

Town of Fairhaven

Finance Committee

Minutes of the meeting for <April 6, 2017> at the Jeffery W. Osuch BPW Administration Building, 5 Arsene St., Fairhaven, MA

Members in attendance:

Chairman-Scott Fernandes, Robert A. Furtado, Padraic Elliott, Kathi Carter, Lisa Plante, Bernard F. Roderick, Tracy Diggins, Thomas Alden

Town of Fairhaven:

Mark Rees- Town Administrator

Timothy Francis- Fire Chief

Todd Correia- Deputy Chief

Vincent Furtado- BPW Superintendent

Michael Ristuccia- Chairman Board of Public Works (in @ 7:47 PM)

Meeting was covered by government access television.

Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Announced that the meeting was 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 Bernie to accept the minutes from March 30, 2017. Seconded by Kathi. Vote: Unanimous

- Mr. Rees distributes copies of information about the Wellness Fitness Station behind the Rec Center, and a handout with Ambulance Fund Costs.

- Mr. Rees explains the ambulance sheet:
 - The sheet compares actual FY2016 numbers to estimated FY2017 and projected FY208 numbers.
 - The Chief's figures are based on a 3 1/2% increase in runs between FY16 and FY17. Chief Francis states the runs are actually up 5 1/2%. He is planning on a 3 1/2% increase between FY17 and FY18.
 - Chief Francis plans on a \$112,017 surplus in FY17 and a \$130,849 surplus in FY18.
 - Pat asks if the cost of the replacement ambulance is in the numbers.

Chief Francis shows a \$50,000 transfer is included in FY17 and a \$60,000 transfer in FY18.

- Article 24: General Fund Capital Plan (FY18)
 - B. Fire, Ambulance Replacement: \$260,000
 - Tom motions for \$260,000. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous
 - Tom motions to reconsider vote. Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
 - Tom motions for \$98,817 from the Ambulance Stabilization Fund and \$161,183 from the Ambulance Receipts Reserved for Appropriation. Seconded by Bernie. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 6: Community Preservation Program Appropriations- FY17
 - B. Recreation Center/Wellness Committee- Fitness Station Project \$10,000

7:17 PM. Fire personnel leave meeting

- Kathi and Lisa question the value of the proposed unit and the cost.
- Tracey asks who came up with the idea.
Mr. Rees states it was put forth by the Wellness Committee as an effort to increase healthy life styles and keep the health insurance costs down.
- Tom questions how much it will get used.
- Pat states it seems like the beginning of a series of units that will be installed along the Bike Path in the future.
- Mr. Rees suggests waiting to vote until we get more information.
- Mr. Furtado states the Wellness Committee meets in the building and he feels they do not select any projects without due consideration.
- Chairman states we will wait until we get more information.

- Mr. Rees presents his PowerPoint presentation on the Collective Bargaining Agreements:
 - The agreements are for 3 years- FY17, FY18, FY19
 - Mr. Rees states the bargaining strategy consisted of 3 major objectives:
Affordable/Sustainable
Recognition of Labor Markets
Improve Management Rights
 - Mr. Rees presents a graph that shows that:
 - Firefighter/Medics in Fairhaven are paid 13% less than comparable communities
 - Firefighter Lt./Medics - 13% less
 - Police Officers-7% less
 - Police Sergeant- 8% less

- Clerical-Assist. Dept. Head- 3% less
- Clerical-Principal Clerk- 7% less
- Clerical-Senior Clerk- 11% less
- Mr. Rees states the increase for Fire amounts to 3% for FY17, 4.25% for FY18, and 3% for FY19.
- Mr. Rees states the Town gained management changes consisting of:
 - Mandatory Random Drug and Alcohol Testing
 - Allowance for 2 Day Firefighters for improved ambulance coverage
 - EMS Coordinator/Training Officer: Seven Year Commitment
 - Repayment of Training Costs if a new firefighter leaves
- Mr. Rees states the increase for Police amounts to 3% for FY17, 3.5% for FY18, and 2.5% for FY19.
- Mr. Rees states the Town gained management changes consisting of:
 - Use of Management Designed Assessment Center Process for Promotions
 - Stronger Language for Drug and Alcohol Testing
 - Shift Differential to be paid based on shift assigned, not worked
- Mr. Rees states the increase for Clerical amounts to 3% for FY17, 3% for FY18, and 2.5% for FY19, for Grade A. The higher grades receive a lower increase in the second 2 years to close the gap in lower level clerical.
- Mr. Rees states the Town gained management changes consisting of:
 - Stronger Drug & Alcoholic Testing Language
 - Combine Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Collector into Assistant Treasurer/Collector
- Mr. Rees states the increase for Dispatchers amounts to 3% for FY17, 2% for FY18, and 1% for FY19
- Mr. Rees shows a graph that illustrates the new salaries "closing the gap" with other communities, but still lower than other communities.
- Kathi questions the Police "shift pay differential assigned, not worked" clause. Mr. Rees states officers will be paid for the shift they are assigned, regardless if they trade shifts with another officer. Mr. Rees states the old system was an administrative nightmare.
- Bob questions the 7 year commitment for the EMS Training Officer. Mr. Rees states the Lt. that takes that position must stay in it for 7 years. If a new Firefighter leaves after training, they must repay the training costs to the Town, on a sliding scale depending upon when they leave.
- Pat questions the salary survey with comparable towns. Mr. Rees states the comparable communities were negotiated with the union.

7:47 PM. Mr. Ristuccia joins the meeting

- Pat asks what the EQV Per Capita category is in Mr. Rees' comparables sheet.

Mr. Rees states that is a DOR term that is an indicator of property wealth.

- Pat is concerned if the economy hits a down turn, we will pay unemployment.
- Chairman states he is concerned the Schools will want more.

7:50 PM. Pat abstains from School Salary discussion and leaves meeting:

- Chairman discusses school salaries.
- Mr. Rees is proposing a 3 1/2% increase in the School budget for FY19.
- Chairman states we have to be concerned about arbitration with the Police and Fire.
- Mr. Rees states if this went to arbitration, he feels the union would get this as a minimum.
- Lisa is concerned with layoffs in the future.
- Bernie asks if Town Meeting doesn't approve, does it move to arbitration. Mr. Rees states they would go back to negotiations first, then arbitration.
- Chairman states next year we will need roughly \$800,000 for the increase, and Mr. Rees has shown that the revenue is there.
- Lisa asks do the arbitrators automatically assume you will increase taxes 2 1/2% each year. Mr. Rees states they look at the communities ability to pay and surrounding communities.

8:01 PM. Pat rejoins the meeting

- Kathi asks about the "stronger language for drug and alcohol testing" in the police management changes. Mr. Rees states before they needed probable cause, now they just need reasonable suspicion.
- Bob asks if it is random drug testing. Mr. Rees states only Fire has random drug testing. The Town wanted it from all unions, but they did not get it.
- Chairman states the money is there for the increase.
- Mr. Furtado presents the changes to the Highway Contract:
 - Mr. Furtado presents his sheet with comparisons of salaries from comparable towns:

Foreman	8% below average
Mechanic	10% below average
Machine Operator	9% below average
Truck Driver	12% below average

Laborer 17% below average

- New contract includes raises of: FY17 3%, FY18 3%, FY19 2.5%
 - Mr. Rees states he suggested a graduated raise in the final year for the Laborers, to bring them closer to other towns, but the union rejected it.
 - Mr. Furtado runs down his sheet, highlighting the major changes to the contract.
 - Mr. Furtado states he is satisfied with the contract.
 - Pat questions if workers working Memorial Day will get the double time pay as well as the regular holiday pay.
Mr. Furtado states the worker would only get the double time for hours that were work on the holiday.
- Mr. Rees states approving the contracts will cost \$162,022 for FY17 from the General Fund, which will come from the Salary Reserve Fund.
 - Chairman asks if Mr. Rees has the numbers for the Sewer and Water Enterprises?
Mr. Rees states he doesn't have those numbers yet.
- Discussion of Roadwork
 - Mr. Furtado clarifies section B. Diamond Street- will include paving Club Street and Henry Street.
 - Chairman states the motion at Town Meeting will have to be changed to reflect that.
 - Chairman ask why they are doing more dirt roads than paved roads this year.
Mr. Furtado states those roads were among the ones on the list, and when they held the meeting, there were people present from those streets, so the Board went with those roads.
 - Pat asks about the use of chip seal.
Mr. Furtado states it doesn't last and, depending on the weather, it can be problematic with the Conservation Commission.
 - Chairman asks about plowing the Bike Path.
 - Mr. Furtado states they will contract it out. He is concerned with making sure the contractor has equipment that can plow it without damaging it.
 - Mr. Rees states he will take the money out of the Snow & Ice category and put it in Contracted Services.
 - Mr. Rees states the idea of plowing the Bike Path came from the bike advocates in Town.
 - Article 25: Roadwork-FY18
 - Tom motions to approve the BPW petitioned streets not to cumulatively exceed \$320,000 in aggregate-with \$104,000 coming from Free Cash and \$216,000 coming from the Surplus Overlay- as follows:

- A. Brown Street
- B. Diamond Street- including Club Street & Henry Street
- C. Hopkins Street
- D. Rockland Street

- Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous
- Pat motions to Indefinitely Postpone the following:
 - E. Bluepoint Road
 - F. Cove Street
 - G. Billy's Way
 - H. Ebony Street
- Seconded by Lisa. Vote: Unanimous

- Article 7: Funding Labor Contracts FY17

- Pat motions to proceed to vote on the Article. Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous
- Pat motions for Adoption and transfer of \$162,022 from the Salary Reserve Fund, in the following amounts:

Selectmen/TA- Salary Other	\$2,076
Finance Director/Treasurer/Collector- Salaries & Wages	\$6,008
Town Clerk/Elections- Salary- Other- Town Clerk	\$1,128
Assessors- Salaries & Wages	\$1,902
Police- Salaries & Wages-Wages Police	\$74,167
Fire- Salary and Wages-Fire/EMS	\$48,488
Building Department- Salaries & Wages	\$522
Highway Division- Salaries & Wages	\$24,766
Board of Health- Salary- other	\$522
Council on Aging- Salaries & Wages	\$1,034
Park Division- Salaries & Wages	\$1,409

- Seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Articles 8,9, & 12 Non-Union Wages-FY17

- Mr. Rees states these positions received a 3% raise.
- Discussion of money in the Town Accountant Dept. to cover the floater position at Town Hall.
Mr. Rees states this is a mistake and the money comes out of the Selectmen's budget.
- Mr. Rees states that money has been taken out of the FY18 budget
- Chairman runs down Mr. Rees' sheet and committee members will hold any amounts questioned.

- Pat holds Selectmen/TA- Salary Board \$468.
Pat wonders about the philosophy of raises for elected part time officials.
Pat states he doesn't have a problem with a raise, but wonders if it is going to be a yearly thing.
- Bob questions the Selectmen and elected officials getting raises, but the Moderator not receiving one.
- Mr. Rees confesses to not being equal across the board because he didn't give a raise to the Board of Health or the Moderator, but did give one to the Selectmen.
Mr. Rees suggests we deduct the \$468 this year.
- Lisa holds Police Dept. & Animal Control- Salary & Wages-Animal Control \$1,600.
Mr. Rees states this is a 3% raise for the ACO and the assistant ACO.
- Lisa asks if the ACO will be reclassified now that the Police Chief has oversight.
- Mr. Rees states the assistant position was added to cover when the ACO was off.
- Tom asks if the ACO will still prepare the budget or will the Police Chief do it now.
Mr. Rees states the ACO will still do it.
- Pat holds Emergency Management Agency-Salary & Wages \$50.
Pat asks what this is for.
Mr. Rees states it is the raise for the EMA director.
- Mr. Rees directs committee to remove the \$468 from the Selectmen's budget and reduce the Town Accountant number to \$8,708.
- Mr. Rees discovers the money for the floater position is still in the FY18 budget and states he will remove it.

➤ Pat motions for Adoption and transfer of \$119,945 from the Salary Reserve Fund, in the following amounts:

Selectmen/TA- Salary -Other	\$6,692
Town Accountant- Salary & Wages	\$8,708
Finance Director (Treasurer/Collector)-Salaries & Wages	\$7,881
Town Clerk/Elections - Salary- Town Clerk	\$1,589
Assessors- Salaries & Wages	\$2,398
Town Hall- Salaries & Wages	\$5,442
Town Meeting/Finance Committee- Salaries & Wages	\$32
Planning Board- Salaries & Wages	\$57
Planning & Economic Development- Salaries & Wages	\$3,016
Board of Appeals- Salaries & Wages	\$347
Conservation Commission- Salaries & Wages	\$361
Police Dept.-Salaries & Wages-Wages Police	\$6,963
Police Dept.-Salaries& Wages-Animal Control	\$1,600
Fire Dept.-Salary and Wages-Fire/EMS	\$8,400

Fire Dept.-Salary and Wages-Alarm	\$341
Building Dept.- Salaries & Wages	\$3,621
Harbor Master/Shellfish Inspector	\$2,693
Emergency Management Agency	\$50
Sealer of Weights and Measures	\$196
Public Works-Administration-Salaries & Wages	\$4,872
Highway Division- Salaries & Wages	\$2,439
Tree Warden Department- Salary-Tree Warden	\$201
Tree Warden Department- Salary-Other	\$830
Board of Health-Salary-Other	\$2,803
Council on Aging- Salaries & Wages	\$3,038
Veteran Services- Salaries & Wages	\$1,278
Recreation-Salaries & Wages	\$4,548
Park Division-Salaries & Wages	\$1,432
Office of Tourism- Salaries & Wages	\$1,563
Medicare	\$37,000

➤ All amounts seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Bob questions a statement by Mr. Rees concerning raises for FY17 for contracted employees.

Mr. Rees clarifies that this only applies to those with a wage reopener.

- Article 9: Amended FY17 General Fund Operating Budget-

➤ Pat motions to transfer \$36,919 from Interest on Temp Loans in the following amounts:

Town Clerk/Elections-Purchase of Services-Town Clerk	\$1,200
Town Hall-Purchase of Services	\$5,720
Fire Department-Purchase of Services-Fire/EMS	\$8,500
Bristol County Aggie HS	\$6,423

➤ All amounts seconded by Tom. Vote: Unanimous

- Mr. Rees runs thru some of the changes to the Town Hall budgets:
 - Mr. Rees states the Selectmen- Contracted Services is up because of \$6,000 job classification study.
 - Chairman asks if the Wellness Committee money and Sister City money is coming from the General Fund.
Mr. Rees states yes, it is General Fund tax money.
 - Lisa questions the \$7,500 for the Wellness Committee.

Mr. Rees states the committee was started several years ago in an effort to improve the health of the employees.

It was originally started with a grant, and the grant is no longer available.

Mr. Rees states he would like to get more information together before the committee votes.

- Mr. Rees states Information Technology will be changed to Consolidated IT.
- Town Hall- Contracted Services includes money for a new alarm system
Minor Equipment- \$4,500 will be coming out of this category for the ramp repair that will be done with FY17 money.
- Chairman discusses the money in Finance-Dues Prof. Gatherings for the annual ATFC meeting.
- Chairman asks Mr. Rees if he is still carrying the same amount for Legal Services.
Mr. Rees states he is.
- Mr. Rees distributes a handout with job descriptions for the Human Resources Director.
 - Mr. Rees states the Town is at risk without a HR person that knows all the legal requirements for employees.
 - Discussion of HR person in comparable towns.
 - Mr. Rees states that now each department is not necessarily handling personnel matters in the same fashion.
 - Mr. Rees states he is meeting again with the BPW on Monday to try to get them on board with using the HR position also.
 - Lisa asks if this is creating a new department? Will it mean more staff?
Mr. Rees states it would be a new department. One clerk would move from the Selectmen's office to this department.
 - Lisa asks if Mr. Rees is given part of his job to this position?
Mr. Rees would have ultimate oversight over the position and feels this is a necessary position.
- Chairman states we will complete the FY18 budget next week and work on Town Meeting Articles.

9:47 PM. Bernie motions to adjourn. Seconded by the Tom. Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully submitted by:

Robert A. Furtado
Finance Committee Secretary
(accepted 4-13-2017)