

Minutes, January 22, 2020

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Meeting, January 22, 2020

A scheduled meeting convened at 7:10 p.m. at Town Hall in Room 7.

Present: Mr. Creighton, Ms. Harrison, Mr. Oldeman and Mr. Weld. Ms. Mellish joined the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Absent: Mr. Pratt

Board of Selectmen: Mr. Boling, and Mr. Bodmer-Turner

Staff Present: Town Administrator, Mr. Federspiel, Finance Committee Clerk, Ms. Hunter, Interim Fire Chief Beardsley and Police Chief Fitzgerald

Mr. Creighton called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Review and Approve Meeting Minutes – There were no meeting minutes to review this evening.

Review of Public Safety – Fire Department Budget and Capital

Chief Beardsley stated salaries for the Department are driven by collective bargaining agreements, the salary budget reflects those agreements. He went on to outline changes he recommended to the Operating Budget for the Department.

- Utility lines with the exception of natural gas have been reduced in line with energy savings and efficiencies implemented by the Department.
- Building maintenance is becoming a challenge for the Fire Station several problems have developed including leaking oil tanks, heating circulation system problems, surveillance system requiring repairs, garage door openers malfunctioning and water valve failures. As a result, \$2K was added to the maintenance budget for the fire station.
- Vehicle maintenance line item has been increased by \$1,800 to address ongoing repairs to the ambulance and other apparatus.
- Training Equipment and Miscellaneous line item has been increased to keep up with changing needs in the EMS standards around drugs, equipment and training.
- Maintenance budget has been increased to provide necessary supplies for preventative cleaning following calls.
- Gasoline and diesel fuel lines were increased.

Turning to the Capital Budget, Chief Beardsley complimented the Town on its plan to fund fire apparatus by putting aside funds annually.

The FY21 Capital Budget for the Department includes:

- \$250K into the Fire Engine Fund
- \$60K for pick-up truck to replace the 2007 pick-up which has an unrepairable faulty electrical system
- \$33.5K for Fire Equipment
- \$160K Public Safety Radio System a shared resource with Police Department and DPW
- Wall constructed from entry door to the back of the building. The wall would separate the engine room from offices and create needed energy efficiency and address health concerns from vehicle exhaust. There is no estimate for construction.
- \$13.5M Knox Box Replacement, upgrade key entry system for businesses. The proposed upgrade will assure accountability for who is accessing businesses off hours.

Mr. Creighton asked if the Town has missed opportunities for turn out gear grants? Ms. Mellish had seen articles in the *Gloucester Times* and was interested in knowing. Chief Beardsley stated there were two grant programs funded by the State, The first was for Volunteer Fire Departments who were wearing torn and damaged gear. MBTS did not qualify for that grant. The second grant was for Fire Departments who did not have an extractor, the MBTS department has an extractor. MBTS failed to meet the criteria for either grant.

Ms. Harrison asked what we did with old gear. Chief Beardsley stated it is used for training purposes to keep from damaging gear in current use.

Mr. Creighton asked about line item 52662 Apparatus maintenance. He asked if the line item should be increased. Mr. Weld stated in previous years the budget line had exceeded budget by as much as 70%. Chief Beardsley does not believe the line needs to be increased because the Town has invested in a new ambulance and resolved the hydraulic system in the ladder truck.

Mr. Oldeman asked how much remained in budget at this time? There is \$5,200.00 remaining in the budget. Chief Beardsley stated some of the work included in this line item applies to re-certification of equipment which occurs at the beginning of the fiscal year addressing the status of apparatus for insurance purposes. He believes the equipment is in good shape. Chief Beardsley does not anticipate any major repairs requiring and increase in the budget line.

Mr. Creighton asked about that status of Call Fire Fighters. Chief Beardsley stated Call Fire Fighters are on life support and this is not a problem for MBTS it is a national problem. To become a certified firefighter, it takes 220 hours away from family, 2 nights a week and Saturdays and Sundays.

Ms. Harrison stated there are 2 skill sets required for ALS ambulance and fire fighters. Was it possible to set up volunteers for one or the other? Chief Beardsley replied ambulance and fire fighters need to be able to lift and carry people out of their home's strength is important for both positions. The department runs with 3 people on duty, responsibilities with that shift standard requires cross-training.

Mr. Creighton asked about the cost of training. Fire Fighter training cost are covered by the Town. ALS and EMT training is paid for by the individual, ALS training costs up to \$15K and can take more than one year to complete, EMT training is about \$1-\$2K.

Mr. Creighton requested updated pages for the Operating Budget.

Review of Public Safety – Police Department Budget and Capital

Chief Fitzgerald stated salaries for the Police Department like the Fire Department are driven by collective bargaining agreements, the salary budget reflects those agreements. Chief Fitzgerald stated he and Chief Conley had reviewed and modified the operating budget for the Department a few years ago. Chief Fitzgerald went on to outline his recommendations for the Operating Budget for the Department in FY21.

- Electricity, auto and truck repairs and rental fees remain the same
- Professional services is increased by \$500 to \$10,500 and covers pre-employment physical and psychological examinations at the Police Academy
- Radio technician is covered under the 911 Support Incentive Grant and will be in place through FY21
- Gasoline/oil line item was reduced to reflect savings realized with purchase on new Hybrid cruiser
- Uniforms is a contractual agreement and reserve officers and dispatchers all receive one uniform upon hiring
- Dues and Subscriptions increased to \$4,800
- Medical supply line remains in the budget, but the Chief is recommending this move to the Fire Department for efficiency in ordering supplies. All cruisers carry life support equipment and Narcan.

The FY21 Capital Budget for the Department includes:

- \$160K Public Safety Radio System a shared resource with Fire Department and DPW
- \$61K for new cruiser a Ford Hybrid and lease payment on the motorcycle

Mr. Creighton asked about the parking enforcement line increase. Chief Fitzgerald stated this past year there were additional funds in the parking enforcement line and an officer was stationed at Singing Beach from Labor Day to mid-October. During that time \$12.5K was collected from parking tickets at a cost of \$3.5K. The added dollars will cover the same 6-week period in FY21.

Mr. Oldeman asked about the seasonal employment with the Harbormaster and SRO. Chief Fitzgerald stated the coordination with the Harbormaster takes place primarily on weekends. This past summer officers were becoming familiar with the water and boat. This coming summer the Chief plans to have an officer on the boat and an officer dedicated to traffic enforcement.

Mr. Weld asked about the personnel summary. Chief Fitzgerald stated a Sergeant will be promoted to Lieutenant and a Patrolmen will be promoted to Sergeant, leaving a vacancy to fill in the Patrolman rank. Mr. Weld asked about an understanding the Committee had with Chief Conley around the total number of officers on the force. He recalled there was an agreement to reduce the number of officers to 13 and the officer on permanent disability would not be replaced. Chief Fitzgerald was not aware of the agreement. Mr. Weld indicated the salary line for Patrolmen went down \$40K, Mr. Federspiel stated that is where the Department went down from 9 to 8 Patrolmen.

Mr. Creighton asked the Chief if he was able to fill positions in the Department. The open position is posted and there has been one applicant. Chief Fitzgerald believes people who have left the Department leave for three reason, pay, call volume and opportunity. The Town cannot change call volume or opportunity but could change pay. It is difficult to find people who want to come to Manchester due to the educational incentive. In current contract negotiations with the union it is an issue. Chief Fitzgerald believes people have left for higher pay.

In Manchester contractual agreement requires officers to be EMT certified. Other communities do not require EMT certification and some applicants are not interested in the requirement. Ms. Harrison asked if that was something being negotiated. Chief Fitzgerald stated it was being discussed. The requirement is a challenge for the Town recruiting not for the officers currently on the force. Chief Fitzgerald believes it's a benefit for the Town because police are first responders.

Mr. Boling asked why it was a problem for new hires if there is additional pay associated with the certification? Chief Fitzgerald stated it is a lot of work and the applicant needs to pay for the training. Mr. Oldeman stated, and those applicants can get a job elsewhere, Chief Fitzgerald indicated that was correct.

Mr. Weld asked if the requirement is a detriment to hiring and the current officers already have the certification why not take the requirement out of the contract. EMT certification is 5% of the officers pay. Ms. Harrison pointed out if an officer was hired without the certification and achieved the certification, they would realize a 5% increase in pay.

Mr. Federspiel indicated the union is interested in reinstating the Quinn Act which the Town is unwilling to consider.

Mr. Creighton asked about Department calls. Chief Fitzgerald stated there were 4,859 calls for service last year and an additional 4,200 calls with officers engaging. Additionally, there were 82 arrests. Most incidents occur in June, July and August, May through October calls are spiked.

Mr. Creighton asked about trends, Chief Fitzgerald stated many calls are around mental health issues. The Department partners with Lahey for support around sectioning a person and transporting to the hospital against their will. The Lahey crisis intervention person is on call 24-hours, comes out and makes the decision to transport the person in crisis to the hospital.

Overdoses are tracked statewide if a person from Manchester overdoses anywhere in the State that person can be followed up in Town to assure their safety.

Mr. Weld had one final questions about retired officers. Chief Fitzgerald stated there are 2 retired officers who work on traffic details. There were no additional questions

Review of DPW Operating Budget –

Operating budget was approved.

Mr. Dam is taking cemetery operations in-house for a projected savings of \$25K to \$30K annually. Catch basin work will be handled in-house estimated contractual cost of catch basin cleaning is \$2K estimate cleaning 25 basins in FY21 for a net savings of \$50K. Mr. Oldeman requested a formal tracking system be established to account for the new position and estimated savings on contracted labor.

Review of DPW Capital Budget – Capital budget for DPW will be reviewed next week.

Operating Budgets Approvals:

Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the FY21 Police Department operating budget and expenses as outlined on page C-6 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Weld moved to approve the FY21 Animal Control operating budget and expenses as outlined on page C-7 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Creighton moved to approve the FY21 Emergency Management operating budget and expenses as outlined on page C-19 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Harrison moved to approve the FY21 Harbor Master operating budget and expenses as outlined on page C-22 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Weld moved to approve the FY21 Building Department operating budget and expenses as outlined on page C-25 in the amount of \$80,941.00 in the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Harrison moved to approve the FY21 Department of Public Works operating budget and expenses as outlined on page D-4 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget with the exception of moving \$10K from line item 52662 Vehicle/Equipment Repair to line item 52175 Tree Maintenance; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Weld moved to approve the FY21 Snow Removal operating budget and expenses as outlined on page D-4 in the amount of \$202K in the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Oldeman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the FY21 Sanitation Collection & Disposal operating budget and expenses as outlined on page D-5 in the amount of \$654,750.00 in the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Mr. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Oldeman moved to approve the FY21 Water and Sewer – Sewer Indirect Costs in the amount of \$1,282,275.00 as outlined on page J-3 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Ms. Mellish seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Creighton moved to approve the FY21 Water and Sewer – Water Indirect Cost in the amount of \$1,340,912.00 as outlined on page J-5 of the FY21 Preliminary Budget; Ms. Harrison seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the chair (discussion only).

Mr. Oldeman moved to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Weld seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Materials:

FY 21 Preliminary Budget

Upcoming Meetings:

January 29, 2020 – Discuss and Approve Budgets and Capital for Several Department