

# Town of Fairhaven

## Finance Committee

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Minutes of the meeting for <February 15, 2018> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Padraic Elliott, Robert A. Furtado, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, Bernard F. Roderick, Tracey Diggins, Thomas Alden, Jessica Dwelly

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Wendy Graves- Collector/Treasurer/Finance Director

Timothy Francis- Fire Chief

Todd Correia- Deputy Fire Chief

Meeting was not covered by government access television.

Chairman Pat called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was not being recorded by government access TV. Chairman has to be notified if anyone else present is recording the meeting by video or audio.

Motion made by Tom to accept the minutes from January 18, 2018. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Committee members now have copies of the TA's FY19 General Fund recommended budget, after picking them up at Town Hall this week.  
Mr. Rees runs through his cover letter for the budget.
  - Bernie asks about the amount of State contribution.  
Mr. Rees states it is up slightly from last year.
  - Lisa asks about the \$100,000 revenue from the wind turbines. Is this just the lease payment?  
Mr. Rees states there is a detailed breakdown in the Revenue section of the budget.
- Pat states, at the end of the meeting, we will discuss if any members have questions about specific department the budgets, we can have them come in.

- Chief Francis presents the Fire Department budget:
  - Chief Francis states they had requested 2 new firefighter/paramedic positions to fully staff the ambulances.  
He states Mr. Rees and the budget team have asked him to hold off on those positions for now.
  - Chief Francis states we are still losing firefighters to other communities. He has 2 recruits waiting attend the Fire Academy and Mr. Rees is encouraging him to apply for the Safer Grant this year.
  - Mr. Rees states, because the budget is in flux, new sheets with the correct salary number will be distributed. Also, numbers will be adjusted to reflect the money that was budgeted in other categories for the new firefighters.
  - Chief Francis states he is requesting \$2,514 to replace a multi gas meter. The meter is used to detect dangerous gases and the present unit is too old to obtain replacement parts for.
  - Chief Francis is requesting \$11,400 to update the existing Plymovent system. The system is used to remove the exhaust fumes when the apparatus are started inside. The current system is old and requires costly repairs. The new system will have a more efficient method of attaching to the trucks.
  - Chief Francis has also included an additional \$500 in Building Maintenance to allow for painting in the station.  
Chief Francis states he will use labor from the Sheriff's Dept., but this money is to cover the paint and supplies.
  - Contracted Services is up because of the increase in service contracts.
  - The dept. is requesting the purchase of 3 Air Traq video recorded laryngoscope systems, used to insert trachea tubes in patients.  
Deputy Chief Correia states the devices making inserting the tubes easier and it provides a video record of the procedure if needed in the future.  
There would be 1 per ambulance.
  - Equipment for Personnel seeks to purchase 8 sets of helmets and Level 3 ballistic vests to protect 1<sup>st</sup> responders when entering a violent situation.
  - Chief Francis states he has removed Small Claims from the budget because they now contract collections to an outside company.
  - Replacement Equipment seeks an increase of \$3,790 to begin a multiyear project of replacing aging defibrillators.  
Chief Francis states they plan on replacing 2 each year.  
The new units would also be interactive with the paramedic units, eliminating the need to use switch pads.
  - Chairman asks if committee members have any questions of the Fire Dept. budget?

- Bernie asks if new hires undergo drug testing?  
Chief Francis states yes, and everyone has random testing. Also new hires undergo psychological exams.
- Bob asks about Chief Francis's statement that only half of the call firefighters are active.  
Asks if they still receive equipment if they are not active.  
Chief Francis states the Town requires them to attend at least 50% of the calls.
- Pat and Chief Francis discuss the shift schedule and how the 24 hr. shift works.
- Kathy asks if the dept. does exit interviews when firefighters leave?  
Chief Francis states they do and many are leaving because they can make more money in other departments.
- Chief Francis discusses the Fire Alarm budget:
  - Chief Francis states Salary is up because one of the employees was reclassified. He originally had been incorrectly put in lower category.
  - Replacement Equipment seeks \$2,270 to continue replacing the fire fighter pagers.
- Chief Francis discusses the Fire Department Capital Improvement items:
  - The first item is \$32,000 to purchase a battery operated Hydraulic Spreader, a battery operated Hydraulic Cutter, a Strut Stabilizing Package, and three standard airbags. These tools would replace the existing 16 year old tools and 25 year old air bags.
  - The second item is \$64,000 to install a radio repeater on a pole at Hoppy's Landing. This would improve the radio coverage for the Fire Dept. on the southern area of Sconticut Neck Road and West Island.
- Committee briefly discusses the new ambulance being in service with the Chief and Deputy Chief.

Chief and Deputy Chief leave the meeting at 7:38 PM.

- Discussion of how the scheduling of future meetings will work.

Mr. Rees leaves the meeting at 7:42 PM.

- Ms. Graves presents the accounting & finance budgets:
- Town Accountant:
  - Regular pay has gone down because a new employee has started at a lower step.
  - Office supplies are up.
  - Preprinted Forms is increased to cover the 1099 Forms that were originally in the IT budget.
  - Town Audit is up to cover the OPEB audit.
  - Jessica asks about the "Open Checkbook".

Ms. Graves explains this allows the public to view the Town spending online.

- Treasurer/Collector:
  - Regular Pay has increased because of the increase in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the Clerical contract.
  - Contracted Services is increased to cover the Harpers Payroll for \$35,000 and Pitney Bowes postal machine for \$2,860 which was removed from the IT Dept.
  - Tax Title remains the same.
  - Kathi asks about the time table of property going to Land Court.  
Ms. Graves states there is a process involved and she keeps after it.
  - Postage is increased \$300 to allow for 1 more Waterways Account billing.
  - Office Supplies are up to reflect paper and supplies moved out of the IT budget.
  - Mileage and Seminars is increased to allow for training for new staff members.
- Assessors:
  - Ms. Graves states the Assessors requested a part time person, but Mr. Rees did not recommend it.
  - Regular pay is up because of the Clerical contract.
  - Office Supplies is increased \$200.
  - Mileage and Seminars are up to allow training for new personnel.
  - Jessica asks where the training is held and questions the mileage.  
Ms. Graves states it is put on by the Assessors Assoc. for the entire State, and is generally held in a central location. The Town Accountant requires proof of attending and the mileage.
- Chairman states he will be out of Town next week and we will not meet.
- Chairman states he will have Mr. Rees arrange to have the large departments come in.
- Mr. Rees expects to have Articles for the next meeting on March 1, 2018.
- Ms. Graves states she thinks the Selectmen are meeting that night.  
Bernie and Tracey state they will not be in attendance for that meeting.
- Chairman states Mr. Rees will not be at the March 22, 2018 meeting and has requested we not take any votes that night.
- Chairman states we will probably need to meet on Tuesday March 27, 2018.
- Chairman advises we will likely have heavy voting on March 29, 2018.
- Chairman asks members to contact him if they have questions about specific budgets, and need someone to come in.
- Meeting schedule as it stands now:  
March 1, 2018

March 8, 2018  
March 15, 2018  
March 22, 2018 tentative  
March 27, 2018  
March 29, 2018

8:17 PM. Bernie motions to adjourn. Seconded by the Tom. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado  
Finance Committee Secretary  
(accepted 3-1-2018)