

Finance Committee Meeting
February 25, 2014
Minutes

Chairman John F. Doherty called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Jonathan R. Eaton, Bernard P. Nally Jr., Richard K. Hayden, Jordan Weiner, Victoria L. Ellsworth. Members Excused: Theresa M Manganelli, Robert P. Palmer, William J. Wallace

Also present: Jeffrey M. Hull, Town Manager, Kendra Amaral, Assistant Town Manager

Recreation Department (pg 53)

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Deborah Cipriani, Director

Ms. Cipriani – Main goal is to offer quality programs at affordable prices. Reviewed budget. Brief discussion on kids taking programs, large increase in ages 2-4 programs. Brief discussion on summer programs and other programs to overlap so parents could have a full day of care. Reviews materials & supplies budget.

Mr. Doherty – Regarding the part-time how many hours do they work? Ms. Cipriani responded that they work 25 hrs and they are paid from program funds.

Mr. Cipriani – The department is actively pursuing with Kendra the online services. It is difficult with the array of services we offer to find one company that does it well. Have met with Billerica to go over their online registration program. Capital improvements include the fence at North Intermediate School. Resurfacing of the Shawsheen tennis courts will not be completed until April. The department received a donation at end of summer for a bench and plaque for the beach. Upcoming capital projects include the North Intermediate court resurfacing, and replacing the fencing at Silver Lake and near Baby Beach.

There will be a public meeting March 13th regarding Silver Lake. With Andover closing Poms Pond down last year, Silver Lake was busy. The town needs to address issues prior to the upcoming season. Discussion will cover rules, regulations, safety and non-resident uses. Brief discussion on public drinking laws, extending the hours to 8PM and installing motion censored lights.

Mr. Doherty – Asked how the water quality is at the beach. Water quality is great; we didn't have to close the beach.

Police Department (pg. 31):

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Michael R. Begonis, Chief of Police

Mr. Doherty – Asked if someone can be arrested for drinking in public at Silver Lake. Chief Begonis responded that yes they can. He explained safety and issues at Silver Lake.

Chief Begonis - Reviewed Police Department budget (pg 31) personal services except 2 items stayed the same. He requested an additional part time clerk, and went from 6 sergeants and 4 Lieutenant to 5 and 5. Last year had promotions. During the process he looked at staff and the way they were broken down and tried to equal divisions out so all divisions have a Lieutenant in charge. The new Lieutenant position will be what the former administrative sergeant was with all responsibility over seeing the IT division as well as crime data.

Brief discussion on hiring the new IT Administrator person. Fire arms permits has doubled and takes about 1 hour to complete each application. Contractual Services stays the same, there is a slight increase in Training & Conferences for new detectives including an intensive 2 week training program. Computer expenses includes licensing. Brief discussion on data back-ups on and off-site. Uniforms have been unchanged for a long time. Believes uniforms should be the same for all officers as image is important. Small tools and equipment went up due to increase in ammunition cost due to wars and supply and demand.

Federal and state courts mandates that police departments have to record everyone that comes into the station whether in custody or part of an ongoing investigation. Furnishing and Equipment includes the costs of having to record and produce the recording to the courts.

Capital includes \$240,000 for cruisers.

Mr. Doherty – Asked about the model of cruisers to be purchased. Chief Begonis explained the department will be purchasing the SUVs again. They have a stable platform for easy access in and out and great gas mileage.

Mr. Doherty – Asked what will happen to the crown Victoria's? Mr. Hull explained that DPW will go through them and depending on condition will either auction or trade them in for credit against new purchases. Brief discussion on trade-in and sale value. Need to change out K-9 vehicle, looking at a larger SUV to house all the equipment.

Mr. Weiner – Asked if the Police Department is working with Shelly Newhouse on the drug and mental health problems. Chief Begonis responded that they are. It is a struggle without money. Explains family and friends do not come forward and the police cannot arrest their way out of the situation. Drugs come in faster than they can get them off the streets. Have been pretty successful now that the department is fully staffed. Explains his idea that there should be executive director to run drug prevention and how Shelly & he have limited time to dedicate to this one issue. The police do not go after small time users anymore. Officers are instructed to knock on their doors, be in their face, to offer any services they can. They have put multiple people in programs; it's a lot of work and will never refuse anyone.

Animal Control (pg. 36):

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Michael R. Begonis, Chief of Police

Chief Begonis – Personnel services has a 2% increase, with the \$2,000 overtime. Overtime is utilized to address issues on the weekends.

Public Safety Dispatch (pg. 35):

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Michael R. Begonis, Chief of Police

Chief Begonis – Explained they get grant money for personnel and equipment; it varies year to year.

Mr. Doherty – Inquired about turn over? Chief Begonis explained Dispatch is fully staffed as of now. Furnishings & Equipment includes the purchase of a new radio, due to frequency changes. The Chief recommends getting an assessment of what communication equipment the town has and determine where we need to be.

Fire (pg. 33):

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Richard McClellan, Chief of Department

Chief McClellan – Personnel Services reflect a lot of movement this year.

Mr. Hayden – Asked about the dollar change from year to year for Lieutenants. Mr. Hull explained that salary adjustment carried forward for the anticipation of contract settlements. We were still in discussion while developing the prior year's budget.

Chief McClellan explained overtime is keeping in line what was spent FY13. The amount is not considered normal but reflects retirements of the past couple of years. The department is obligated to fill these positions with overtime until the positions are filled.

Mr. Hull – Explained the process of hiring of civil service workers. Once hired the new fire fighter has to go through the fire academy which runs for 9 weeks.

Training Overtime is a new line item to address the turnover and ensure they can provide solid training. Holiday pay is contractual and grows slightly every year due to pay increases. Misc. Contractual Services has a slight increase due to taking on more technology which needs to be supported. \$25,000 portion is strictly for EMS oversight and training to maintain their EMT cards. Brief discussion on equipment longevity and the change in stretchers. Mentioned that fire alarms are no longer wired, they are completely wireless.

Training & Conferences has a small change due to bringing in new Chief and Deputy Chief. Computer Expenses increased due to supporting computers in each ambulance. The department is planning to install mobile hot spots to access internet in the vehicles.

Mr. Doherty – Asked who is handling IT for the Fire Department. Mr. Hull explained that largely Police IT staff person will be providing their IT support. Uniform & Protective Equipment reflects costs for the 6 new hires at approx \$5,600 per firefighter. Helmets, coats last 10 years. Fire Prevention & Arson Investigation is used for fire prevention programs in the schools and any equipment needed for arson investigations.

Furnishing & Equipment reflects the need to replace defibrillator, airbags, radio comparator, RIT equipment used to rescue a down firefighter.

Capital includes \$120,000 to replace breathing apparatus which is about 10 years old. Usually spend \$3,000 for repairs of equipment, have spent \$15,000 this year. Brief

discussion on usefulness of the small fire truck. Brief discussion on the Avalon fire and prevention.

Other Business:

Meeting Tuesday March 4th, 2014 Public Schools, March 6th, 2014 Shawsheen

There being no further business, a motion was made by Victoria Ellsworth, seconded by Jordan Weiner and by the affirmative vote of all, it was.

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at Unknown, next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, March 4th, 2014

Respectfully submitted,

Recording secretary