

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Budget Committee Meeting

Meeting Called By: Budget Committee Date, Time: 01/02/2019 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 6:20 PM.

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

Firefighters: Captain Sean Valovanie, Firefighter Daniel Leathers

Minutes

December 19, 2019

Paul made a motion to approve the minutes of December 19th as written. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

2020 Operating Budget

4155 Personnel Administration

Dennis asked which numbers are right. Chief Sitar commented that if they vote the Commissioners' budget, those are the correct numbers. They include the two additional personnel. Paul asked what the difference is between the Chief's Budget and Commissioners' Budget. Chief Sitar explained that his budget included four additional personnel plus a part-time Code Enforcement Officer.

210 Group Health Insurance

Dennis made a motion to fund Line 210 at \$309,875. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Discussion ensued about what the total cost would be should the voting body decide to remove the two additional personnel or add just one. The Budget Committee requested Chief Sitar provide these numbers to them before District Meeting.

215 Group Life Insurance

Paul made a motion to fund group Lines 215.01 through .05 at \$12,772 per the Commissioners' Budget. Jane seconded the motion. Jason asked what the pluses and minuses are. Chief Sitar explained that these Short-Term Disability went up 8.5% while Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability went down 15% over last year. Jason wanted to know if this is an earned discount or better bidding. Chief Sitar explained this is based on group rates as we are grouped with other people. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

220 Social Security

Charlie made a motion to accept the Commissioners' figure of \$10,855. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

225 Medicare

Jane made a motion to accept the Commissioners' figure of \$18,549. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

230 Retirement

Jane made a motion to accept the Commissioners' figure of \$338,413. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Dennis commented that when people are watching the recording, these figures are fixed. They are not negotiable. It is not a rubber stamp.

250 Unemployment Compensation

Dennis made a motion to fund Line 250 at \$2,250. Charlie seconded the motion. Paul asked why the difference. Chief Sitar explained that we have someone who is collecting now. This is our projected cost for the year. Paul asked how we could have someone collecting unemployment. Chief Sitar explained that it is not a career person; it is someone who works for us part-time who got laid off from their full-time job. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Dennis moved 4155 Total Personnel Administration funded in the amount of \$692,714. Charlie seconded the motion. Dennis commented that this is a total of everything they just funded. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

4220 Fire

660 Vehicle Repairs

Chief Sitar explained that at the last meeting they were basing their number on the predicted number of what would be spent in 2019. It is lower than what was actually spent. The line item was over expended. His request for next year was \$59,468. What was appropriated in 2019 was \$60,374 and what was spend it \$69,333. Even at his request, they are \$10,000 less than what was spent in 2019. If that happens again, from what has been appropriated, it is a \$15,000 difference. Chief Sitar explained that even if the new engine is approved at District Meeting it will be a year before we get it. Half of the \$70,000 is to keep the two fire engines on the road. Paul asked Chief if it was fixed this year, did he expect to have similar problems next year, and if no why does he think they will spend more next year. Chief Sitar replied that he had done a study on the rising costs of maintaining a vehicle as it ages. Using Engine 3 as an example in 2018 they spent \$16,000; in 2019 they spent \$28,000; in 2017 it cost \$19,000 and the year before that \$14,000. Engine 1 cost \$8,000; \$6,000; \$45,000; \$7,000 over the past four years respectively. Paul asked what big-ticket items Chief Sitar anticipates will need repair in 2020. Chief Sitar replied that he doesn't know. Dennis commented that Engine 3 has cost in the area of \$20,000 to run for the last few years, the known maintenance only being budgeted at \$4,300. Paul asked if Dennis wanted to revisit the line for unplanned repairs. Dennis replied not necessarily that he understood what Paul was saying. Paul asked Chief Sitar if he anticipated anything that may need repair or replacement because it is showing signs of deterioration. Jason noted that the original ask was to be level funded, they had cut the \$25,000 for unforeseen repairs down to \$20,000. Dennis commented that he was pointing out that Engine 3 sucked up that line. Eric asked if Engine 3 was the one being replaced. Chief Sitar responded that it was Engine 1 that they were replacing due to the corroded frame rails. They have addressed it the best they can, but it continues to be a problem.

Paul asked Chief Sitar what he wanted for the budget. Chief Sitar responded that he would like to see it back at \$60,000. That if he had to find that money elsewhere in the budget, he could but something else would suffer. Discussion ensued regarding where in the budget that money may come from.

Chief Sitar commented that Engine 3 has 110,000 miles on it and Engine 1 has almost 74,000 miles on it. Dennis asked how the old the engines are. Engine 1 is 20 years old and Engine 3 is a 2006.

Paul commented that he believes they should wait to make any motions till Kevin Waldron is present as he was a large contributor to the conversation previously.

Jason directed attention to page 15 and asked Chief why there is money on the line for Engine 2. Chief states that when it shows up it may need service depending on the vendor.

Dennis commented that he does not mind waiting till the next meeting to finish addressing the line item. Jason noted that he is not any more comfortable backing more money than he was when they voted it. Paul commented that they have a parachute for the catastrophic events. Chief Sitar suggested they move on.

331 Ambulance Billing Service & 332 Paramedic Intercept

Dennis made a motion to approve lines 331 & 332 for \$37,500. Jane seconded the motion. Paul clarified with Chief Sitar that line 331 is what is paid to Comstar to send the bills and collect money and 332 is what is paid to other departments if our department needs the assistance of their paramedic. Dennis commented that the amount for Comstar is subject to change, that the fees are based off a percentage of what is collected. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

740 Fire Equipment

Jane made a motion to fund category 740 for \$384,543. Charlie seconded the motion.

740.191 SCBA

Jason asked if the new SCBAs will be a different brand than they use now? Chief Sitar responded that it was the same brand but the latest model. Paul asked if Sanbornton or Franklin use the same packs. Chief Sitar replied yes. Paul asked if it was a 10-year expiration. Chief Sitar stated that it was 15-year expiration.

740.103 Base Stations/Repeaters

Paul asked what Base Stations & Repeaters are. Chief Sitar replied that it is for the equipment that will be on the new tower at Park Street. Paul asked if the amount included anything for the tower at Spaulding Youth Center. Chief Sitar replied that it was only the Park Street tower. Paul asked if the Tower would definitely be put up this year. Chief Sitar replied that yes, that was his understanding. Paul asked if there was a contract and if there was a time limit on how long they have to complete the project. Chief Sitar responded that the company leasing the property has a contract with AT&T to construct the tower this year and that he believes they are still in the permitting process but that he anticipates it will be put up this year. Paul asked if there had been any push back from the Town of Northfield. Chief Sitar replied that there was not much as they would be collecting property tax revenue on the equipment installed, excluding equipment owned by the department and town.

740.190 Protective Clothing

Dennis asked if protective clothing was turn out gear. Chief Sitar replied that it was. Dennis asked if it was for the anticipated two new personnel. Chief Sitar replied that there were eight sets of gear included in that number. Two are for the new members and the other six are replacements.

2140 Encumbered Funds

Charlie asked how encumbered funds work. Chief Sitar replied that there would not be any encumbered funds for 2020, going on to explain that encumbered funds is a budgeted amount that is held over to the next year to finish paying for something they purchased the previous year.

Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

741 EMS

Paul made a motion to fund category 741 in entirety for \$47,870 per the commissioners' budget. Jane seconded the motion. Paul asked if it was all maintenance of current equipment. Chief Sitar replied that it is for replacements and new equipment. He continued explaining what the items are for. Paul asked why the X-series mount needs to be the same as the one in A1. Chief Sitar deferred the question to Captain Valovanie. Captain Valovanie explained that the current mount in A2 is universal and does not hold the machine securely as it should. They would like to get a mount specifically made for the monitor to prevent it from becoming a very dangerous projectile in the event of an accident. He noted that the mount is also transferable to a new ambulance.

Paul clarified that the iPads were for the ambulance. Chief Sitar replied that that was correct. Paul asked what they would be replacing. Chief Sitar replied that it would be replacing older iPads that are not working properly. Paul asked what benefit it brings to the ambulance crew. Chief Sitar responded that it is where they input all the patient records and data and information for their reports. Firefighter Leathers added that it is also how they get patient and nurse signatures so they can get paid for services, as they are required to have electronic signatures.

741.02 EMS Disposable Equipment

Paul asked that out of the \$40,000 budgeted in 2019 they only spent \$33,506 this year on disposable EMS equipment and there have been a record number of EMS calls, so why does Chief Sitar think they will need more than \$33,500.00. Chief Sitar responded that he doesn't know but over the last few years they have spent in the range of \$33,500 - \$35,500 and he would rather not run short. He also commented that if they don't spend it, it does go back into the fund. There being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

960 Rescue Equipment

Jane made a motion to approve line 960 for \$8,880. Charlie seconded the motion. Paul asked why \$8,880 was budgeted if only \$544 was spent last year. Chief Sitar explained that they did not fully expend on the line because the new washers and extractors cost more to install than had been budgeted. Chief Sitar went on to explain that in 2020 for water and ice rescue they were requesting 3 pairs of wet shoes, 4 dry suit liners, 2 sets of neoprene gloves, 3 strobes for personal floatation devices and 3 dive knives. Paul asked if that was replacing existing items. Chief Sitar replied that it was.

Chief Sitar stated that for rope and rigging they were requesting 3 CMC multi-purpose devices. Paul asked if they have any currently. Chief Sitar replied that they have rope and rigging but that this set would have less set up to do the same thing. Paul asked what vehicle these items would be on. Chief Sitar replied that they would be on the Rescue and likely there would be a set on each engine. Paul commented that the rescue almost never goes out. Chief Sitar replied that he knows that but that is where they keep the majority of their rope rescue equipment and there will also be a set on each engine. Chief Sitar stated that they are also requesting 2 CMC Aztec pro lift pro packs, 600 feet of 8 mil. prusik cord, and 600 feet of 1' tube webbing, noting that the current tube webbing is 20 years old.

Jason asked what the current approximate fund balance is. Chief Sitar replied that it is \$1.5 or \$1.6 million. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Dennis made a motion to fund line 4220 in its entirety for \$478,793. Charlie seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

760.10 New Engine 2

Dennis made a motion to fund line 760.10 for the amount of \$811,450. Paul seconded the motion. Paul asked where the number came from. Chief Sitar replied that they had narrowed down the truck manufacturers to 3 companies and each was given a list of items the truck needed. Paul asked how they came up with a list of needs. Chief Sitar responded that they formed a committee of made up call members, career members, and officers. Paul asked if the Chief or Deputies were involved. Chief Sitar replied that they all attended some meeting but were not part of the committee. Also noting that Captain Powell was chair of the committee and the other members included Lieutenant Matt Gilman, Derek Farrell, and Travis Gosine.

Dennis asked if the committee recommended the manufacturer. Chief Sitar responded no, that they interviewed several and some were eliminated immediately for one reason or another. Chief Sitar stated that they currently have three makes that they are considering, Sutphen, E1, and Seagrave. Dennis recalled a discussion where he learned pros and cons of the different manufacturers.

Paul commented that they are always talking about commonality with their neighbors, what make do the neighboring towns use. Chief Sitar replied that there may be some of the same manufacturers but they are all custom made so they are all still different. Paul clarified that he was more concerned if the control panels were the same with the same manufacturer. Chief Sitar responded that across all manufacturers they are similar enough that there would not be an issue using it.

Dennis asked what the difference in cost was between the three manufacturers. Chief Sitar responded that Sutphen costs \$670,000, E1 costs \$700,000, and Seagrave costs \$783,000. Paul asked if that was with no outfitting. Chief Sitar replied yes, that is with no equipment. Paul commented that according to the commissioners' budget they were ok with price of the most expensive of the three options. Chief Sitar responded yes, because Seagrave was the only was the only company that guaranteed that the

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truck would fit in the station. The others said it could be to a specific height give or take 2 inches, which would come too close when taking into consideration the slope of the ground and any snow. Discussion continues comparing the manufacturers and problems there have been with current trucks.

Charlie asked if the \$811,450 was coming out of the current budget. Dennis replied no, that it is out of the Apparatus and Equipment Fund. Paul explained that the money in the fund comes from ambulance billing and it is very specific as to what it can be used for, it can not be used for operations. Discussion continued regarding how the Apparatus & Equipment Fund is used and the capital improvement plan.

Paul clarified that the amount the commissioners revised budget for the fire truck was for the most expensive option but from the Chief's description was also the highest value machine. Chief Sitar replied yes. Paul asked if Chief Sitar would be bringing just one bid proposal to district meeting. Chief Sitar responded that he would.

Paul asked if the committee came up with the equipment that would be on the new truck. Captain Sean Valovanie responded that he was in charge of the equipment on the trucks and he had inventoried both trucks, to create the list of what the truck would need. He continued that they subtracted from that any equipment from Engine 1 that was still good and could be moved to the new engine.

Paul asked if there was any thought or discussion in keeping Engine 1 as a spare truck. Chief Sitar replied that the commissioners had voted to not increase the fleet for another engine.

Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Yay: 5; Nay:1. Motion passed.

Paul asked Jason why he opposed. Jason stated that he wasn't thrilled with the higher number when there was still so much up in the air, he would like to see it come in at a lower price. Chief Sitar stated that if they choose a truck at a lower price it will be amended for the district meeting. They will not exceed the amount but it may go down.

Adjournment

Dennis made a motion to adjourn. Jason seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Meeting adjourned at 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: January 23, 2019 at 6:00 PM.
Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street, Tilton