal of solid waste from the dumpster at the Highway Barn for the months of January 2011 to June 2011.

Marcia Rising explained that the previous budget had a reduced amount requested. There are not enough funds remaining to cover the rest of this year, due to cost increases for the collections. The Board of Health is currently looking for better prices with other companies.

After a brief discussion regarding the dumpster and the costs, it was decided that Marcia should wait until she has more information for the pricing and bring the RFT back to FinCom for a decision.

Christopher Sarno moved No Action on the reserve fund transfer request in the amount of \$1,200.00. Richard Connelly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (Deluty, Sarno and Connelly)

Budget Reviews

Highway

Mike explained that the budget has a 1% cost of living and is level funded. There are no line item changes. They have gone to Capital Planning for new equipment. Funds were requested from Capital Planning for:

- Refurbishing the 1998 truck - The emission laws have changed and it's much less cost to upgrade than to buy new.
- Replace a 1958 Grader - \$37k is the lowest price for the right amount of power. It is used for grading roads and plowing. It is getting almost too old to get parts for.

Members suggested they specify if it is a grader or asphalt recycler and to be sure the wording is correct in the Town Warrant.

Police Department

Acting Chief Bill Bosworth explained there was a correction to the budget. On page 3, Patrolman 4, under the explanation it should say Step 5 not Step 3.

Gary, via email, requested more information for the item Emergency Notification at \$5,500 and a carryover each year.

Bill explained that the item is the Swiftreach Emergency Notification. The amount yearly depends on how many messages are sent out. Each message has a charge that depends on how many are called and how many times the message is sent. The cost also includes Data upgrades quarterly.

Chris asked about the staffing; are there any increases in calls and how many officers are on duty at one time?

Bill explained that there are 3 officers on duty per shift. Sometimes there is one more or one less.

Rick Rollins asked about the Furniture and Fixtures at \$2,500

Bill said that the chair in Dispatch should be replaced often, due to the amount of time someone is sitting in it. A normal chair at home is sat in for a few hours a day. The chair in Dispatch is sat in 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by varying size people. The chair takes a lot of abuse. There are also file cabinets that need to be purchased to store files in.

When asked about the status of the vehicles Bill stated,

- We purchase one new cruiser each year. Currently doing transmission repairs on the oldest one.
- The trade in value is very low due to the high mileage, with approximately 150k on them.
- The average cost of the Crown Vic is \$25k and then the added fixtures cost on top of that.
- Currently we have four Crown Vic's, one Expedition, one Tahoe and 1 Hybrid.
- Cars are retired by condition not by the year made.

Chris questioned the work done on the Dispatch station.

Bill explained that they shrunk the dispatch equipment in size instead of enlarging the room. They got a Grant in 2010 that paid for the fixtures and in 2011 a grant paid for the labor. The radio system was replaced years ago. Mark Trefry left the department in great shape.

When asked about the Incidents line item he explained that it is for extra patrol, fires, snow storms, accidents, domestic violence and emergency calls. They all cause extra hours to complete the necessary paper work.

William Bosworth and Rachel Belanger exited at 8:00pm

IT Department

When asked about the Police Laptops yearly replacement Beth explained that the laptops are now 5 years old and starting to fail. The police department would like to start replacing one Laptop each year. The old laptop will be saved for parts or spares.

When questioned on the scheduled pc replacement she explained that the Accountant and the Assessors office are on PC's that were purchased in 2000. The PC's are extremely slow and have many software issues.

Beth was then asked about an IT Master Plan for replacing equipment. She explained that it being discussed with Paul Yannoni (Volunteer IT Professional) and will be put into place when it is finalized.

Deficit Spending

After a brief discussion member voted as follows:

Christopher Sarno moved to approve deficit spending in the snow and ice account pursuant to MGL C.44,s, 31D.

Richard Connelly seconded the motion.

The motion carried unanimously (Deluty, Sarno, Connelly and McManus)

Liaison Reports

Library- Ann explained that the Library would be submitting a Reserve Fund Transfer Request in the near future for repairs.

Minuteman – Chris stated that Minuteman School Committe had unanimously approved the budget. They were able to cut their level services to keep the overall budget increase to about 1%. Stow assessment has gone up considerably to \$750k. This is largely based on enrollment increases; also Special Ed students went from zero to thirteen students. With \$5k added per Special Ed student enrolled, a total increase of \$60k. Last year the enrollment decreased substantially, causing a decrease in the budget. This year's budget is tight for the overall school.

In the past, Minuteman's tuition rates have been good for non-member towns. They have raised this significantly this year. They had cut the budget by 7% in the previous year, leaving very little room for additional movement. Towns should gear up for the future for increases coming.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Ann Deluty at 8:37 pm. Christopher Sarno seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously (Deluty, Sarno, Connelly and McManus).

Future meetings:

February 22, 2011

March 1, 2010

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Tobey,
Secretary