

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Commissioners' Budget Work Session

Meeting Called By:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	October 8, 2009 at 18:00
Note Taker:	Stephen Carrier	Place:	Tilton School, new Academic Building, School Street, 1 st Floor 9 th Grade Classroom, Tilton

Present: Commissioner Paul Auger, Commissioner Tom Gallant, Commissioner Kevin Waldron and Chief Stephen Carrier.

It was intended for the meeting to be audio taped. However, a technical difficulty resulted in no recording being made.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Waldron.

Commissioner Waldron asked how the Commission wanted to proceed.

Commissioner Gallant stated that they should first address the pressurized hydrant issue since they told the Water District Commissioners that they would draft a proposal to address the hydrant fee issue for the future.

The Commissioners discussed the issue and Commissioner Gallant made a motion to set the annual payment at \$115,000. It was seconded by Commissioner Auger. A good deal of discussion ensued. (I'm not sure if there was another motion in here by Paul, either before or after Tom's motion) Commissioner Waldron stated that he believed the number should be at \$34,500. Commissioner Gallant asked why? He stated that there are no other Communities paying more than \$500/hydrant, and that is what he used as a multiplier to come up with his figure. There was disagreement and discussion. The vote was called and the motion passed 2-1 with Commissioner Waldron dissenting. Commissioner Gallant stated that he would draft a letter to the Water District Commissioners for review at the Fire Commissioner's next meeting.

2010 Budget

Commissioner Waldron asked how the others wanted to proceed. There was some general discussion about this year's budget and the need to "hold the line" with respect to the economy and the effect of it on the people in the District.

Commissioner Waldron began the budget work session by addressing revenues.

Lines 2530 and 3110 were skipped.

Line 3351 – Commissioner Waldron stated that there would be no Revenue Sharing from the State, so the line should be "0".

Line 3502 – Set at \$1,000.

Line 3506 – Set at \$500. Discussion of line title. It should simply say "Insurance Reimbursements"; strike the "Other".

Line 3509 – set at \$6,000.

Commissioner Gallant motioned to set line 3351 at \$0; 3502 at \$1,000; 3506 at \$500; and 3509 at \$6,000. Seconded by Commissioner Waldron. Approved unanimously.

Expenditures

Line 110 – Career Salaries and Wages.

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Line 110.01 - Discussion about level funding the raises to 2009 levels. Commissioner Auger motioned to set Line 110.01 at \$608,267. Commissioner Waldron seconded. Commissioner Gallant asked what they were going to do about the Chief's contracted wage increase of \$3,515. Commissioner Waldron withdrew his second, and Commissioner Auger withdrew his motion. The motion was re-made and re-seconded at the amount of \$611,782. Approved unanimously.

Line 110.05 – With the level funding of 110.01, it was obvious that the Holiday Pay line would remain the same as the budgeted amount from 2009. Commissioner Waldron stated that he understands that the State has 11 paid holidays, but asked how we came up with 12 hrs of pay for a holiday? Chief Carrier explained that the work day, when we covered days, only, was 12 hours. He stated that most people get paid for 8 hours on the holiday. Commissioner Gallant said that is true for someone that works 40 hours/week, but our shift personnel work 48 hours per week. There was discussion of making a change from 12 hours/holiday to 8 hours/holiday. Commissioner Gallant said that is not a budget discussion, but a policy change discussion that should be done at a Commission meeting. (I am not sure who motioned and seconded) The line was set at \$23,610.

Line 110.06 – Overtime. Both Commissioner Waldron and Commissioner Auger felt the overtime budget was too high and that something could be done to lower the amount of overtime expended. Chief Carrier explained that he originally had come up with a figure of \$142,000 to cover anticipated overtime, and had trimmed it to the \$130,000 that was submitted in the budget. Commissioner Waldron asked if per diem help would lower the budget. Chief Carrier stated that per diem help would be a reduction in service. It is not guaranteed help and you would, or may not be hiring personnel that are trained to operate your equipment or follow your procedures. Scheduling and managing per diem help could be a nightmare. Commissioner Auger said that we could use call people – there must be a way. Chief Carrier stated that, also, would be a change in the level of service we provide. He also talked about Gilford looking into hiring a "vacation coverage person". They have determined that it would not be feasible. Also, Sanbornton uses per diem help for coverage and it is a constant struggle to schedule help and it is different people working together all the time, so continuity is questionable. However, it is a good way for an emerging full-time department to get started. Commissioner Auger stated that he would like to see the OT budget set at no more than \$100,000. There was discussion about where he would like to see the OT budget cut to get to that level. Chief Carrier indicated that he would cut training costs first if faced with a drastic cut such as the one proposed. Discussion continued. Commissioner Gallant made a motion to set the budget line at \$112,500. It was seconded by Commissioner Waldron(?) for discussion. Commissioner Gallant explained that his rationale behind this number is that it is a compromise between the \$123,000 budgeted for last year and the \$100,000 that Commissioner Auger is proposing this year. Chief Carrier pointed out that setting this line at \$112,500 would bring the OT Budget back to below 2008 budget levels. The amount was approved (not sure of the vote).

Commissioner Gallant reserved his right to come back to any of the salary lines during future work sessions if he or others felt it was necessary. All agreed.

Line 120 – Call Salaries and Wages – The line was set at the proposed \$73,625 (not sure of motions and vote). After the vote Commissioner Waldron questioned line 120.01 – Deputy Chief Stipend, and the fact that the note indicated a \$.50/hr raise for the Deputy. Commissioner Gallant indicated that sub-line was included in Line 120 and has already been voted on. Chief Carrier pointed out that Deputy Robinson is well worth the raise proposed and

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that it will have minimal impact on the 120 line. In fact, he has not even increased the line because of the raise.

Line 130 – Elected Officials

Commissioner Waldron discussed the fact that the commissioners do a lot of work for \$900/year. He stated that the selectmen in both Northfield and Tilton earn over \$3,000/year. Commissioner Gallant agreed that a lot of work was required of the Fire Commissioners, but stated that no public official takes on a job for the money – they do it to serve their community. Commissioner Gallant motioned to set the line at \$6,250. Seconded by Commissioner (unsure who seconded and what the vote was). There was also discussion about the Clerk and Treasurer's pay being more than \$900.

200 – Employee Benefits

210 – Group Health – skipped – no rates have been received yet.

215 – Group Disability and Life Insurance

Commissioner Waldron questioned the State Fireman's Association sub-line. Chief Carrier explained that the \$600 in question is for dues for all members to belong to the State Association. The State Fireman's Assoc. has improved the services that it provides to firefighters and the membership also secures supplemental insurance, that is much like the "Greene Insurance", but it is additional, not just duplicate. Commissioner Waldron asked if the full time members were members of the State Union Association. Chief Carrier said that they were. He questioned why they would want to or need to be members of both. The Chief said that both had benefits to them. (unsure who made and seconded and what the vote was) The line was set at \$7,150.

220 – Social Security – Chief Carrier re-figured the amount to be budgeted based on the earlier actions to the salary lines. This figure was \$6,628 and the line was set at that amount (unsure on motion, second, and vote).

225 – Medicare – This line was recalculated, as well... \$11,912. And, it was set at that amount.

230 – Retirement – Recalculated - \$130,963. Set at that amount.

250 – Unemployment Compensation – Commissioner Waldron asked what we had spent year to date. Chief Carrier reported \$45. There was some discussion as to the liability to the department for not carrying Unemployment Insurance and the expense it would create if we did.

260 – Worker's Compensation – skipped due to no estimate available at this time.

290 – Other – Set at \$1.

Professional and Technical Services

301 – Auditing – skipped. We will be checking with Kathy to get a quote for budgeting purposes.

320 – Legal Services – Commissioner Waldron felt that we should increase the line because we may be faced with the prospects of a bargaining unit being formed in 2010. Commissioner Gallant motioned to set the line at \$2,000, seconded by Commissioner Auger and set by a 2-1 vote with Commissioner Waldron dissenting.

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335 – Training – There was quite a bit of discussion due to the decrease in the OT budget. Chief Carrier indicated that the overtime reduction would make it easy to reduce the training line because he won't have the money to pay full time personnel to take training classes. He recommended it be dropped to \$10,000. It was asked how much more will Capt Michaud's class cost. The Chief thought it to be around \$5,000, but will check with Greg. The line was skipped until we get better information. *(That figure is \$2,538)*

340 – Bank Services / Interest - \$1 was set after some discussion about the remote possibility of having to borrow money in anticipation of taxes.

341 – Telephone – line set at \$5,500.

342 – Data Processing – Line set at \$3,000.

350 – Medical Services – There was a good deal of discussion about the current plan to get all full time people annual physicals and how that differed from the previous plan of each employee who was in their 40's receiving a physical every year, in their 30's – every 2 years, and in their 20's – every 3 years. The Chief said the national standards indicate that every employee, call or full time should be given a fire department physical annually. However, our budget has never supported that. Even this year, fully funding all personnel, we may not be able to get everyone through due to cost overruns in other lines.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2115 hrs.

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: October 15, 2009 at 18:00. Meeting to be held at Tilton School, new Academic Building, School Street, First Floor, Ninth Grade Classroom, Tilton.