

**TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES
BUDGET/MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
Town Hall Council Chambers
April 24, 2008**

Present: Kenneth J. DiFazio, Chairperson
Patrick O'Connor, Vice-Chairperson
Arthur Mathews (Absent)
Michael Molisse
Kevin Whitaker

Also Present: Robert Conlon – Chairman Senior Citizens Committee; Edward Harrington – Ordinance Committee Member, James Wilson – CFO; Maureen Duffy – Town Auditor; Mayor Susan Kay; Michael Gallagher – IT Director; Attorney George Lane; David Chandler – Interim Appointment South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation Member; Melvin Einhorn – Director of Human Resources; Fire Chief Leary; Police Chief Thomas

Recording Secretary: Doreen Teodorson

Chairman DiFazio called the Budget/Management Committee meeting to order at 6:45 p.m.

Chairman DiFazio stated they would review and discuss the Police and Fire Department Budgets and deliberate the following measures: 08 026L – Police Department; 08 026M – Fire Department; Voting would be on the following measures: 08 041 – Appointment – Director of Human Resources – Melvin Einhorn; 08 045 – Acceptance of Land Donation – Tommy Marks Way; 08 046 – Acceptance of Land Donation – Paomet Road; 08 048 – Interim Appointment – South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation Member – David Chandler.

A MOTION was made by Mike Molisse and seconded by Kevin Whitaker to take measures 08 041, 08 045, 08 046 and 08 048 out of order and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED.

08 041 – Appointment – Director of Human Resources – Melvin Einhorn

Mr. Michael Gallagher introduced Melvin Einhorn to the committee and stated in the short time Mr. Einhorn has been with the Town, he has been a definite asset to the Town. Mr. Einhorn stated his educational background is in English literature and in Human Resources. He has had substantial human resource and labor relations in the hotel services environment and at the Green Airport in RI. He thanked the Town for hiring him and stated it has been a pleasure to be employed by the Town.

Ken DiFazio stated he has an extensive resume and recommends favorable action.

A MOTION was made by Patrick O'Connor and seconded by Mike Molisse to recommend

favorable action to measure 08 041 to the Full Town Council and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED FOR APPROVAL.

08 045 – Acceptance of Land Donation – Tommy Marks Way

Attorney George Lane stated the land on Tommy Marks Way consists of 4.28 acres of mostly wetlands. It is to be given to the Town as open space and is a valuable asset for the Town. He has checked on the taxes and they are up to date within \$100.00, which will be paid before the transfer of ownership. Mike Molisse stated many lots have been coming through for approval over the last two months. Attorney Lane stated the Town has been reviewing all available land through tax title or street acceptances. It is favorable to the Town to have an increase in the open space. The owners can give the land to the Town and receive a charitable donation on their tax returns. Robert Conlon said it is a great program. He asked if the Town approaches the owners, or do the owners come to the Town. Attorney Lane stated it happens both ways. Ken DiFazio asked what the advantage to the Town is taking the land. Attorney Lane stated it adds to the Town's open space and the benefits to the Town's increase outweigh the small amount of taxation on wetland property.

A MOTION was made by Mike Molisse and seconded by Patrick O'Connor to recommend favorable action to measure 08 045 to the Full Town Council and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED FOR APPROVAL.

08 046 – Acceptance of Land Donation – Paomet Road

George Lane stated the parcel of land on Paomet Road contained 72,460 s.f. and was accepted by Conservation in the early 1990's but was not consummated. It is marshland with residences surrounding the area. It would be advantageous for the Town to own it to preserve the brackish water area. It is a valuable resource for the Town. Mr. Thompson, Jr. of NH is willing to donate the land. The taxes will be paid in full. Mr. DiFazio asked if Attorney Lane could provide the committee with a GPS overview of the lots in the future. Attorney Lane stated he could do that for the committee members.

A MOTION was made by Mike Molisse and seconded by Patrick O'Connor to recommend favorable action to measure 08 046 to the Full Town Council and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED FOR APPROVAL.

08 048 – Interim Appointment – South Shore Tri-Town Development Corporation Member – David Chandler

Mayor Susan Kay spoke on behalf of David Chandler. He has been involved in the base since its inception. He is a resident of South Weymouth. He knows the acronyms and knows the people involved. He is aware of the terminology and that is going to be a very big plus going forward to developing agreements. There is an importance to appoint another person as they are down one person and need four members for a quorum. Rockland has not appointed their member. The Mayor stated she sought out David Chandler. Mr. O'Connor stated he has no objection. Mayor Kay stated the matter does not require the vote of the council, but she wanted to know the

committees opinion and if they were able to show their support. Mr. Conlon, Mr. Whitaker, Mike Molisse, Patrick O'Connor and Ken DiFazio all stated their support. Mr. DiFazio praised the Mayor's initiative to bring Mr. Chandler before them. He stated he hopes Mr. Chandler will be available and able to close the gap to fully answer some questions for counselors and residents on the issues at the base. Mr. Chandler stated he would give straight answers anytime. He stated the more that people know, the better you are. He believes nothing should be hidden and if the information is important, that information should be given. Ed Harrington stated he was appreciative of his openness to come to council. He asked if the area at Rooney's Gas station on Route 18 that is still narrow could show widening improvements before the 2010 and 2011 timeframe. The residents of that area would appreciate it. The Mayor stated there is much information she and David must review. There are items that are not fully signed regarding the base. She stated she was seeking support of this appointment from the committee to the Full Town Council. This item was put on this agenda as a measure. The Mayor intention was to seek show of support. Kevin Whitaker asked if they could rescind the measure or if they must take action. Attorney George lane stated that as it was on the agenda as a measure, the measure must be voted on.

A MOTION was made by Patrick O'Connor and seconded by Michael Molisse to recommend favorable action to measure 08 048 to the Full Town Council and was UNANIMOUSLY VOTED FOR APPROVAL.

08 026L – Police Department

Chairman DiFazio invited Chief James Thomas and James Wilson to speak on the Police Department budget. The Town Auditor questions were reviewed.

1. Salaries: What positions have been unfunded/eliminated? What impact will the vacant position have on the department? Chief Thomas stated there are presently seven vacancies in the FY09 budget. Out of the seven, two were unfunded in FY08. Therefore, there are five vacancies realistically. They will be filling some of these. In FY09, there will be three more vacancies coming. There will be eight funded, but unfilled positions. They reviewed the traffic supervisor's hours and locations and eliminated some of those positions.

2. Will the delivery of service to the community be impacted by cuts in personnel? Chief Thomas stated they will definitely be impacted. The emergency response is essential employees, which will be filled. The specialty personnel within a department would be cut back. For example, a detective may not be fingerprinting for a housebreak. A School Resource Officer at the high school may not be available. The traffic enforcement would be decreased, and the revenue would be decreased.

3. Uniform Police Overtime08: The amended FY08 budget for uniform police overtime is \$650,424. This increase is \$250,000 over the original budget. What major factors contributed to this significant increase for FY08? Chief Thomas stated the spike this year was due to dispatch group union members needing overtime due so many absences due to illness, one employee death, one maternity leave, and vacation coverage. Another spike in overtime was the implementation of a new computer system and the training of the officers. The Police

Department was able to supply the money for the computer system with monies confiscated from drug busts. They saved approximately \$300,000 - \$400,000 out of the Police or IT budgets.

Kevin Whitaker asked why the changes in the FY08 and FY09 overtime budgets. Chief Thomas stated there was a murder in Weymouth which has expenses in overtime for follow up and investigations. Drug investigations are also time consuming. Ken DiFazio asked if drug use was on the increase in the past year or two. Chief Thomas stated it has been consistent for heroin, cocaine and abuse of all drugs & alcohol. Court appearances increase due to those problems and that is also an expense to the department. Chief Thomas stated they have senior members of the department with four to five weeks of vacation which results in overtime for filling of those vacancies. Mr. DiFazio asked if they stagger the vacations. Chief Thomas stated try to accommodate the employees and abide by the contracts.

4. Uniform Police Overtime FY09: How is it that the FY09 Budget for Uniform Police Overtime is being reduced by \$300,000? Is the proposed FY09 budget of \$350,424 realistic in comparison to FY08? Chief Thomas stated they cannot compare year to year as it depends on what incidents occur. The murder that occurred is not a usual event in Weymouth and hopefully will not occur again. James Wilson stated they had to reappropriate from the salary line item to the overtime to maintain his level of funding. Mr. O'Connor stated his concern with running into overtime and salaries being underfunded. Mr. Wilson stated they cannot exceed their appropriation. Chief Thomas stated they will meet their budget with the elimination of officers going to court, thereby criminals are released. In the past, they have always attended when needed to Dedham Superior Court and the Quincy District Court. In FY09, they will need to prioritize cases. He stated he feels justice will not be served. Ken DiFazio asked if there is any change within the Police Department with the breathalyzer mandate. Chief Thomas stated they have an officer in charge of the breathalyzer who keeps meticulous records and sometimes must accompany those records to a court. Kevin Whitaker asked if the School Resource Officer comes under the Police budget. Chief Thomas stated it was under the Police budget. They will fill three out of five vacancies. One is already a police officer in training and the other two are from the academy. Kevin Whitaker asked if there were any officers overseas. Chief Thomas stated they have one officer in Afghanistan who should be returning soon.

Patrick O'Connor voiced his concern with underfunding overtime and salaries. Chief Thomas stated historically since 1980 the overtime funding was low. If you look at the textbook management, they say a certain percentage of the salary should be set aside for overtime – usually 8 – 10%. Presently, the traffic supervisors are posted in various crossings. They did a study of number of children crossing and the times of crossings. They are able to readjust some schedule and eliminate some crossings to decrease costs. Sergeant Concannon did the study. The crossing guards get unemployment in the summer, but do not qualify for health insurance unless they work a certain number of hours elsewhere in the Town.

5. Investigation Overtime FY09: Explain how it is that this line item needed to be increased by \$25,000 during FY08, and the FY09 reflects a \$25,000 reduction. Chief Thomas stated the murder investigation increased in FY08 along with court times.

6. Technical Support Overtime: What is O/T Training? Why budget \$50,000 in FY09 when only

half of that was used in FY08? The budget for O/T Dispatcher for FY09 is \$25,000 less than the Amended FY08 budget. Explain the variance. Chief Thomas stated the overtime training for the new computer system was agreed to as the monies for the computers hardware and software came from drug bust confiscations. Ken DiFazio asked if IT was assisting in this area, to which Chief Thomas stated they were.

7. Harbor Patrol: Why does the salary line item of \$103,281 remain a constant for FY08 and FY09? Chief Thomas stated they eliminated a part time position. The Harbormaster's day off will not be covered. The phone charge is for a phone system at Tern Harbor and at the booth near the boat ramp. Patrick O'Connor asked why the water charges varied so from year to year. James Wilson stated some charges were carried over to the next FY; thereby one payment was for one and one half years use of water.

Ken DiFazio asked who is responsible for graffiti removal. Chief Thomas stated the DPW. He stated they know where the crime takes place, for example the skate park, but as soon as they get a call and are gone, the crime occurs. If they can get citizens that sell the paint to 13 year olds to ask questions such as, what are you going to do with this paint, they might avoid some graffiti. Patrick O'Connor asked if they might limit the sale of paint with a by-law such as that proposed by Quincy. It states if you are not 18, you cannot purchase.

Mr. Conlon asked about police jurisdiction in Southfield. Chief Thomas stated he was disappointed he was not informed of the Governor's meeting at the base today. For security reasons, he feels he should have been notified of this important event. A discussion was held on who was responsible for the base Policing and Fire Department needs. At this time, the calls to those departments are responded to under a 1943 Federal Act that covers that land area until the land is fully transferred from the Navy. After the time of transfer, then the landowners will need to purchase security and fire protection. The Mayor stated the Town of Weymouth will decide at that time if it is advantageous for them to participate in providing such a service. It will be up to the landholders to decide on who they would like to provide that service. A discussion was held on the possible need for a separate fire station in the center of the Tri-Town area. Mr. Conlon asked the Police Chief if he would like Weymouth to provide the service. Chief Thomas stated he would like to see Weymouth provide that service, but feels it would go to the lowest bidder. He wondered if they had a security service and an arrest was involved, where they would incarcerate the accused. Ken DiFazio expressed concern with possible adverse affects with providing increased services. He asked it be completely analyzed before any action was taken. Mr. Wilson stated at this time there are weekly reports from those that provide services to the base. They come from the Engineering Department, Inspectional Services, Finance, DPW, Fire Department, and the IT Department. Ken DiFazio asked if there was any theft during this construction phase, to which the Police Chief stated there was theft reported. A discussion was held as to providing services across Norfolk and Plymouth County lines within the Tri-Town area. The Police Chief did not see an issue with that matter and stated they have to cross over areas in Abington to get to some South Weymouth locations. Mr. O'Connor expressed his concern again regarding the insufficient funding in the salary line item and the overtime. Mayor Kay stated there are some that are underfunded in every department. There are severe cuts everywhere and we must look at priorities within the Town services. Chief Thomas ended with stating his FY08 budget will be returning approximately \$100,000 to the general fund. He

thanked the committee.

08 026M - Fire Department

Chief Leary stated the proposed Fire Department budget for FY09 reflects a 2% reduction from the FY08 budget, but it includes some changes for which he has advocated for many years. Two of those changes include specialized staff positions: one fire inspector and one administrative officer. These positions will help more effectively deal with the public demand for our services, and will help with our internal operations by freeing the shift commanders from daily administration and enable them to concentrate on their primary mission of public safety.

Another major change is for the Department to finally stabilize the number of apparatus and firefighters who are on duty at all times. The goal with this budget is to return to a minimum of four engines and one ladder with twenty members on duty at all times. Our firefighters deserve the peace of mind to know how much apparatus will be in service at any given time and where their backup is coming from. With the support of Mayor Kay and for as long as the budget allows, I will restore the fourth engine to permanent service on July 1st.

Although the FY09 budget has been reduced by 2% over FY08, I have tried to be creative in allocating funds so that positive changes would result. I could never promise perfection, but think that with the requested changes, the Weymouth Fire Department will be better able to serve the Town and its residents while simultaneously offering a more stable work environment for its members.

1. Salaries: What positions have been unfunded/eliminated? What impact will the vacant position have on the department?

The Department will leave three positions unfunded for FY09. Two have been unfilled in FY08. Since 2005, using the involuntary retirement option, the Department has been able to fill positions that had been occupied by long-term sick or injured members. This, along with routine temporary transfers of personnel, has left us better able to staff each unit. Chief Leary is currently awaiting rulings on two other involuntary retirements. He anticipates four or more retirements this summer. He plans to hire as soon as possible to fill all vacancies beyond the three that will be lost through attrition.

Patrick O'Connor asked where the new hires would be hired from. Chief Leary stated they would come first from the civil service statewide re-employment list. They get first priority, and then go to the firefighter school. He expects two openings for firefighters to be filled. Ken DiFazio asked if there were any changes in services at the different stations. Chief Leary stated the doors are being replaced at Station II Headquarters which will allow the storage of a ladder truck. Mr. Conlon asked if there were two fires simultaneously, how does the town get assistance. Chief Leary stated rather than send all the equipment out; there is a mutual agreement with surrounding Towns for mutual aid for a working fire. They are part of the Norfolk County Fire District. This allows the Fire Department to always be available for an emergency response.

2. Will the delivery of service to the community be impacted by cuts in personnel?

The loss of personnel automatically increases the need for overtime. The budget is intended to provide a minimum of four engines and one ladder while also improving public service and department administration.

3. Overtime FY09: Explain the increase in overtime for FY09 of an additional \$50,000 over FY08. What are the driving factors contributing to the increase?

Chief Leary stated he is planning to restore the fourth engine on a full-time basis and to stop varying between three engines or four. Going back to FY03, OT was based on expenditures from previous years, even though the dynamic had changed following the reduction of twelve positions in July 2002. That figure, \$366,000, remained static until FY07 even though salary increases naturally drove OT costs higher. FY07 showed an increase, but not to the point of being commensurate with salaries. In FY08, it increased slightly, but still not enough. FY09 requests sufficient OT funding to operate four engines and one ladder (20 people) as a minimum and has been calculated using salary as the base line.

The Chief thanked the members of his department of working together to keep the overtime from becoming unmanageable. They have temporary transfer of personnel to try and cover position to prevent overtime. There is one vacant position and two openings at this time and another additional position becoming open this FY09. There is one employee in Baghdad and is expected to be returning soon.

4. Training: Explain what expenses are charged to this line item. Why does the proposed budgeted expense nearly double for FY09?

Training has typically been underfunded for what the job entails. If recruit training is needed, as is expected this year, training costs can double, mainly due to instructor costs. Compare the training expenses in FY07, the last year we did recruit training, to this year's request. FY07 = \$10,706 FY09 = \$10,000.

Chief Leary stated he has had to ask his employees the cost of courses they are taking and limit the amount of training they are allowed due to budget restraints. Mayor Kay stated the Towns ISO rating has dropped due in part to the safety areas and professional development. Mr. O'Connor asked if there were any plans for a permanent Fire Academy in Weymouth. Mayor Kay stated there were no plans for that at this time.

Kevin Whitaker asked for the timeline for the retirements that will leave more posts funded but unfilled. Chief Leary stated he does not know for sure when they will retire. There are FY09 vacation and accruals that must be paid out. This will determine when he will be allowed to hire.

5. Expenses: What are the most significant increases in expenses for FY09? What is the cause of the \$25,000 increase for FY09?

The driving force behind expenses is the cost of utilities. This is the third year in a row where

they have increased the utility lines, but cannot seem to raise those lines enough to meet the increases. One expense that Chief Leary stated he wanted to increase significantly was the firefighting equipment, but could not. That has been reduced from FY08. The State Equipment Grant has been eliminated from the House Budget. It was originally \$60,000. Last year it was \$15,800 and FY09 is zero. They are lobbying to get this reversed.

A discussion was held on when the need for Fire Services may spike. Chief Leary stated there are increases in this need when things are demolished and when things are first built. He stated he would like to see a fire station built in the middle of the Tri-Town area. He feels they could integrate the current King Fisher fire alarm system with their buildings. Ken DiFazio stated the Tri-Town community should think ahead before building as to who they were going to use for their fire service provider to integrate the systems upon building. Mr. O'Connor asked if anyone has gone to the State to see if there is money available to provide perhaps an ambulance service to create revenue. A discussion was held on the start up costs involved with the police and fire protection services in the Tri-Town area. Mayor Kay stated the start up costs would be very high. She is not convinced that any plan would be zero cost to the Town. She is open to suggestions and reviewing the matter, but stated it was not high on her priority list at this time. Ken DiFazio stated they could, as part of negotiation, ask them to pay for the start up costs to expand our force. Mr. O'Connor stated the 4/1 is great and commend the Mayor in trying to get it to the 4/2 ratio. He asked what the numbers have been since the beginning of the FY. Chief Leary stated the 4/1 has been 66.6%, 3/2 has been 17.5% and 4/2 has been 15.8%. This is five percent better than last fiscal year.

Kevin Whitaker asked why the revenue line item decreased by \$10,000. Chief Leary stated the elimination of Master Boxes over the last three years and transfer to the King Fisher Fire Alarm created a choice for Town businesses to change from wire system to radio boxes directly to the Fire Station or a UL system. About 75-80% chose the UL as they didn't want to spend \$4,000 to convert their boxes. In the long run, it would have cost them less, but they did not want the up front fee.

6. Equipment: In FY08, what was the equipment expense of \$47,784? Which capital lease has been paid in full to reflect a reduction in the total equipment expense for FY09?

\$47,784 was the cost of the lease/purchase of the fire alarm systems for all town-owned buildings. It is the King Fisher Fire Alarm that had a three year lease that was paid monthly. This lease is due to be paid off in May of 2008. Since this amount has been part of the operating budget, he was able to use this figure to offset some of the impact of the 2% requested reduction.

Ken DiFazio asked if the fee has remained the same for the Smoke Detector Fire Certificate for a single family home. Chief Leary stated it is still \$50.00.

Chief Leary thanked the committee and stated he was very happy the Mayor has accepted his budget in its present form.

Ken DiFazio stated he has received constituent questions that may not be resolved at this time during the department questioning. Mr. DiFazio stated it was his intent that most of those

questions would be brought forward at the end of the review. They have several weeks at the end of the budget review and they will review those questions at that time.

Ed Harrington thanked Maureen Duffy, Town Auditor, for the questions she provided to the departments.

A MOTION was made by Patrick O'Connor and seconded by Mike Molisse to adjourn at 9:15 p.m. and was unanimously voted.

Respectfully submitted,
Doreen C. Teodorson/Recording Secretary

Ken DiFazio, Chairman