

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES  
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
Town Hall Council Chambers  
June 2, 2014, Monday**

Present: Patrick O'Connor, Vice Chairman  
Jane Hackett, Councilor  
Rebecca Haugh, Councilor

Not Present: Michael Molisse, Chairman  
Brian McDonald, Councilor

Also Present: William McKinney, CFO  
Richard Swanson, Town Auditor  
Keith Stark WFD

Recording Secretary: Mary Barker

**Review and Discuss Fire Department Budget with Chief Financial Officer, Chief of Fire and applicable senior staff**

**Deliberate the following measure: 14 057M-Fire Department**

Vice Chairman O'Connor called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM. Chief Keith Stark, WFD was invited to the table to review the proposed FY15 Fire Department Budget. A list of questions was provided ahead by Auditor Swanson, and the responses were incorporated into the powerpoint presentation. Chief Stark's review included the following:

- Organizational chart- 4 groups total 92. The calculations include all contractual obligations, steps and COLA increases. Councilor Hackett asked if the department anticipates any vacancies. Chief Stark responded no, due to the extension of the SAFER grant.
- Salary increases as a result of non union raises (3 employees-\$20,000)
- telephone – cells, lines to stations, and switching over to Verizon- separate line items per station
- dues/memberships
- Federal or state grants anticipated-Chief Stark noted that the department did not meet the criteria for the SAFER grant this year. They submitted and received others, and will apply to anything offered. CFO McKinney noted the department didn't qualify for the SAFER grant because no layoffs were imminent.
- FY14 grants- includes salaries for 5 positions. Vice Chairman O'Connor asked if the proposed budget includes these salaries. CFO McKinney responded no because the extension of the SAFER grant covers them. It is good through FY15, and there may be some retirements which will allow him to move these positions into the regular operating budget. Vice Chairman O'Connor noted this could be

an issue at the end of this fiscal year. They briefly discussed anticipated retirements.

- Number of stations staffed- three stations are open and manned with three engines/1 ladder. Administration, dispatch and some training are located on Broad Street. Some of the apparatus is out for repair.
- Overtime- \$545,000 – the Chief noted this is based on past practice and it all comes out of the same pools.
- \$50k firefighting equipment- this line is used to maintain and replace equipment
- Sick leave incentive- this is a contractual incentive- firefighters receive a check if no sick time is used.
- \$70,000 out of grade incentive- this is a shift incentive and is cheaper than overtime.
- Retirement payout -\$40K was paid out last year; after July one gets vacation and sick; without this, the department would have to wait for all sick and vacation time to finish before they could fill the vacancy. It is capped at \$4,000 per employee.
- Fuel tanks are filled at the DPW pumps and all vehicles have keyed access.
- Fire prevention- \$20,000- because of restructure. Fire prevention does not have the same scale. Auditor Swanson noted the department consists of one person.
- \$5000 in overtime for Fire Prevention/\$15,000 for training is due to promotions and CBA requirements
- \$20K training- 91 men- several trainings are conducted by outside vendors (EVOC training resulted in savings for insurance) Councilor Haugh asked if it includes Narcan training/cost. The Chief responded yes; they get it free but Fallon wants them to leave a replacement kit when it is used, and charge for the replacement kit. It does not cost the town at this point.
- Maintenance- vehicle mechanics performed by the DPW. The Chief noted that it would benefit the department to have a dedicated mechanic; they would not have to send equipment out for repair as often as they do now.
- Municipal alarm budget- technology-IT/Dispatch can now monitor 911 and set up the two stations to align with it. Chief Stark reviewed the items that are included in this budget: dispatch and recording software, Verizon wifi hotspots, portable radios.

Councilor Haugh asked when the next equipment replacement is to take place. The Chief noted that because the budget is tight and the truck costs \$500,000 apiece, and the oldest vehicle is 13 years old now, it will need to be taken care of. Construction occurring at Southfield is also a driver. Councilor Haugh asked about bringing EMS services to the fire department. The Chief responded that it can be done. The service can also provide a sustainable revenue source to the town over and above the cost of the service, but that they need to get through the startup costs. They would require two ambulances, manned by two people, and they could start with providing basic life support service. Councilor Haugh asked if there are grants available. The Chief responded no, but there are businesses in town to approach. The estimated cost would have to include purchasing ambulances, equipment and two people per shift per ambulance. He noted that health care is driving the budget in the town, and if a support service is set up correctly it could

generate funds to the town. He noted that Braintree, Quincy and Weymouth are the three communities that don't provide as part of their fire department. Weymouth Fire goes out on every run now and does 90% of the work, and Fallon collects the revenue. Vice Chairman O'Connor noted that there might be host community funds for this use.

Vice Chairman O'Connor thanked the chief for his presentation; he noted that expecting more with less money has been the motto for public safety for too long.

Adjournment

At 6:55PM, there being no further business, a MOTION was made by Councilor Hackett to adjourn the meeting and was seconded by Councilor Haugh. UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

Respectfully submitted by Mary Barker as Recording Secretary

Approved by Chairman Molisse

Voted unanimously on 14 July 2014