

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <February 7, 2013>at the BPW Administration Building, Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-John Roderiques, Robert A. Furtado, Scott Fernandes, Kim Hyland, Kevin Costa, Therese Szala, Colin Veitch, Dawn Devlin, Sid Martin, Phil Washko, Padraic Elliot

Members absent:

Kathi Carter

Town of Fairhaven:

Jeffery Osuch- Executive secretary

Timothy Francis- Fire Chief, 7:30 PM appointment

Meeting was covered by government access television. Member of the press present.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Announced that the meeting was being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording.

Motion made by Kim to accept the minutes from January 31, 2013. Seconded by Scott.

Vote: Unanimous

Chairman asks, if there are no objections, for one person to make all motions and one person make all seconds in order to make the secretary's job easier.

- Mr. Osuch passed out updated budget spreadsheets, new sheet with Preliminary Revenue Projections, Draft of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant for May 4, 2013.
- The 2014 Assessment for GNBRVTHS is \$ 2,129,811. Enrollment is down slightly. This number does not include any money for the new construction project. There will be a meeting March 8, 2013, 9:00 AM at the school to discuss the term of the loan for the addition project. The borrowing can be for either 10, 15, or 20 years. The ultimate decision is that of the GNBRVTHS school committee.
- Mr. Osuch and the Chairman discuss revenue projections with the committee.

The committee must decide how they are going to handle the associated costs issue with the water and sewer enterprise accounts.

The cost of doing business must be come out of the enterprise account. The enterprise accounts should be self-sufficient for all the expenses of that operation.

Chairman advises committee that there is good information available on the DOR website under Local Services, Data Bank Reports.

- Chairman and Mr. Osuch discuss the Selectmen meeting with the Finance Committee to discuss their articles and department budgets.

Mr. Osuch states that he has relayed the invitation from the Chairman. The Selectmen have responded that the Finance Committee is welcome to attend the February 11, 2013 Selectmen's meeting. Chairman explains that logistically this won't work and even if it did, there is not enough time to legally post for the meeting. If the Selectmen choose not to attend a Finance Committee meeting, the Committee will have to make recommendations without their input.

- 7:30PM appointment with Chief Francis to discuss the Fire Department budget, Fire Alarm Department budget, and the Department's Articles.

- Discussion is started with a Reserve Fund Transfer Request to transfer \$ 5,000 to the Supplies-Ambulance Supply category #01-220-00-5501-00.

Chief states that "This year saw an extraordinary amount of patients needing ALS care, which caused the replacement of supplies that have a high cost. In addition, we have found that medical supply prices have increased in general which has resulted in more funding spent."

The Chief also states that part of the increase in spending is due to a 3rd ambulance being run. The ambulance has performed 100 more runs this year than last.

Chairman explains that only Town Meeting can take money out of the Ambulance Account.

- Terry motions to transfer \$ 5,000 from the Reserve Fund to Supplies-Ambulance Supply category #01-220-00-5501-00. Seconded by Scott. Vote: Unanimous.

- Chief Francis presents the Fire Department budget:

Overall budget is up approximately \$ 24,400. \$ 20,380 of that is contractually required because of the 1% raise + steps+longevity.

Contracted services is up because of maintenance. Medical supplies are up because of the above stated reasons.

Discussion of running 3 ambulances:

Chief states he has been running 3 ambulances since September. Runs are up 100 since last year. The same staff is used. No increase in manpower.

When asked if the 3rd ambulance billing would cover its cost, the Chief initially states that he hopes so. The Chairman makes it clear to the Chief that it was understood that the 3rd ambulance must cover its own costs. We are not in a position to increase services.

Mr. Osuch recommends reducing the heat and light budget by \$ 600 because of historical data. He also recommends increasing the gasoline budget by \$ 1,950 of which \$ 650 would be used by the 3rd ambulance.

- Chief Francis presents the Fire Alarm Department budget:
Budget is up slightly because of the 1% raise.
Chief advises that there is potential for \$ 3,000 worth of repairs to the department bucket truck in the near future. The truck is used almost daily by many different departments in town.

- Chief Francis discusses his Articles:
 - Article #13-FEMA Grant for Ladder 1:
Matching grant to replace the existing Ladder Truck. New Ladder would cost approximately \$ 858,000. If the Town gets the grant, it would be responsible for \$ 38,450- approximately 5% of the total cost.
The existing Ladder will be 40 years old in 2015. Because of its age, it requires yearly hydraulic inspections with associated repairs.
\$ 10,000 worth of repairs are presently recommended for the truck, but the Chief advises he is holding off until he sees if he is going to get the grant for the new truck.
 - Article #14-Fire Department Fee Schedule:
Chief is recommending raising the various fees in the department to increase revenue and bring fees more in line with surrounding towns.
 - Article #17-Fire and Police Shared Telephone System:
Same Article discussed by the Police Chief at last meeting.
This past weekend the phone lines, other than 911, were down for 6 hours. Calls had to be transferred to other departments in order to ensure the calls were received.
 - Article #36-Hazardous Materials Revolving Fund:
Recurring yearly Article that establishes an account to pay for replacing damaged equipment caused by hazardous materials. Account is funded by those

responsible for the hazardous material or their insurance company. Money cannot be expended if it not in the fund.

Terry questions wording in Article referencing hiring. Chairman states that the position could only be funded with money in the fund.

- Article #38-Fire Department Security System:
Chief Francis seeks \$ 8,500 to install security cameras on all exterior doors and the apparatus floor. ALL Security is the contractor providing 7 cameras and associated hardware to allow for storage of 4 months of surveillance . The installation has to be done at prevailing wage.
Chief states that items have gone missing while personnel have been out on runs.

- Chairman calls recess at 8:16PM. Back in session at 8:20 PM.

- Chairman starts a preliminary discussion about the Articles:
 - Article #3-Setting Salaries
Town Clerk salary is up. It will be discussed next week when she comes in.
 - Article #5-Town Department Computer & Telephone Upgrades
Committee needs more info on this. Mr. Osuch promises more for next week.
 - Article #6-Water Pollution Control Facility
Committee will need explanation from the BPW.
 - Article #8-Road Work
Chairman starts discussion by warning members that they must be careful of the conflict of interest laws if they or their relative lives on or near a listed road.
Chairman would like to get a range of what amount the committee would like to spend on road work this year. He suggests \$ 325,000 to \$ 350,000 as a starting point, if the committee has no objection. The amount could be fine tuned as the budget process proceeds and we see how much money we have to work with.
There is not enough money to recommend every road listed.
Sid questions availability of town labor in doing the work without overtime.
Chairman questions the value in paving dirt roads. Still many dirt roads left in town.
 - Article #10-High School Fire Escapes
Chairman states some believe there may be a possibility of using CPC money for this. Also trust money from the High School Trust.

- Discussion of voting on budgets:
Chairman states that if everyone seems satisfied with the budgets that have been presented so far, the Committee will leave them as presented for now.

Terry states that sometimes it is advisable to vote on the budgets as they presented, as they are fresh on your mind, instead of waiting and voting many budgets in one night.

- Discussion of the need to make a decision on whether the Committee will use a Max, Mid Point, or Conservative approach for the revenue numbers.
Chairman and Mr. Osuch discuss Surplus Revenue and the strategies involved in planning for future years. Need to be careful of one time money.
Chairman states his desire to have 3-5 year projections from the administration.
- Chairman states that if the DOR was asked to study the town, the administration should follow their recommendations.
Discusses displeasure with the Selectmen appointing a Capital Improvement Committee instead of Town Meeting.
- Next week Town Clerk will be in.
Next Friday is the deadline for people to make an appointment with the Finance Committee.
Members are urged to continue reviewing the budgets.
- 9:31 PM Kim motions to adjourn. Seconded by Sid. Vote: Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary

(accepted 2-14-2013)