

TOWNSEND FINANCE COMMITTEE
April 7, 2016
Selectmen's Chamber

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TOWN OF TOWNSEND
TOWN CLERK

The meeting was called to order at 6:15pm by Mr. Klein in the Selectmen's Chamber, Memorial Hall.

Present: Don Klein, Gini King, Sam Grant, Nancy Rapoza, Mary Letourneau
Andrea Wood (note: arrived at 7pm)

Present from the Police Dept: Interim Chief Barrieau, Stephen Couture and
Samantha Morris

Present from the Fire Dept: Chief Boynton

Guests: Keith Letourneau, Roger Rapoza and Linda Johansen

Mr. Klein informed the members that there will not be a meeting between the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectmen on April 12th. Members of the finance working group agree it is too soon as information is still being gathered.

Discussion was held regarding concerns being raised that some members of the Finance Committee have family members who work in town departments. When the State has been contacted, they have consistently stated that members may discuss but not vote on matters where there may be a financial interest to them. Mr. Klein stated he has a letter coming from the State but it could take up to 30 days to arrive. The committee unanimously agreed to continue the practice of those members of the Finance Committee being allowed to discuss all the budgets, however, they must abstain from voting on budgets that may have a financial interest to them. Members/budgets impacted are as follows: Mr. Klein, Fire Department; Ms. Letourneau (Police and Highway); Ms. Rapoza (Board of Health, Cemetery and Parks and Highway).

Police/Communications

Members from the Police/Communications Department reviewed some areas of the budget. The attempt was made to level fund as much as possible and adjusted pay increases were submitted at 2.5%. There are some increases and changes being requested.

- Hiring of a fulltime officer to provide a School Resource Officer (mandated but unfunded by the State)

- Mandated training in areas outlined in the department budget letter. Recommendation to increase line item 5196 from \$16,838.00 to \$40,000.00.
- Hiring two fulltime dispatchers. This will allow shifts to overlap and help ensure that State mandates are met without undo pressure on those in these roles. This also may allow some tasks currently being performed by officers to be done by trained communications personnel, which will be a cost savings.
- With the elimination of the Administrative Coordinator position, the Administrative Assistant is taking on more responsibility. Recommendation is to upgrade the position from a T4, Level 2 to T4, Level 6 to reflect the increase in responsibility.
- Discussion is being held regarding how to fill the vacancy in the Communication Supervisor position, including creating a town wide position who will be responsible for the IT function across all departments.
- Increases in the following expense lines:
 - #5240 service contracts for generator and elevator – increase of \$7000
 - #5300 increase \$1000 to accurately fund prisoner meals and bio-hazard cell cleanings
 - #5240 increase \$1951 for toner and printer supplies

FIRE/EMS

Chief Boynton reviewed the budget worksheet. He has items that are increased due to the new building, items that he is requesting additional funding for and items being moved from labor to expense so they are accounted for correctly.

- Hiring and retention is an issue due to our wages no longer being competitive. He recommends a multi year approach to get our wages to a competitive rate and to reach a level of being fully staffed.
- Requesting \$250 per week for Duty Officer Compensation to be on call during the nights and weekends. This request is in line with other departments on call amounts.
- Training and uniform expenses had been included in labor. After consulting with the Town Accountant, the correct way to manage these items is as an expense. This change is reflected in the budget worksheet.
- Energy was increased by \$14,000 to cover heating the new building which is 12,000 square feet versus 4,000 for the previous building. In addition, custodial supplies have increased due to the larger building.
- Request mileage reimbursement for travel to EMT or Firefighter training. Personnel are not paid to attend the trainings but the recommendation is to compensate them for mileage to travel to and from these trainings.
- Increase to \$15,000 (from \$9000) for Firefighter protective clothing. This will allow five sets to be purchased each year and end up replacing 50 sets over 10 years.

WATER DEPARTMENT

The Committee reviewed the budget – no questions.

MINUTES

Ms. King made a motion to approve the minutes from March 17, 2016. Second by Ms. Wood, vote was unanimous to approve.

Ms King made a motion to approve the minutes from March 24, 2016. Second by Mr. Grant, vote was unanimous to approve.

Mr. Klein did inform the committee that the finance working group did leave in 2.5% increase in wages until union contracts are negotiated and amounts can be finalized.

NEXT MEETING:

The Library and Highway Department will be invited to the next meeting, with Library being first. Hopefully the warrant articles will be ready for review.

Ms. King made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10pm, seconded by Mr. Grant. Vote was unanimous to adjourn.