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TOWN OF NORTON

FINANCE COMMITTEE
Municipal Center – Selectmen's Conference Room

FEBRUARY 25, 2019
7:00 P.M.

MINUTES

I. 7:00 P.M. Call to Order

The February 25, 2019 meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Board of Selectmen's Room and was called to order beginning with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 P.M., by Mr. William Rotondi, Chairman.

Members Present:

Mr. Stephen Evans, Vice-Chair, Mr. Peter Carignan (late arrival), Mr. Tom DeLuca, Mr. Richard Dorney, Mr. Walter Eykel, Mr. Michael Fiore, Mr. Paul Helmreich, Mr. Aaron Smith, and Ms Bonnie Yezukevich.

Also in attendance was Mr. Mike Yunits, Town Manager.

Absent: Ms Aimee Sawyer.

II. New Business

Proposed FY20 Budget Reviews:

#210 – Police Department – Chief Brian Clark stated that this is a level services budget requesting 2.9% increase due to contracts. There is really no increase in overtime hours but rather the rate increase due to officer's hourly rate. The predominant reason for overtime is backfilling shifts when someone is out. There are two officers scheduled to retire soon so we must plan ahead to get officers through the academy to replace them. The overtime will increase until the person currently in the Academy has completed training in September. The department has future needs which are not on this budget, but will include a second School Resource Officer which the school pays 75%, Deputy Chief of Police, and a Full Time Problem Oriented Police Officer. Also, I funds are available would request, \$69,000 which is a half salary for two officers to attend a recruit academy and would be ready for 2021.

The following questions were asked of Chief Clark throughout his budget presentation:

1. An example of Investigative Technology Services: Chief stated things like researching complaints about unknown phone or text messages. The information from this service helps to find the information.
2. Is the Asst. Deputy Chief is going to be filled from within. Chief Clark 'correct'.
3. What is the overtime rate? Chief Clark responded that it is time and a half of the officer's base rate.
4. What would be the perfect manpower size for a town the size of Norton; where Norton is in comparison to other towns? Chief Clark responded that at a force of 32 officers, we are lower than both Mansfield and Easton, but we should never have less than 4 cars on a shift.
5. Is there a preference to sending candidates to the academy opposed to hiring laterally? Chief Clark stated that he prefers to send his own candidate for training. That way you are not picking up someone else that wants to jump ship from one municipality to another.
6. Will the new Regional Communication Center in Foxboro have additional cost to Norton, as Foxboro is hiring three new people to cover this center? Chief Clark said that it will not impact his budget as Norton Police Department already has a desk officer assigned to each shift.
7. What is causing the \$104,000 increase, is \$69,500 for the second resource officer? Chief stated the increase is mostly contractual and has nothing to do with the second resource officer. That would be \$32,000 additional and is not included in this budget.

Chief Clark explained further about overtime, what defined normal shift coverage and how and when backfill is required. In a handout to members it illustrated how different shifts are staffed; for example, staffed at 6 for day shift; Midnight - 8 manned with 5 officers; when someone on day or midnight shift takes a day we will not backfill, if two are out a desk officer will cover. Weather issues may be a reason for overtime as well.

#610 Library – Ms Lee Parker, Director, stated the hourly requirements required by the State to remain certified. The library must increase it's open hours from 40 to 45 per week by 2021 with 284 staff hours per week at an increase of 12 ½% per MBLC. Her budget is based on the 45 per week model. Ms Parker wrote up the budgets for 40/45/50 hour openings for review and comparison. She presented a very thorough update on the duties of the staff. She also stated appreciation for the HVAC updates and new alarm system, and new LED lights. Ms Parker also shared the comparison of funding for comparable towns. Questions asked of Ms. Parker were:

1. What hourly budget is shown here? Ms Parker wrote 3 budgets, but this year's budget projects 45 hours.
2. When does the Library have to be staffed up to 50? Ms Parker stated, we must get to 50 by FY21. Trying to start the transition this year and will try to implement over two years.
3. What are the average salary increases? Why is there a 29% total budget increase? Ms Parker stated that this is because of materials that she did not include in last year's budget (\$77,000 in materials). If you take out the materials, it is really 11% increase. Looks like more than 10%. The person salary discussed went from a Reference Librarian to Asst. Director. Admin assistant also takes up many more hours. For example, Popup library caused additional hours and duties.

4. It was requested that Ms. Parker show the salary increases including percentages to make sure it compares with the rest of the town. The Town Manager was asked what is the expected average salary increase to town employees? Mr. Yunits replied the average is 3% with Department Heads 4% (includes their step).
5. Do you have any idea of the forecasting state aid coming? Ms Parker stated approximately \$21,000. But for 100% of that amount, the library needs to be open 50 hours.
6. Are there good and bad attendance days? Ms Parker stated that they do track and can trend. Most days there are people waiting at the door in the morning for opening at 10. She would like to open 9:30 to 7:30 rather than 10-7. Saturdays and Fridays are always slower. Wednesday evenings are very busy due to story time. She also stated that they continue to raise funds through the Friends of the Library and write Grants. They received \$34,080 in grants and fundraising last year.

Ms Parker stated that the Library's Endowment(Supplemental Budget) is down due to additional cost of maintenance for HVAC, LED lights, Fire Alarm system, etc. The Endowment is being utilized for these and other costs which means its lower value provides for lower investment returns.

#570 – Board of Health - Professional Services – Mr. Yunits requested Reserve Fund Transfer of \$1,865.00 additional to cover unforeseen cost to board up a condemned home.

Motion made by Mr. DeLuca

Second by Mr. Evans

Unanimous approval

Mr. Yunits added to note that they added \$2,000 in their budget in case this is required in the future.

#522 – Public Health Nurse – Mr. Yunits stated that the salary increase is contractual. Health Agent has been able to attain 1 Bolt and 3 Volts. They are coming up to 3 years and they are looking into getting better prices on the trade in value and cost of new vehicles. These are very efficient cars to run.

#438- Landfill – Mr. Yunits stated that the increase this year is due to additional testing and monitoring required every 3 years by the state. (Hill Street).

#292 – Animal Control – Mr. Yunits stated that there are contractual increases, propane cost is up, and additional repair maintenance is needed. Bid for propane is up this spring. The building is 18-19 years old and 6 windows and one door need replacing. Capital improvements include 12 new gates and repairs to doors and windows due to aggressive dogs chewing. Also included is a request to pave the driveway.

#161 – Town Clerk – Mr. Yunits stated that salary increases are contractual. Under Goods & Services pertains to 1 Assistant Town Clerk working to be recertified and the costs of education. General code for Zoning is mostly online and asked for an additional \$4,500. They asked for this, not sure if it will be needed at this time.

#171 – Conservation – Mr. Yunits stated that Ms. Carlino is hoping for a Full Time Clerk rather than Part Time. There is a lot of building going on in town to warrant but will depend on the funds. Also the

reason for the salary account increase is to hire someone full time. It will also be easier to hire someone at full time as people do not want to work part time. Questions asked:

1. Can you explain the Maintenance/Conservation area line increase? Mr. Yunits stated that this includes signage on conservation areas, cleanup of trails, Camp Edith Read requires mowing in the summer, filling in the pool, engineering for parking lot, paint and supplies for kitchen and trim. Mr. Yunits stated that the Southeastern Tech Students will be proving much of the work hours.
2. Will Edith Reed be open for public use soon? Mr. Yunits 'yes'
3. Is the town is committed to using the Bunk House? Mr. Yunits stated they are committed.
4. What was the outcome of the use of the house itself? Mr. Y stated we tried to sell but there were no takers.

Cherry Sheet – Mr. Yunits stated that much still needs to be added, for example SE Regional; Assessment for Bristol Agricultural, Water and Sewer Indirects. Questions asked:

1. Is there any chance to recoup the cost for the Fire and Police Department expenses toward the arson issue at Wheaton? Mr. Yunits replied 'not that he knows'.
2. Will we get any property tax on the new Wheaton building? Mr. Yunits – No. Dorms do not give town taxes.

III. Old Business

Mr. Rotondi circulated the sheet for signatures of the Finance Committee to allow both he and Mr. Evans authority to sign for payments.

IV. Minutes

Mr. Rotondi inquired whether anyone has past minutes that were approved and ready for submission:

November 28, 2018 written by Mr. Smith and December 19, 2018 written by Mr. Eykel were given to Ms Tarantino, recording secretary for submission. Mr. Fiore wrote minutes for January Special Town Meeting, but not with him. There may be October meeting has one written by Ms Sawyer. Over the next few meetings Ms Tarantino will endeavor to complete past meeting minutes not submitted by the former recording secretary.

V. Adjournment

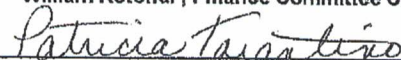
Mr. DeLuca motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 P.M.

Seconded by Mr. Evans

Unanimous

Respectively submitted by:


William Rotondi, Finance Committee Chair


Patricia Tarantino, Recording Secretary


Date Approved