

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS

Commissioners' Meeting

Meeting called by:	Commissioners	Date, Time:	December 7, 2006 at 18:00 to 19:26
Note taker:	Janine Vary	Place:	Center Street Station

Attendees: Comm. Tom Gallant, Comm. Bob Watson, Chief Steve Carrier, Deputy Mike Robinson, Treasurer Roland Seymour and Clerk Janine Vary. Gretchen Wilder, Chair of the TNFD Budget Comm. Member of Public: Kevin Waldron.
 Absent: Comm. Harold Harbour, Capt. Brad Ober, Fire Prev.

At 18:05 Comm. Gallant called commissioners meeting to order. 2 commissioners, Harold absent due to illness, treasurer, clerk and chief and deputy chief present.

Review of minutes which were distributed by mail. Comm. Watson motioned to accept the minutes. Seconded by Comm. Gallant. Discussion: none. All in favor. Minutes approved unanimously.

Review of treasurer's report: operating budget. Listing revenues and expenses. Expenses are \$1,096,835.88. Does show a \$702.36 difference. Bills signed tonight are included in the report. Apparatus and Equipment fund was started in January 2006. Started with \$500 balance and has yielded a positive. Chief hasn't spent \$20,000 in rescue equipment yet. With the proceeds from the sale of E3, we'll expend one more month on vehicles so will have \$80,000 plus in the account at year's end. This shows that it is working the way designed. Questions on Apparatus and Equipment fund, none. Grant monies, Comm. Gallant asked Chief to figure out what to do with balance. Chief talked with FEMA rep who deals with grants, \$5000 could go to loose equipment on truck and remainder could be put to use for fire prevention activities. This \$5000 was already expended from general fund. So that amount would be transferred to Apparatus & Equipment fund, the other \$2000 could stay in general fund but spent on fire prevention. Then would clean out the "grant account report".

Pressurized hydrants, how can we spend more than what we had budgeted? During the budget season last year, we were given the cost of \$135,000. Chief said the question that the budget committee asks is if it is a warrant article, don't we have to stick to that amount. Comm. Gallant asked to see how the article was worded. It states to enter into a contract. Comm. Gallant said we do not have a "contract", it is a contract of convenience. By paying it, you assent that you have received that value. Gretchen asked if T-N Aqueduct sent a bill for a certain amount? Tom: we get billed quarterly. There was one quarter that we paid to the private owner. Roland mentioned the ownership transferred on 1/18/06. TNFD will get a bill in Jan. 07 and that will go to the new district. Gretchen, so the bill for \$145,000 could it be more? Roland, no. Tom: based upon budgetary law, he's not sure. Although there is a separate warrant article for it, it is carried in the operational budget. In event that the warrant article failed, the operating budget was reduced by that amount. If we had a warrant article to buy a truck for a certain amount, we can't spend more but can spend less. He thinks this is thought of differently. Roland stated the letter he sent the commissioners was an informative letter, not a contract. With all things being equal (no new additional hydrants, etc.), that will be the cost for years to come. Tom: that warrant article isn't mandated by RSA. We could include in budget and not have a warrant for it. If we did, it would come up in discussion. He isn't sure why it has been carried from the operating budget. Gretchen asked Roland why there is a discrepancy in the current budget. Tom: asked if we had a change in tariff and that changed the cost of \$135,000. Roland said no, but when new district formed, they began charging for every hydrant at the tariff set and that is why amount increased. Comm. Gallant opened session to public. Kevin Waldron: if it was in the operating budget, we could take the money from another line item and pay it anyway. Tom: that is correct, but in either case, it does appear in the operating budget. If a line item budget reviewing discussion takes place on a major category, and line is stricken from bottom line, it would be less than prudent for us to do anything different because the body has spoken. If someone said, pay only half, we could not be in a negotiating status. Situation where it would be stricken completely or not. Kevin asked if anyone knows if it is legal or not to spend more money in a warrant article or not. Tom: can't answer that categorically except that it isn't a special warrant article. Comm. Gallant would be glad to research and it would be covered by the Municipal Finance Act. We could report back to the budget committee. Kevin asked if it wasn't legal to pay more, would the water district have to repay. Comm. Gallant couldn't address that. Let's look at what the RSAs say. Roland: stated if the line item for health insurance is a certain amount and we overspend that line, what would we do? Gretchen: if there was a change in the billing, should have given us a heads up. Tom: asked to terminate this conversation. Roland wanted clarification. If the warrant article stated 135000, you question about paying more than that.

Tom; had a comment on the operating budget as approved by the body \$1,320,361. It appears that DRA doesn't feel that that is the consensus of the body. They have removed \$310,000 from the operating budget because they contend that the \$310,000 was included in the amount the body approved. We have petitioned the Dept. of Rev. Admin. as is our right under RSAs for an oral hearing. We have not formally heard from them regarding this request. That hearing is mandated. It is Comm. Gallant's understanding that speaking with Selectman Cavanaugh, who spoke to DRA, and he was told that we are scheduled to go to DRA on Dec. 18th. Comm. Gallant doesn't know what time. We may receive notice tomorrow. Hearing has been granted. He

believes fervently that we will show that the body (intent) at that meeting was to approve \$1,320,761 after the reconvening and approval of the water contract. This did not include the acquisition of a truck as in warrant article 13.

They reached their decision by a motion made on Article 16 which is to move an amount to be raised and appropriated. Comm. Gallant excluded 2 articles, one covering the Winn. Fire Dept. and the water article dealing with water company. Because he didn't exclude article 13, they assumed it was included. Comm. Gallant contends that when an amount is moved to raise and appropriate, it is through taxes. Don Borra insists that whether the truck passes or fails, it won't affect the tax rate. If DRA doesn't reverse, we will have overspent our budget by \$310,000 which is not allowed. We could stop spending money, but would have to lock the doors. He believes the intent of the body was to vote the total amount. Nothing that has happened or will happen will change the tenure of the services of the dept. Chief agreed. Comm. Gallant stated we have a responsibility to the district. Comm. Gallant asked for any questions. None.

Reviewed the trust account balances. Comm. Gallant explained the closing of the truck fund into the Apparatus and Equipment fund and there will be an article for that. The Rescue Trust fund could also be closed and put into the Apparatus and Equipment fund. Comm. Watson will propose to budget committee. The only trust fund left would be the Land and Building fund. We haven't put the \$100,000 in for 2006 and it will be done after resolution with DRA. Roland: we would have to do them as separate warrants. Asking for authority and then stating what the amounts would be and where to transfer. Comm. Gallant mentioned that we have been summoned to the Tilton selectmen meeting.

Kevin Waldron asked if the trust fund for Land and Building was set up with wording for land or building? Comm. Gallant said yes. For money to come out of that would have to be a separate warrant. Those funds have been set up to enlarge the Park Street station. Comm. Gallant motioned to accept the treasurer's report. Seconded by Comm. Watson. Vote to approve the finance report. Accepted unanimously.

Fire prevention: Capt Ober submitted his report. Pizza Hut started. There is a lot of wood in its construction. Tanger Outlet keeps Brad busy. One thing we keep an eye on is storage in back rooms, outside of building, etc. Headquarters dump a lot of product on them this time of year. When Nike is out, then they will be full. The alarm system has been all upgraded. Mike Robinson commented that it is a nice system and narrows location down right away. They did come to us and asked what we would like to see up there. They did bid it out and planned by ADT and then we worked out the details with them. New development: Riverfront Medical Group opened. Doing foundations on Hampton Inn, Tom asked about Cross Mill Road – Brad said development is on hold. HBAC warehouse is completed. Comm. Gallant asked to keep an eye on to be sure it was just a warehouse and nothing else. It is not sprinklered. Brad also included a report that shows his monthly activity as far as inspections. Fire safety trailer went to Ashland and the Ark Day Care.

Old business

Building committee: Tilton PD Committee, Comm. Gallant a member, put out RFPs, received 15 responses and narrowed to 3. Had 3 interviews with candidates and selected one for architectural engineer study. That recommendation will be made to board of selectpeople tonight. Then very aggressive search for a site. Discuss with all 3 candidates as well as final candidate where the money was coming from a special warrant article thru Tilton. The committee saw that partnership with the fire district was something they definitely wanted to do. This will throw a curve. If we do team up with TPD, finances have to be looked at. \$15,000 with a group from Florida who looked at facility. The station needs to be located in a highly visible area, preferably Rt. 3 corridor. We have singled out some pieces of property to do that. Also intentions of committee to take one step further to merge the two committees. Comm. Gallant briefed the committee as to us being a district and there would have to be a construction work done in Northfield at same time. Will meet again next Weds.. The Committee has been assigned a select person, Al LaPlante. Chief met with Chief Chapman and Det. Wellington, the only name he could come up with was Al. Al is the liaison from TPD to the board to the selectman. Det. Wellington is the chair of that committee. We need a public at large to be appointed to serve. Northfield members are still OK. Comm. Gallant mentioned that there are 4 members of 2 and 2 and Chief would vote to only break a tie. PD committee has an odd number of members.

New engine 3, special meeting to be held on Mon. Dec. 11 at 7:00PM at the WRHS cafeteria. Hope that the warrant article will be confirmed as it was originally. Roland has the inside track on getting the financing. Roland doubts we might be able to do by Friday but the 13th would be easier. Chief: asked if we want Dennis Allen to put a sign out at the monument for us. Comm. Gallant agreed to have a sign out advertising the meeting.

Engine 3 was sold and picked up this morning at 10:30. On its way to Wisconsin. We need to send a check to Firetec for finders fee. One offer on E4, which was unreasonable. We won't actively pursue it until after Monday night's vote. The amount received for E3 was higher being \$18,500. That type of vehicle was in the \$15,000 range, so we did well.

Direct deposit status: Janine reported that we should be all set for January 1st with a limit of 2 transactions per person. When FSB gets new software, annual cost will probably come down. Looking at around \$500 for the year.

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Budget comm. There was a comment made that the figures for career salary lines that all raises were at the 5% rate and Chief can provide that detail if needed to prove that it is not 5% across the board.

DRA budget issue. Tom mentioned that this is an ongoing thing. He will vote never to fill out an MS form again. Would vote that all MS forms signed by an accountant. He will deal with that hopefully when Harold returns and after this business.

Building committee: Kevin Waldron asked about Tilton PD. Comm. Gallant responded that they have housing issues and need something that could grow. \$35,000 spent to hire an architect engineer and they would isolate a location and a design of the building. Façade of building and a capped budget amount which would go for a bond issue in March. Chief said that \$350,000 specifically marked for a police station. Comm. Gallant in the warrant article yes. Kevin, does all that \$350,000 belong to Tilton, so fire district hasn't spent anything. Tom, no, fire dept. hasn't spent anything towards that. Tom: Det. Wellington is right, however, in conversations and looking at floor plans and in conversation with the 3 finalists, they have indicated that a public safety building is the way to go. A police department is a specialty building, but public safety building would have mutually common areas, so you can take a building that could be 2 separate buildings of 20,000 sq. feet down to 15,000 sq ft. Will be taking a ride to look at public safety buildings as well as PD only buildings. Comm. Gallant isn't sure how to deal with it, the logistics. Funding assisted by grants but they also agreed that a public safety bldg is more available to grants. Canterbury has police, fire and DPW with one common core facility. They received sizable grants down there. Comm. Gallant would like to explore but would need to be given some guidance. Chief: the rural development grant suggests that grants be \$50,000 or less when applied for. Chief Chapman has a contact with Sununu's office and Comm. Gallant suggested to go and talk with Pat Clark to discuss his success in fund raising with the Tilton Park.

A letter received from E-One today. They will be charging for storage at \$152.87 per day for the new truck. They make some reference to the contract. It will be entered into the record. He doesn't feel we should be overly concerned with that amount right now and let's deal with the issues at hand. There isn't anything we can do about it right now.

Kevin: does the new truck come to use all equipped? Comm. Gallant specked out at time of acquiring bids. Chief, doesn't have all the loose equipment on it but we have stripped the current Engine 3 and will take other equipment to stock the new engine. Kevin asked what the 18% of the invoice was for. Comm. Gallant explained it was for failure to perform. Until we make good on the amount due. Risk we run is non performance on a contract. They could sue us for damages. In March we were granted permission to move forward. Chief entered into the agreement. If we default, they would come after us for damages. Specifically constructed on our design but doesn't mean they can't sell it to someone else. They may have to discount it to sell it. Suit would be for nonperformance of a contract. 18% not the issue. Kevin is aware of some who will vote against the truck. Feels we will be assuming more debt. We should buy these vehicles outright and save the interest. Could pay cash for it next year. Gretchen commented that the understanding is that the Apparatus and Equipment fund is for the "purchase of" not bonding or leasing or adding to debt. Tom: feels it comes down to - do we need the vehicle?

Tom motioned to adjourn at 7:26PM and Comm. Watson seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:26pm.

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:	January 4, 2007 at 18:00 at Center Street Station
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