



Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS

Michael W. Sitar Jr, Chief

Michael Robinson, Deputy Chief

Budget Public Hearing Minutes of the Meeting of February 2, 2016

Budget Committee Members Present: Don Stevens, Jane Alden, Peter Fogg, George Flanders, Paul Blaisdell, Timothy Sattler, Pat Clark

Also Present: Paul Auger, Dennis Manning, Chief Michael Sitar

Don Stevens opened the public hearing of the proposed budget at 7:55pm

Don Stevens described the process of the budget and the work that was done to bring the budget to what is being proposed. The year TNFD purchased the two ambulances was the two years that both companies had troubles with their engines. The District is looking at going to a gas engine; Paul Blaisdell explained the benefits.

Chief Michael Sitar explained his process in preparing the budget. Going over the preventative maintenance plan, overseeing the inspection and repairs of the dry hydrants, grants applied for in 2015, applied for a grant for radio replacements and replacement old ambulance.

Pat Clark explained the Commissioner's process in preparing the budget. Salaries and wages play a large part in the budget. The Chief suggested this year adding a fourth shift which increased the budget along with an hourly wage, health insurance and retirement increase.

Don Stevens went through the budget line by line with committee members answering any questions from the public.

Salary and Wages – increase due to 2.5% raises, overtime. Chief Sitar explained about call fire fighters, shift coverage. Gretchen Wilder asked why do call fire fighters not cover career fire fighters, do we have volunteer firefighters. Chief Sitar explained that we have a support company which helps us during fires making sure fire fighters are fed, fundraisers etc. EMS calls are not just two people, typically we have five people there to help. Kevin LaChapelle stated that the fire department has not had a volunteer program since 1970, he also stated that it takes between three and six years to get the certification just to get hired. For the level of service we are providing is what you want coming through your door.

Holiday Pay – No questions

Overtime Pay – was increased due to the increase in fire in 2015.

Elected Officials – No questions

Group Health Insurance and Retirement – No questions

Payroll Taxes – No question

Unemployment Comp – No questions.

Workman's Comp – No questions.

Auditing – No questions

Legal Services – No questions

School Training – No questions

Bank Charges and Interest – No questions

Telephone – No questions

Information Technology – Up this year. Gretchen asked why. Chief said we need to replace two computers and purchase a new iPad for one of the fire trucks, all the fixed services such as IT support, email services, website, etc. remain the same.

Medical Services – Up this year due to hiring additional call fire fighters and cost of insurance.

Vehicle Repairs – No Questions

Elections – No Questions

Other Professional Services – The various items charged to this line were discussed, i.e. two years ago it was used for COMSTAR billing.

Heating Fuel – No questions

Water and Sewer – No questions

Repairs and Maintenance – Need two garage door openers at Park Street Station, entry door replacements, striping on the floors, and general maintenance.

Property Liability Insurance – No questions.

Printing – No questions

Dues and Subscriptions – No questions

Pressurized Fire Hydrants – Catherine Dawson asked if the warrant article fails does this line zero out. Pat Clark said no, the wording in the warrant article states the first year is in the budget. It's a five year deal, but the first year is in the budget.

Supplies Office – No questions

Postage – Pat Consentino asked why this went up so much. Chief would like to institute a satisfaction of service survey, information gained will be used for training going forward. Catherine Dawson suggested also putting it on the website, such as an "Ask the Chief" page. Catherine Dawson says this is a great idea in improving service.

Equipment Maintenance and Repairs - Radio equipment, tools, pumps, ladders, gas meters, generators, portable pumps, fire extinguishers, flashlights, unanticipated equipment repair, SCBA, etc... Pat Consentino asked why the budget was cut. Paul Blaisdell commented for mobile radio repairs we are getting parts off eBay because the radios are obsolete, chain & vent saws we have historically spent about \$450, SCBA was cut by \$1,000, unanticipated equipment report was cut that back \$1,000 after discussion.

Service and Testing – No questions

Gasoline – Contract runs until July 1st.

Vehicle Repair – No Questions

Books and Periodicals – No questions

Departmental Awards – Pat Consentino asked why the increase compared to what was spent why. Chief said this was because the event wasn't planned as well as it should have been so the monies weren't spent. The award has already been planned for April. Gretchen Wilder asked why the increase in the past few years. Chief said we are trying to honor department retirees and employees for providing service to the community.

Fire Prevention – No questions

Uniforms – Gretchen Wilder thinks we should reduce the line item and not purchase dress uniforms. Don Stevens said right now the career fire fighters get \$500 a year for their work uniforms. That money is to purchase two dress uniforms, in two years everyone will have a dress uniform. We purchase two dress uniforms a year for two different fire fighters. Gretchen asked if we purchase a new uniform every 6 years. Chief replied no, it's one and done. Pat Consentino asked if these monies are contractual and how much is one dress uniform. Chief replied no contract, and a uniform is \$1,400. Pat Consentino asked if when the fire fighter leaves if they take the uniform with them. Chief replied yes as they are custom fit uniforms.

Miscellaneous – Gretchen Wilder would like to see this line eliminated next year. Kathryn Tobine said the miscellaneous covers new employee criminal background checks, motor vehicle reports, etc...

Fixtures and Furniture – Gear lockers are going down to the Park Street Station, office chair, UPSs

Dry Hydrants and Cisterns – Three are to be repaired on Roadway Inn, Calif Hill and PCC, two new ones on Shaw Rd and East Pleasant.

No adjustments were made to the proposed budget. Members signed the MS-737.

Motion to adjourn by Don Stevens seconded by Jane Alden. Don Stevens closed public hearing at 9:30pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Giovannucci
District Clerk