

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS SAFER Grant Committee Meeting

Meeting Called By: SAFER Grant Committee

Date, Time: 04/26/2022, 6:00 PM

Transcribed By: Beth Joslin

Location: Tilton Town Hall
257 Main St, Tilton

Call to Order

Commissioner Pyra called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM.

Attendance

Commissioner Eric Pyra, Paul Blaisdell, Captain Matt Gilman, Scott Lewandowski, and Chief Michael Sitar

Old Business

Update

Commissioner Pyra asked if there were any updates or changes. Chief Sitar replied that the only change really is that they are doing far fewer recalls than they used to which will create a savings in overtime, but it is too soon to see a difference yet.

Scott asked if there was any information regarding impact fees. Chief Sitar replied that the Commissioners could impose impact fees. The lawyer will be providing them more information but believes it as simple as the Commissioners voting to do it. Discussion ensued regarding how to develop a formula for impact fees and how and when they can be applied.

Matt asked if there was enough time for impact fee to take effect before the grant runs out. Paul discussed the amount of billing and paperwork that will come from this needing more staff to manage it. Discussion ensued regarding concerns that impact fees is not beneficial to this project and concerns that it would discourage growth.

Commissioner Pyra asked if there were additional grants out there. Chief Sitar replied that it is allowed that near the end of this grant period they may apply for another SAFER grant. Paul asked the time frame for grants being awarded; would it be in time for this grant to end. Chief Sitar replied that he wasn't sure. Paul commented that he believes that as many grants as possible should be applied for but that they should not rely on that being the solution.

Discussion ensued regarding various options including Capital Reserve Funds. Paul suggested they prioritize the immediate need and then talk about long term.

New Business

Immediate Need

Matt stated that he likes the idea of taking about \$200,000 and setting it aside as a warrant article. Adding that he has thought a lot about ambulance billing but feels staff should be funded with tax dollars they do not run operations out of the capital improvement fund. It could become a worm hole if they open it up to it.

Paul commented that the Chief had asked some towns people their thoughts on using the Apparatus & Equipment fund for staffing and received negative feedback. Chief Sitar suggested moving maintenance, repairs, & service from the Operating budget to the Apparatus & Equipment budget which would add \$70,000 but also free up that much in the operating budget. Paul expressed concern that voters may choose to move that savings to offset the tax burden instead of funding the staff.

Paul suggested that they should have multiple funding sources in their proposal.

Scott commented on the Tower fund. Chief Sitar explained that half the revenue is used to offset the tax burden while the other half is put into a reserve fund of which the Commissioners are agents of to offset

building costs and offset radio costs. Commissioner Pyra asked what potential income could they expect. Chief Sitar replied that with one tenant on the tower it would be about \$20,000 per year, with the ability to house 5-6 tenants. Paul asked if planning board approval was needed to add additional antennas to the tower. Chief Sitar replied that he was not sure.

Matt asked what 50% of the cost of funding the grant positions would be. Chief Sitar replied that it for all its about \$365,000. Matt commented that they are shooting to fund about \$182,500.

Scott asked ballpark what revenues could they expect from the tower if all the tenant spots are filled? Chief Sitar replied that he doesn't have that information on him but that ballpark probably \$70,000. Scott replied that about \$30,000 would be in building costs. Discussion ensued regarding the tower.

Matt summarized that with a warrant Article for \$200,000; \$70,000 freed up in the operating account; and \$10,000 in tower revenue they have met their 50% goal for the first 2 years and that would give them at least \$80,000 per year going forward. Discussion ensued regarding cell tenants and revenues.

Paul asked that the Commissioners discuss their proposal to change maintenance to app and equipment fund. Get full approval of commissioners to change purpose of fund. Discussion ensued.

Paul asked for a list to be made of what falls under the maintenance and service testing. Chief Sitar replied that they already have that list as it is broken out in the budget.

Matt asked what the unintended consequences of this could be. Chief Sitar replied that the Warrant article could be amended on the floor at district meeting. Matt asked what about 15 years down the road? Chief Sitar replied the only thing he could see is depleting the funds too far in the app and equip fund because maybe a Medicare reimbursement policy changes. Matt asked would changing the fund incentivize not replacing equipment, say 10 years from now when they need a new ambulance. Discussion ensued regarding capital improvement plans and the funding.

Paul suggested having a to do list for the next meeting. Discussion ensued regarding what items and info will be needed for the next meeting.

Meeting Minutes

February 10, 2022

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to accept the minutes of February 10, 2022, as written. Scott seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

March 7, 2022

Commissioner Pyra made a motion to accept the minutes of March 7, 2022, as written. Scott seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

Paul made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, vote was taken. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 7:19 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Beth Joslin

Beth Joslin
Office Clerk

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:

May 24, 2022, at 6:00 PM.
Tilton Town Hall, Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street, Tilton, NH