

Minutes of the Board of Finance Budget Review Meeting
March 17, 2014 – Police Station Conference Room – 7 p.m.

Members present: Justin Donnelly, Joseph Sangiovanni, Scott Lingenfelter, Chris Childs, Ryan Anderson, Brian Kost, alts. Tracy Eccles, Eric Harrington, Michael Stevens
Also present: First Selectman McAnaney, Selectman Fitzgerald, Treasurer Christine Davidson, Director of Finance Deborah Cerrato

Chairman Justin Donnelly called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Citizen Comment: None

Correspondence: None

Budget Review:

**Emergency Medical Services (Tab 43) – Art Groux ,Chief, noted some statistics of service provided by the Emergency Medical Service: 1525 calls last year and provided 26,000 hours of volunteer labor; now we have 89 volunteers. The majority of the volunteers continue to be from out of town. The budget for the proposed fiscal year is \$219,417, the same as last year.

**Police Department (Tab 30) Chief Mike Manzi – He noted that the PD had proposed a two officer increase to the Board of Selectmen. The BoS reduced it to one additional police officer which puts the PD back to staff status two years ago. In fiscal year 01-02, the PD handled 13,000 calls of service that year. To fast forward to FY 2011-12, we handled nearly 20,000 calls of service that year. More importantly, Suffield is dealing with more violent crimes. We need more personnel. The population has increased. We have 44 square miles for two officers to cover. The PD has one officer on long term military service and one officer off on workman’s comp. The PD is down 5 officers on every single day. The PD has never ever reached our authorized strength since he has worked here. What is the real cost of new police officer? It was noted that the high overtime expense does increase the pension cost. Fatigue is a real factor when officers put in over 100 hours a month of overtime. \$39,000 salary actually increases a budget by \$78,000. Mr. Lingenfelter feels that the two main purposes of our Town Government is education and public safety. He thinks their request for two additional officers, is an issue of public safety. This is a public safety concern; we would be remiss if we did not take this request seriously. Chief Manzi says this request is a need of the Town; for public safety. The Board discussed the cost the pension of a police officer reflected by the amount of overtime. The Chairman thanked the Chief for his presentation.

**Information Technology (19) – The First Selectman stated that we have not filled the part time position (20 hrs) that is available in this department. The position has been posted internally to the Town Hall Union. Dan Beaudoin stated not much has changed; there is a change for Training, Books, increase of \$300 moving to Windows 7; and a change for Service Maintenance Contracts (31% increase, Cloud Backup .). The cost depends how much data we acquire. The amount that will be backed up has not been determined at this time. This budget does not include the Board of Education. One cannot risk not having a back up of data. The internet service maintenance cost has been reduced by 43%. The Town has been one of the 8 communities that has connected to the State CNET. The total budget reduction is 5.5%.

The Chairman asked the First Selectman if the BoF could see a list of new positions or pay increases by next week? Mr. Donnelly noted he is asking for an “overall” report. The First Selectman agreed it was possible.

Public Works (35) John Cloonan Our budget from last year has increased 2.75% . He noted that this proposed budget includes \$2,000 for repair of the Spaulding ADA playground surface, add wood chips; He reviewed the Repairs& Maintenance Buildings line item, reflecting an increase of 21.43%, (\$13,000 should have been budgeted from the contracted services last fiscal year). The Contracted Cleaning line item has increased by 10%. This funds the cleaning of the Town Hall, the Library, the Annex, 230 Mountain Road, and one day a week at the Highway Garage. Mr. Donnelly asked who judges the quality of control of the cleaning at Town Hall. Mr. Cloonan replied that he did. Mr. Donnelly stated that the lower head (bathroom) needs to be addressed from a quality control point of view. Pure maintenance, it really needs a “police” job.

The fuel oil-Gas Heating line item increased by \$4,900 added for the Bridge Street School. The Board asked just what made up “Contracted Services; the amount remains the same. It is used to hire any contractor that is necessary to perform a particular service when needed. It has been used to hire Jack Muska after he retired and before the Facilities Maintainer position was filled. Now Jack is overseeing the Fire Pump project.

The other increased line item is payroll line item for the department of public works is the new position, Department of Public Works Executive Assistant (salary of \$35,880) which was approved by the Board of Selectmen last Friday. This combines the PBC Recording Secretary salary (\$6,000), the Clerk’s salary (\$20,280) and increasing the weekly hours to 30 at the new rate of \$23 per hour, totaling \$35,880.00.

Highway (36) John Cloonan and Mark Cervione

The Highway Department Overtime through 3-2-14 –pay date 3-6-14 was \$52,650.19. The cost of Outside Services through 3-14-14 is \$76,599.54. Total - \$129,249.73

The Highway Department Overtime through 3-3-13 pay date 3 7 13 was \$62,525.10. The cost of Outside Services through 6-30-13 \$52,096.66. Total - \$114,621.76

The higher cost for the current fiscal year is due to more snow storms, and icy weather.

Mr. Donnelly asked about the staffing? You have an open position. And you have possible two retirements. What is your plan for adequate staffing. The First Selectman stated, We should now fill the open position during this fiscal year; to keep this authorized. We now know what is the exact number of staff to have on hand, to provide services. There are currently 7 Highway Department employees and 2 Landfill Department employees. Mr. Lingenfelter stated that public safety is the highway staff. The gaps are filled by an increasing number of sub-contractors.

Landfill (37) John Cloonan and Mark Cervione

Increased fees are based on an estimated number of 15 new homes. The burn fee is the same rate as last year. Salary increase is due to step in the union contract for the recent hire. The Highway contract expires on June 30, 2014.

Capital Expenditures (7) ACCE Advisory Commission on Capital Expenditures

J. Michael Stevens, Chairman, distributed the written reports from the Advisory Commission of Capital Expenditures (ACCE).

The First Report- begins with Debt Service. This shows the debt service for 2014 -15 -\$2,780,436. The Bond Premium Applied in 2014-15 (\$176,610) – This shows a total Debt Service Load for 2014-15 to be \$2,603,826.

The Capital Expenditures –Recurring Expenditures and Previously Committed Expenditures are listed next. There was extensive review of prior projects done this year. There are several old projects that can be reallocated negating any new funding in this budget.

The ACCE Gross Recommended projects listed by Priority totals \$4,425,635. If you subtract from the grants and project reallocations the net amount ACCE is recommending for a total of Capital Expenditures, \$3,437,249. The Debt Service is offset by the balance of the Bond Premium \$176,610 from the Bond sale for a Total Debt Service Load of \$2,603,826.

The second report shows the Sweep to General and Transfer to other Capital; thus showing the Residual Balance after the recommended Transfers. A total of \$4,689,009.13 reflects the total of all capital Accruals.

The third report shows by different colors, the history and tracking of all existing funds.

Mr. Kost noted that if non tax revenue is flat; a proposed 4.77% increase (\$1 M) BoE increase, debt service of \$1.5 M; BoF Selectmen budget increase of \$600,000, and Debt Service increase of \$500,000, he figures approximately a 11% increase in taxes even before the BoF makes any budget decisions. Every percent of increase is worth approximately \$400,000. If we want the 11% to be more like 3%, that means we have to find \$2.8 M that we have to find. A 4% increase in the operating budget in his opinion is too high.

Mr. Lingenfelter asked if the expense of a Charter Revision is included in this budget.

Discussion followed.

Ms. Cerrato noted that the Fire Commission has requested that its budget review be postponed until April 7. The Board of Finance agreed that the Fire Commission could present their budget before the Board of Education's budget presentation. The meeting will be scheduled to begin at 6:45 that evening.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling, Secretary BOF.MINUTES.MARCH.17.2014 FINAL

