

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
TOWN HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MAY 9, 2012 - WEDNESDAY**

Present: Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairman
Michael Molisse, Councilor
Arthur Mathews, Councilor
Michael Smart, Councilor
Jean Hackett, Councilor

Also Present: William McKinney, Chief Financial Officer
Acting Fire Chief Joseph Davis
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor

Not Present: Kenneth DiFazio, Chairman

Recording Secretary Ann Flynn Dickinson

Budget/ Management Vice President O'Connor called the Budget/Management Committee Meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

Councilor O'Connor invited Acting Fire Chief Joe Davis of the Weymouth Fire Dept. to the table. He gave an overview of the organizational chart which begins with Chief of Department, Robert J. Leary, Acting Chief Joseph Davis. Then the day staff is outlined Capt Keith Stark – Training Coordinator, Lt. Thomas D. Murphy-FA Superintendent, FF Justin Myers-Fire Prevention Coordinator, Marie O'Leary-Confidential Secretary, Patricia Malfy-Senior Clerk and FFOP Anthony M. Davy - Training

Auditor Swanson stated a 28% percent calculation on 89 fire suppression positions, what are the F-2 positions?

Acting Fire Chief Davis responded those are positions by contract that are senior people who get the F2 rate.

Auditor Swanson moved onto Letter B: The total budget for Expenditures is 1.7% higher than the FY12 revised budget, which indicates level funding. Are all salary step increases and other types of salary changes included in the budget? What manpower level does the budget support?

Acting Fire Chief Davis answered all salary changes are included in the budget request. Staffing would remain at 88 uniformed personnel being paid for by the town. Portions of four other members will be paid for by the Federal SAFER Grant. The fifth member under that grant will be 100% funded by the SAFER Grant throughout the fiscal year. Staffing remains at 88 the fifth member will be 100 % funded.

Auditor Swanson asked when you say a portion what is the percentage of the salaries that will be funded?

Acting Fire Chief Davis responded it is the entire salary so it is 100%.

CFO McKinney interjected with the fact that the grant period is for 2 years. Some of them would be in Jan/Feb so some of them would be funded up to those month and it is not definitive if they will be funded.

Vice Chairman O'Connor asked if there is an extension for the grant?

CFO McKinney stated there are separate grants that we apply for each year. Part of it is budgeted for salaries. The budgets are from March to March.

Councilor Hackett asked if there are 88 or 93 uniformed personnel.

CFO McKinney responded that there are 88 through the budget.

Councilor Smart asked if these five people do not get funded, will we be short one engine company.

CFO McKinney responded that we can keep them whole through FY13 and see what happens after that.

Acting Fire Chief Davis said we cannot afford to lose these people and we need to find a way to keep them.

Councilor Hackett asked if we were to lose the personnel through the grant and the town could not support them, would we have to pay them unemployment?

CFO McKinney responded with yes we would.

Councilor Smart remarked that is exactly why we want to keep them.

Council President Mathews asked if we could look further down the road to sustain them, or is this grant a one shot deal?

CFO McKinney stated the grant we are speaking of is a grant for rehire- there are separate grants to hire new fire fighters.

Acting Fire Chief Davis explained part of this is the need under Southfield, because Southfield can not file for grants, only Weymouth Fire Dept can for the manpower and hopefully that would help to fold those five fire fighters in. His department is trying to show a need. He cited that support to Southfield is a large need and they need some help under this unique situation.

Council President Mathews asked if we would be looking for a grant as well under Southfield. If we did get potential funding from Southfield could we use that?

CFO McKinney said he is not part of the negotiations and he would not know the answer to that. It would be difficult to justify the grant than to be paid for services.

Acting Fire Chief Davis said it goes hand in hand with the total need at Southfield and the expectations to service.

Council President Mathews asked if we could tie it into the whole town somehow to have a good rational behind our requests.

Acting Fire Chief Davis said they give priorities to certain needs, such as a brand new opening of complexes in the town.

Councilor Smart remarked we previously had a lot of fluctuation.

Acting Fire Chief Davis stated that three engines and one ladder is what we are maintaining-nothing is changing

Councilor Smart remarked that it looked like sick and vacation time had been consistent.

Acting Fire Chief Davis replied yes.

Auditor Swanson moved onto letter C: How many stations will be staffed for Fire Suppression and rescue? What is the Ladder/Engine configuration in the budget?

Acting Chief Davis responded with three stations one engine. There are four firefighters on an engine, two firefighters on a ladder. They may have to drop down to two engines and one ladder if they do not have the firefighters to maintain.

Auditor Swanson moved onto Letter D: In the Fires Suppression and Rescue budget:

1. In the salary detail FF number 1834 is shown as “quantity 2 @ \$0 unit cost” – Why is that?
Acting Chief Davis states this firefighter was terminated.
2. Explain the purpose and use of the \$20,000 in line item “Sick Leave Incentive”?
Acting Chief Davis responded with Sick Leave Incentive being a contractual time. Members are given a stipend for a limited use of sick leave during the fiscal year:
\$500 for less than 1 shift used
\$350 for 1-3 shifts and
\$150 for 4-5 shifts.
No stipend is paid to those who use more than 5 sick leave shifts during the fiscal year.
3. How was the \$50,000 derived for “Out-of-Grade” pay?
Acting Chief Davis’s response was the estimated “Out-of-Grade” amount is calculated on past years amounts.
4. What is the Retirement Allotment of \$60,000? How was this derived?
Acting Chief Davis’s response was this is an amount built into the salary line to help pay out retirees while enabling their positions to be filled more quickly. For instance, if a fire fighter was owed \$15,000 for unused vacation, sick leave, etc, they would have to wait weeks to fill the position until the \$15,000 was made up. By having the funds to pay that person without impacting the specific salary line that position can be filled immediately. For lateral transfers, this means less overtime would be required as the firefighter would start working immediately. For new hires, this may mean the difference between getting into a fire academy immediately versus having to wait weeks or months to attend.
Auditor Swanson stated that this is actually a method of speeding up the hiring process.
5. Are there any vacant positions to be filled?
Acting Chief Davis’s response was currently there are three vacant positions due to retirements/resignations that have occurred in the past few months. The department is working to fill those positions as quickly as possible.
Vice Chairman O’Connor wanted to know when these positions will be filled.
Acting Fire Chief Davis replied there are five candidates that were interviewed over the last couple of weeks. They should have them in over the next few weeks.
The candidates should be able to quickly come on board, they are all trained, have had certified physicals and background checks completed.

Vice Chairman O’Connor asked if there was anytime which we could go to the civil service list to add people?

Acting Fire Chief Davis said there is a problem getting people into the Fire Academy- it is a one year wait list and they can’t put them on the payroll until they are trained. It is very difficult to get them in.

Vice Chairman O’Connor asked if there was any talk about getting firefighters from surrounding communities and conducting our own Fire Academy?

Acting Fire Chief Davis they have to send in their own training department. One person from Weymouth can’t do it alone and help from the outside is required.

Councilor Smart asked if we could send our staff to Quincy for an example?

Acting Fire Chief Davis said that if we did that we would have to offer training to Quincy too.

Councilor Smart thinks he is sure there are communities out there that do not have training officers.

Acting Fire Chief Davis agreed.

Vice Chairman O'Connor said we need to get people from our own town to start their careers in this town.

Acting Fire Chief Davis agrees, but they start at a very low pay scale, usually under some EMS training.

6. What was the basis incorporated for calculating overtime of \$500,000?

Acting Chief Davis's response was the overtime calculation is based on previous year's expenditures.

7. There is \$50,000 budgeted for the two line items "Fire Equipment" and "Equipment" compared to actual expenditures of \$586,432 in FY11. Is this amount adequate to replace or upgrade equipment during the year?

Acting Chief Davis's response was \$586,432 includes the purchase of Engine #5.

Auditor Swanson moved onto Letter E: Training Expense is budgeted at \$20,000. What type of training and for how many personnel will this money pay for?

Acting Chief Davis's response explains this encompasses all of the training as the courses come up for renewal such as Fall Protection, Ariel Lift, etc...

Auditor Swanson moved onto Letter F--Vehicle Maintenance is increased by 2.1% which is reasonable. Auditor Swanson had no questions.

Auditor Swanson proceeded to Letter G: Salaries in Municipal Alarm Systems decreased by \$132,711 (two staff) compared to four staff in FY12. How will this operation function 24/7 with two people? Where are the other two personnel in the FY13 budget?

Acting Chief Davis responded the same number of people will be working so there will be no effect on the operation of the Fire Department. The reason it looks like there are fewer people is that there is only one member who is "permanently" assigned as a Fire Alarm Operator. The others who work in that role are temporarily assigned from Fire Suppression on a 6-month rotation. Therefore, their salaries are listed under the suppression line. There was a decrease of two staff members compared to four staff in FY12. It remains the same number of people, however, they are listed in different line items on the budget. They are rotated in and rotated out.

CFO McKinney states it really does not matter because there is one number for salaries and one number for suppression.

Acting Fire Chief Davis states the department rotates one person out and then rotates one in.

Auditor Swanson recommends that the budget show true costs and not show it the way it is presented in this budget.

Auditor Swanson moved onto Letter H: How many Firefighters are being compensated in FY12 under a Grant/Award? How will these people be paid for in FY13 if the grant/award monies expire?

Acting Chief Davis responded in the FY12 budget, there are 5 firefighters whose salaries are paid 100% by the SAFER Grant. Beginning in January 2013, these positions will either be absorbed into the department or they will be eliminated through layoff.

Auditor Swanson moved onto the Letter I: Do you anticipate any Federal/State monies/grants in FY13 to update/replace equipment for the department? Are there any grant applications in process?

Acting Chief Davis responded that grant applications come up in the fall and as usual, the department will be applying for grants through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for the FY13 fiscal year. An application that would have paid for the replacement of all turnout gear in FY12 was denied.

FY13 grant applications will be as a direct result of the need for fire protection at the Southfield property. Even though Southfield should be expected to pay for these new personnel and equipment, they are unable to apply for federal grants to support them. Therefore, the Weymouth Fire Department will make these applications.

Councilor Smart asked how often the Fire Department goes to Southfield for calls?

Acting Fire Chief Davis states they have responded to medical and industrial accidents. Fire had also responded to a heavy piece of construction equipment involved in an incident.

Vice Chairman O'Connor asked of those runs that have been made, has the town been reimbursed?

CFO McKinney responded no.

Councilor Molisse asked about the work that is being performed at Southfield for fire prevention?

Acting Fire Chief Davis said they are billing hourly, but there is no accompanying fee. Inspectors ensure that all requirements are being met.

Councilor Molisse asked if the inspectors are considered to be on regular time and working for the town when they are at Southfield?

Acting Fire Chief Davis says that is correct.

Councilor Molisse noted that reimbursements are deposited to the general fund and he would like to see this funding go back to the Fire Dept. Councilor Smart also believes that time spent at Southfield should be considered overtime so that the town does not suffer with a shortage of personnel when Southfield calls come in.

Councilor Hackett stated at this point in time there is nothing in the budget from Tri-Town to the Fire Dept. so that money is going to go to free cash and not to the Fire Dept.

Councilor Smart asked Acting Fire Chief Davis if he was keeping track of what is being spent at Southfield.

Acting Fire Chief Davis assured him that he is.

Council President Mathews states his personal opinion is that Southfield should have to pay the same as any other residents so the town gets something back. This was supposed to be set up so that the town does not get hurt and right now it is.

Councilor Molisse said two years ago it was changed.

Council President Mathews asked if we had a different tiered structure for residents, versus commercial, etc...

Acting Fire Chief Davis said yes, there is a list of fees.

Vice President O'Connor still believes the Fire Dept. is understaffed. He has not seen it getting better over the past seven years, but it has improved over the past two fiscal years. In addition to it being understaffed, he doesn't see anything promising since there is potentially the threat of losing equipment in the next

fiscal year. He believes the Fire Dept does a great job and we need to get this Department back to where it needs to be and he is definitely working towards that goal.

Council President Mathews asked if Chief Leary is out on injury leave and is recovering? Is that fair to say?

Acting Fire Chief Davis responded that is correct. He is on the mend for anyone asking.

Councilor Hackett asked what is the Fire Department's current contract status?

Acting Fire Chief Davis responded that the contract is expired and in negotiations.

Councilor Hackett wanted to know how long they have been without a contract since FY10? FY11 and 13 expenses were down to what was requested. The schools for the same time period are up 10% and the Fire Department is actually servicing more than in FY11 and are providing more services with less people and staying within budget.

CFO McKinney said the only thing that skews that budget is the large \$500,000 capital.

ADJOURNMENT

At 7:00 PM, there being no further business, Councilor Mathews made a MOTION to ADJOURN the meeting and was seconded by Vice President O'Connor. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted by Anne Flynn Dickinson as Recording Secretary