



Town of Wilmington

Finance Committee
121 Glen Road Wilmington, 01887

Meeting Minutes February 26, 2019

Finance Committee Chairman, John F. Doherty III, called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm in Room 9 of Town Hall. Members present were Theresa M. Manganelli, Vice Chairman; Neal Couture, Secretary; Marianne Gallezzo, Bernard P. Nally, Michelle Kincaid, Leigh Martinson, and Hirak Shah.

FY 20 BUDGET OVERVIEW

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Jeffrey Hull, Town Manager; Kerry Colburn-Dion, Assistant Town Manager

Before the Police Budget was presented the New Senior Clerk Christine Caggiano for the Town Managers office was introduced to the Finance Committee.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Chief Michael Begonis, Lt. Joseph Desmond, Lt. Scott Sencabaugh, Lt. Brian Pupa, St. Daniel Murray, Lt. Charles Fiore

Chief Begonis presented his FY2020 budget. Personnel Services do not have large changes. The union contracts are under negotiation and the budgeted number for the current staff does not show the salary increases for next fiscal year. The \$50,000.00 increase in overtime stems from shift replacements. Contractual Services have increased by \$23,350.00. There are several factors regarding this. There are salary changes for the crossing guards. They have two sign boards that are out of warranties and they need to replace them. Training has increased because of a need to train new officers and offer leadership training for potential candidates for the positions of Chief and Deputy Chief. The Deputy Chiefs position is currently vacant and the Chief is working without contract. Dues and Subscription fees have increased as well. Most of the computer expenses have been transferred into the IT department's budget. He budgeted \$5,000.00 in this account for software and the website host that are specific to the Police Department's needs. There was a request for a \$1,500.00 increase in office supplies. This is primarily due to the addition of the social worker to the department. The Furnishing and Equipment Account was level funded. They plan to make a change from the 40 caliber guns to a 9 millimeter gun. This will require them to stock up on that type of ammunition and purchase the accessories that go along with that weapon. The expense of furniture, tasers, and upgrading the portable defibrillators are also included this account.

Mr. Nally asked why the department changed the firearms. Chief Begonis replied that the 40 caliber is harder to use and train officers on. It is costing them additional training time and it is not cost efficient. Ms. Manganelli asked how the experience with the tasers have been. He replied that they have deployed once. It was very effective way of controlling someone without deadly force.

The Capital Outlay requests included 5 new police cruisers and additional cameras at the public safety building. There was a brief discussion regarding the specific use of the cruisers and how it affects the replacement schedule. The vehicles run idle several times a day. One hour of idle time equals to 33 miles of use. For this reason they need to replace cruisers more frequently than other vehicles. There was a brief discussion regarding why this type of vehicle

was chosen. This vehicle was preferred because of the size and ease of use. The older vehicles are not traded in. They are repurposed in other town departments. Ms. Gallezzo asked if the Chief chooses what vehicles are put on the replacement list. The DPW Mechanics department are responsible for making this decision. Ms. Gallezzo would like a foot note in next year's vehicle replacement book to explain why a vehicle is being replaced. \$31,000.00 is requested for cameras for the booking and evidence room. Mr. Stokes asked if there was a maintenance contract with this equipment. Chief Begonis stated that he was looking into this with the IT Department. Ms. Manganelli asked if the cameras purchased last year were working out. Chief Begonis stated that those cameras were helpful.

Chief Begonis presented his request for expanding his personnel numbers in the next two years. The cost of this addition is not listed in his budget on page 36. He distributed an informational packet that reviewed the need for this adjustment. This would require his department to hire 4 officers this year and 4 officers next year. This stems from a need to add a fourth patrol sector. They have had 3 sectors since the mid 1990's. Since that time the town has significantly grown. There was a discussion regarding the process when someone retires, the civil service process, and the length of time to hire\train officers. This extends the length of time that his department is understaffed at any given time. He is currently staffed at 36 officers but due to the various challenges the department is currently running at below 20 officers on staff. At a bare minimum he needs 4 additional officers. To create that fourth sector he would need an additional 4 officers next year. There are two open replacement positions right now. Ms. Gallezzo asked how long it would take to have those positions filled and trained. Chief Begonis replied that it would take until mid-January. There was a discussion regarding the hardships of finding open police training academies and the delays that this causes. They discussed the challenges of civil service control and whether or not we can negotiate this out of the Union contract. He reviewed his detective list and explained their roles in the department. He reviewed the increase in overtime demand in the recent and upcoming months. He listed the amount of calls, the time on calls, and the time spent on follow up procedures after the call. They had a discussion regarding building the staff incrementally rather than such large increases.

ANIMAL CONTROL

The animal control budget had a small increase in Personnel Services. It also had a request for \$4,500.00. This is to purchase a cage that fits inside the back of the cab of his truck so when he picks up cats or dogs, they are out of the elements. The rest of the budget is level funded.

DISPATCH

Most of the Dispatch budget was level funded. There is a request for an additional \$500.00 for training. There are state training opportunities that they would like to take advantage of. There was a discussion regarding employee turnover. This department had one Capital Outlay request. They need to replace the fire alerting system. The cost is \$175,000.00. There was a discussion regarding incrementally upgrading the dispatch room in the next several years.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

PRESENT IN INTEREST: Joseph McMahon, Fire Chief; William Cavanaugh, Deputy Chief; Billy Herrick, President Firefighters Union; and Jay Fleming, Deputy Chief for the Boston Fire Department

Chief McMahon presented his budget to the committee. The increases in Personnel Services for the Chief, Deputy Chief, Lieutenants, Firefighters, and the Full Time Clerk are due to

contractual obligations. The part time clerk has been moved to the full time position and this part time position was filled with a new person at a lower rate. Mr. Hull presented the large increase in the overtime account. There was a discussion regarding the ongoing challenges with the overtime expenses in the past years. This included employees being deployed into active duty, injuries, and vacations. They have gone over what has been budgeted and have had to ask for a transfer of funds to cover this in FY2019. They are requesting an increase in this account to prevent this problem in the next year. The additional staff that is being requested will take time to go through the civil service process and then training. The Overtime will not start to reduce in FY2020. Training overtime is level funded at \$40,000.00. Paid Holidays, EMT & Incentive Pay, and Sick Leave Buyback expenses are all contractual obligations. Misc. Contractual Services have increased. This is due to an OSHA requirement that all of the firemen are fit tested for their Scott Air-Paks at a cost of \$50.00 a person. There are other licenses and first aid supplies that contribute to the expenses in this account. Radio Repairs, Training & conferences, Fire Alarm/Dispatch and Emergency Management are all level funded. Office Supplies are level funded as well. Uniforms & Protective Equipment has a larger increase. This budget is asking for funds to hire 4 more Firemen. The cost of uniforms and equipment for the new personnel caused an increase in this account. This account also included eight sets of gear to replace existing equipment that is expiring this year. Emergency supplies has a 2% increase. Fire Prevention & Arson Investigation is level funded. Furnishing & Equipment will increase significantly. All but \$900.00 is allocated to outfit the new Fire Pump.

Mr. Doherty asked about the status of the Fire Departments FY2019 overtime. Chief McMahon stated that they are \$65,000 over budget. The department has \$124,800.00 in an account for additional men to work the ambulance during the day. They did not use those funds and he intends to transfer this to cover the deficit. They are transferring \$32,000.00 that was not used in the training account for overtime costs as well. Jeff stated that he will be looking for a transfer at town meeting to replenish this account. Chief McMahon updated the committee that the overtime amounts have gone down since December. He just received notice that one fireman will be coming back to work. This will leave 4 firefighters out right now. Three are out with an injury and one is deployed. Mr. Hull stated that they propose to add four firemen in FY2020. It will take a year to get them trained and on shift. She asked how many firefighters are needed to stabilize the overtime. Chief McMahon said that he would like to have eight firemen added. There was a discussion regarding OSHA's requirement that during a fire two men cannot go in a building unless there are two men outside the building. They discussed how many hours a week the firemen are working now and the potential of a safety issue from fatigue. Mr. Hull felt that an increase of eight firemen would be too much money to allocate in one year. They discussed the history of the overtime costs in the last few years. There was a general consensus from the committee that four firemen will not be enough to resolve the overtime problems and they felt that this issue was urgent. They also did not see the same urgent need for the Police Department. They had a discussion of dealing with the Police Departments need incrementally over the next few years. Mr. Hull advised that there is a recommended span of control and this would require additional Captains on the Fire Department. This will trigger contract negotiations with the union in order to implement this. They discussed the timeline and expenses that adding the four Captain positions would require. If the town decides to build a substation in North Wilmington this would help to staff it. They discussed the process of amending or changing what is being requested in the budget. They would need to determine what the expenses would be, what changes they would want and where the money would come from. Mr. Martinson stated that he would like to see a 5 year

plan presented to address the Police staff, Fire staff, and the substation for North Wilmington. The committee asked for the cost of the additional staff.

Bill Herrick, President of the Firefighters Union stated that the union would be open to work with Jeff to resolve any staffing changes. He introduced Jay Fleming, Deputy Chief for the Boston Fire department. Mr. Fleming presented a study on risk assessment. He referenced different techniques for quantifying how to properly staff a fire department. He showed a comparison utilizing neighboring communities. Wilmington has a denser population and has a daytime population increase. Wilmington has fewer firefighters per shift and fewer officers per firefighter than their peer communities. He also explained the importance of having an officer inside the burning building and an officer outside the building.

NEW BUSINESS

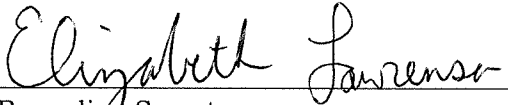
Mr. Doherty asked about the Roman House problems. Mr. Hull stated that he spoke to the Director of Public Buildings regarding what the Roman house needed to make it functional. He will get that information to him.

At the conclusion of the discussion, and there being no further business to come before the Committee, a motion was made by Neal Couture, and seconded by Marianne Gallezzo, it was unanimously:

VOTED: That the Finance Committee adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 10:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Recording Secretary