

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Fire Commissioners & Budget Committee Meeting

Meeting Called By: Commissioners
& Budget Committee

Date, Time: 02/10/2020 at 5:00 PM

Transcribed By: Beth Joslin

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

Jason Wright called the joint meeting of the Budget Committee and Fire Commissioners to order at 5:05 PM.

Present: Commissioners Paul Auger, Eric Pyra, and Jon Cilley; Chief Michael W. Sitar, Deputy Timothy Joubert and Admin. Assistant Kathy Tobine

Budget Committee Members: Jason Wright, Paul Blaisdell, Kevin Waldron, Charlie Broughton, and Dennis Manning

2020 Warrant Articles

Amendment to Apparatus & Equipment Budget

Chief Sitar handed out a memo and explained that they have been working on a tower on Shedd Road and have their building permits but were recently informed that they would need a driveway permit. They now have the permit but one of the requirements is to put in a 30-foot culvert. He received estimates and the least expensive was \$4,670 which includes some trench work for underground utilities that will run across the road. As this is not included in the current contract, he is requesting to amend the Apparatus & Equipment Budget to include this amount.

Commissioner Auger asked why a communication tower needs a driveway. Chief Sitar replied that they need to have access to the tower to maintain it. Commissioner Auger asked how often someone be going out to the location. Chief Sitar replied that he will likely go out there once a month or so to check on it. He also noted that the driveway is a requirement of the Town of Northfield because it is off a town road. Discussion ensued regarding materials and the requirements of the town.

Kevin asked if the Apparatus & Equipment fund was the appropriate place for the money to be coming from. Chief Sitar replied that he had spoken with their accountant and that was his recommendation because the rest of the project had come from this account. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to support the amendment to the Apparatus & Equipment Budget. Commissioner Cilley seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Paul B. made a motion to amend Article 5 to approve \$4,670 in additional site work for the driveway. Charlie seconded the motion. Kevin asked what happens if DRA does not approve the article. Discussion ensued. Jason commented that he believes it is an operating expense. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Gretchen Wilder asked for the motion being voted on to be restated as she did not hear all that was included. Jason stated the item which they are voting on. Gretchen expressed concern over the account which the funding would come from as well as an accountant telling them how to spend their money. She stated that they should check with the DRA because that is not what the Apparatus & Equipment fund is for. Discussion ensued regarding the warrant articles approval through DRA.

Kevin asked if the district owned the tower. Chief Sitar replied that there are two tower projects, the one they are discussing is on Shedd Road and the district owns it. Discussion ensued.

Article 11: Design, Engineering, and Architectural Fees

Chief Sitar stated that the Commissioners and Budget Committee have 2 different ideas of how this article should be funded and thinks they should have a short discussion before making any decisions.

Jason stated it was the budget committee's opinion that they had raised and appropriated \$200,000 last year and the Commissioners want to raise another \$100,000 this year but having only spent \$40,000 last year they would like to take the remaining \$166,000 of funding that lapsed into the unreserved fund balance and return it to the budget rather than raising more money through taxes. The committee felt that this was more transparent to the tax payers and if there was any money left over after the work was finished it could be decided at that time what they will do with it. Jason commented that because of this, Article 12 would be impacted. The committee felt that it would violate the commissioners' policy of the balance that should be kept fund by taking too much out once the \$166,000 was removed.

Chief Sitar stated that he supports the budget committee's recommendation for amendment of Article 11 and does not support moving forward with Article 12. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to amend Article 11 to raise and appropriate the sum of \$166,150.45 with this amount to come from the unassigned fund balance and to be non-lapsing. Commissioner Cilley seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Charlie made a motion to recommend Article 11 as amended. Paul B. seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Article 12: Add to Land and Building Fund

Jason commented that now that this effects Article 12, do the commissioners still want to take \$50,000 out of the unassigned fund balance against their policy of having 16.67% of the budget in the fund.

Commissioner Auger made a motion to withdraw Article 12. Commissioner Cilley seconded the motion. Discussion ensued regarding whether to raise the money through taxation or to scrap the policy. Commissioner Auger withdrew his motion. Commissioner Cilley withdrew his second. Commissioner Pyra made a motion to amend Article 12 to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000. Commissioner Auger seconded the motion. Being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Kevin made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 12 as amended. Dennis seconded the motion. Discussion ensued. Being no further discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Unassigned Fund Balance

Paul B. asked why there isn't 16.67% of the budget in the unassigned fund balance. Discussion ensued.

Adjournment

Charlie made a motion to adjourn. Dennis seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Meeting adjourned at 5:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place: March 3, 2020 at 5:30 PM.
Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street, Tilton