

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Budget Committee Meeting

Meeting Called By: Budget Committee Date, Time: 12/19/2019 at 6:00 PM

Transcribed By: Beth Joslin

Place: Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room, 257 Main Street, Tilton

Jason Wright called the meeting of the Budget Committee to order at 6:07 PM.

Present: Paul Blaisdell, Charles Broughton, Dennis Manning, Kevin Waldron, Jason Wright, Jane Alden, Commissioner Eric Pyra and Chief Michael Sitar.

Public: Captain Sean Valovanie, Lieutenant Matthew Gilman, Deputy Timothy Joubert

Minutes

November 13, 2019

Jane made a motion to approve the minutes of November 13th. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

December 5, 2019

Charlie made a motion to approve the minutes of December 5th. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

2020 Operating Budget

Discussion ensued on whether to continue talking about the additional career staff. Chief Sitar stated that 2 out of 3 Commissioners said they would not write the additional staff as a warrant article. Clarifying that it was in conversation outside of a meeting. Paul notes that it is likely that it will not be written into the warrant articles if that is the case.

4220 Fire

100 Salaries & Wages

Paul made a motion to fund lines 100, 110, 110.5, 111, and 120 for \$1,106,237.00. Dennis seconded the motion. Paul stated that the number was the current wages plus the 2½% step. Paul discusses why he is not in favor of adding two additional personnel, stating that his concerns are the reoccurring cost of about \$90,000 per year per employee (including training, outfitting, benefits). Paul also states that regionalization/consolidation is a possibility. It has been discussed with both Sanbornton and Franklin and Franklin is open to exploring a regionalization/consolidation agreement with Tilton-Northfield. Noting that it should be looked at as a possibility in the near future when they are discussing personnel.

Charlie asks how this will help them get to the second call. Paul replies that there will potentially be more firemen and paramedics available. Regionalization would give a larger employee pool to draw on.

Chief Sitar states that regionalization would still require additional personnel in order to handle the call volume from both towns as Franklin is running at their limit with their current staff. The process of regionalization could take years and, in the meantime, they need more staff now. Discussion ensued.

Lt Gilman (Union VP) states that the union has no desire to collectively bargain. They have had a very good working relationship with the Commissioners the last few years with open discussion and they don't want to lose that flexibility.

Paul asked if he may amend his motion. Jason replies he would like to vote the current motion. Kevin states that he can withdraw the motion and whoever seconded may withdraw as well. Paul states that he gave an inaccurate number and withdrew his motion. Dennis withdrew his second.

Paul made a motion to fund lines 100, 110, 110.5, 111, and 120 for \$1,200,369.00 noting that the number he gave previously did not include call salaries and wages. Funding line 110 for \$877,237.00; line 110.5 for \$38,155; line 111 for \$190,846; line \$94,130.

Charlie asked if there was a holiday pay limit, he was directed to line 110.5. Kevin seconded the motion.

Dennis asked if the total for salaries & wages included the two new fire fighters. Paul replied yes, for 6 months. Chief Sitar added that was two new members starting July 1, 2020. Kevin asked if there were two new firefighters would there be a need for overtime to cover time off. Chief Sitar replied yes, during the day.

Charlie asked if there would be less call firefighters if they hired two new career members, Jason clarified that the two new members would be daytime only because with day jobs it is hard to get call members during the day. Discussion ensued regarding the cost per career member and the new hire costs. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay-3; Nay-4.

Motion Failed.

Charlie made a motion to approve lines 100, 110, 110.5, 111, and 120 for the amount of \$1,271,472.00. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Yay-4; Nay-3. **Motion Passed.**

625 Postage

Paul motions to fund line 625 for \$400.00. Charlie seconded the motion. Paul noted a significant difference year to year and asked Chief Sitar if it is due to the surveys sent out in 2018. Chief Sitar replied that it was. Also noting that they had leftover stamps from the previous year they were able to use but the price has since gone up. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

630 Equipment Maintenance & Repairs

Paul made a motion to fund line 630 for \$7,850.00. Jane seconded the motion. Paul asked Chief Sitar to explain why there is such a large difference in the appropriated and actual for that line in 2019. Chief Sitar responded that the actual was last updated at the end of November, some of the items have since been repaired or maintained. Some of the items they save for December to be sure it's in the budget.

Paul questioned the need for \$2,000.00 to fund 630.191 SCBA repairs if they are getting new SCBAs. Chief Sitar replied that the new SCBAs still need to be voted on and if it passes it may be a few months before they have them. Discussion ensued regarding the number of SBCAs.

Paul asked Chief Sitar how much more he thinks is being spent in December. Chief Sitar said he doesn't know until he receives the bills.

Paul questions what happens to the money that is not spent. Chief Sitar replied that it goes into the general fund and later someone will motion to use the remaining to defer the tax burden. Discussion ensued. Discussion continued regarding using the contingency fund rather

than funding a line item to replace the more expensive equipment should something happen to it.

Paul suggests averaging two years to get closer to the actual amount spent. Jane withdrew her second. Paul amended his motion to fund line 630 for \$5,000.00 rather than \$7,850.00. Jane seconded the amendment. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Yay-6; Nay-1. **Motion Passed.**

631 Service Testing

Dennis made a motion to fund line 631 for \$15,684.00. Charlie seconded the motion.

631.13 SCBA Flow Test

Eric questioned why there are flow tests for 30 SCBAs when there will only be 26. Chief Sitar responded that because there were more riding positions in the vehicles, they have had 30 SCBAs. The number of riding positions is down so there will be fewer new SCBAs. The ones we have still need to be maintained.

631.02 Aerial

Dennis asked what hasn't happened with the aerial. Chief Sitar replied that the testing was just completed that week.

Paul questioned ladders being in both lines 630 and 631. Chief Sitar replies that 630 is repairs and 631 is service testing.

631.12 Water Cooler

Kevin questioned the expense for water coolers. Chief Sitar explained that it is to clean and change the filters in our water coolers. That this is a less expensive option than buying jugs of water. Kevin asked why the water needs to be filtered. He receives the same water from the water company, stating that it has to meet standards for them to sell it. Chief Sitar stated that he does not want to talk about it. Paul stated that he didn't believe it belonged under service testing.

631.11 Power Cots

Paul asked about the \$700.00 allocated to service testing for the power cots and why it has not been spent this year. Lt. Gilman responded that the testing was completed but the company never sent a bill.

Jason stated that the 3-year average for the line is \$11,976.00. Chief Sitar commented that the 2019 actual doesn't include all of 2019 yet, such as the aerial testing. Paul noted that with the outstanding balances not noted for 2019 the 3-year average is closer to \$13,000.00. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay-1; Nay-6. **Motion Failed.**

Paul motions to fund line 631 for \$13,000.00, the approximate 3-year average. Jason seconds the motion. Kevin asked whether that includes the water coolers. Chief Sitar replied yes, as it is included in the bottom line. Jason states that it does for now. If they move it, they will need to revote on the line. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay-6; Nay-1. **Motion Passed.**

635 Gasoline

Paul made a motion to fund line 635 for \$5,250.00. Charlie seconded the motion. Paul asked how the Chief got to that number. Chief Sitar responded that that is what he projects we will be at the end of this year. Paul noted that another vehicle has been added. Discussion ensued regarding the gasoline vehicles in the fleet.

Chief Sitar stated that the 2019 actual is only for 10 months. Paul calculated that based on the monthly average this year. The actual for 2019 will be in the area of \$3,936.00. Chief Sitar noted that the average for 2017 and 2018 comes to \$4,079.00.

Paul stated he would like to see the number closer to the 3-year average. Jason agreed. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay-1; Nay-6. **Motion Failed.**

Paul made a motion to fund line 635 for \$3,936.00, the 3-year average. Jason seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

636 Diesel

Jason suggested finding the 3-year average before making a motion. Paul commented that this year would be about \$13,972, noting that the number is pretty close to what has been budgeted. Jason stated that the 3-year average is \$13,186.

Paul noted that the department uses significantly more diesel and they should base it off the actual rather than a 3-year average. Jason agreed that there are vehicles that need to idle, and not something you can be too conservative with.

Paul made a motion to fund line 636 for \$13,973.00. Jane seconded the motion. Discussion ensues regarding how Paul came to that number. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

660 Vehicle Repairs

Paul asked if they could discuss without a motion. Chief Sitar replied that he could talk about it as he is not a voting member. Chief Sitar went on to explain that the numbers are based on known repairs, service and preventative maintenance and the line for \$25,000.00 is to cover unknown repairs that come up.

Dennis noted that it did not break out how much of the amount budgeted for unknown repairs was used this year as it was broken out into the individual vehicles it was spent on. Dennis goes on to estimate the known costs to be budgeted at \$40,374.00 meaning so far this year about \$16,000 has been spent from the \$20,000 budgeted for unknown repairs. Chief Sitar replied that it is that much at least as he has brought multiple vehicles for repair this month.

Kevin asked why the unknown repairs can't come out of the contingency fund. Dennis commented that it would be bad budgeting. Chief Sitar replies that the contingency fund is controlled by the Commissioners and can only be used for unusual circumstance. The District has funded the contingency fund for the last few years and it has never been used, that is a good thing. They know trucks are going to break, it's something that is going to happen and they need to account for it. Discussion ensued.

Eric noted that the budgeted amount for regular known maintenance for 2019 was \$40,000.00 and for 2020 it is \$34,000. The big difference being mainly a decrease in the allotted amount for Engine 3. Discussion continued as to whether the funds for unknown repairs should be allocated to individual vehicles or kept as a separate item.

Paul made a motion to fund line 660 at a total of \$54,468.00, that number derived from the scheduled maintenance requested and other funded at \$20,000.00. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

670 Books & Periodicals

Paul made a motion to fund line 670 for \$100.00. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

680 Departmental Awards

Paul made a motion to fund line 680 for \$1,000.00. Dennis seconded the motion. Paul asked Chief Sitar what that line covers. Chief Sitar responded that it mainly covers the annual awards ceremony in April. Food is getting more expensive and they are considering holding it in a different venue.

Lt. Gilman added that the Union and the Firefighter Relief Association will also be contributing to the ceremony. Adding that they have not contributed in the past but that they are trying to make it a more upscale event rather than the potluck it has been in the past. Discussion ensued regarding the importance of the event. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

685 Uniforms

Paul made a motion to fund line 685 for \$14,790.00. Jane seconded the motion. Paul asked Chief Sitar for clarification of what 685.01 Career Uniform entails. Chief Sitar responded that each career member is given a yearly \$500 clothing budget. Paul asked if there were 19 employees receiving that budget. Chief Sitar said no, that there were currently 16. Paul stated that the correct number should then be \$8,000.00. Discussion continued clarifying the remaining lines budgeted for uniforms. There being no further discussion, vote was taken.

Motion Failed.

Paul made a motion to fund line 685 for \$13,290. Dennis seconded the motion. Jason stated that he would lower that number further as the Support Company is funded at \$450 and has only spent \$200.00 in three years. Discussion ensued about the use of the uniform budgets.

685.03 Support Company Uniforms

Paul recommended that the Chief encourage the Support Company to use their uniform allowance. Jason suggested the District get them jackets and present them to the members at the annual awards ceremony. Adding that the spirit of volunteers is they don't ask for anything and he would rather see the line used for that than to be not used at all. There being no further discussion vote is taken. **Motion Passed.**

690 Miscellaneous

Dennis made a motion to fund line 690 for \$300.00. Jane seconded the motion. Jason asked what it is. Chief Sitar replied that it covers everything that doesn't fit anywhere else. Also noting that they have used it in the past but for specifically what he was not sure. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

Paul wanted to look back at 631.15 Boiler Inspection, thinking it had been missed. Jason clarified that they had voted on line 631 in its entirety, that the line just fell in a strange spot in the page break.

Kevin asked what boiler it was. Chief Sitar stated it was the boiler in the stations. Kevin asked who inspects it. Chief Sitar responded that he did not know. Deputy Joubert stated that they are unable to inspect their own boiler.

775 Dry Hydrants & Cisterns

Dennis made a motion to fund line 775 for \$4,000.00. Jane seconded the motion. Paul asked if the line is for maintenance. Chief Sitar replied yes, that every year they hire a diver to check them and anything broken is fixed.

Dennis asked if there are any new ones going in this year. Chief Sitar replied that he has them all lined up but until the paperwork goes through, he will not be putting it in the budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the specifics of what the allotment is used for. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

4332 Pressurized Hydrants

Jason noted that the pressurized hydrants are under contract. Paul made a motion to fund line 4332 for \$125,988.00. Dennis seconded the motion. Dennis asked how long the contract was for. Chief Sitar responded that it expires in the next year or two. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay-6; Nay-1. **Motion Passed.**

4723 TAN Interest

Paul made a motion to fund line 4723 for \$1.00. Charlie seconded the motion. Paul asked what that line was for. Jason responded that it was in case you need to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. Chief Sitar added that it keeps a budget line open. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

4901 Land

Chief Sitar explained that the amount is to buy property for the District that may come available.

Dennis made a motion to fund line 4901 for \$0. Jane seconded the motion.

Paul asked what would happen if they found land and there was no money to fund that line. Chief Sitar stated that they could enter a purchase and sales agreement but that it would need to be brought up at the next budget meeting. Chief stated that he believes it could save the District money in the long run if they have a piece of land that will support a single station.

Dennis commented that his choice to fund the line at \$0.00 was because they do not have a design for a station and thinks Tilton has a bad history of buying land. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. **Motion Passed.**

Adjournment

Dennis made a motion to adjourn. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: January 2, 2019 at 6:00 PM.
Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street, Tilton