

COPY RECEIVED
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TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Town of Seymour ~ Board of Finance
MINUTES
Budget Deliberations
Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 7:00pm
Norma Drummer Room, Seymour Town Hall

Members Present: Bettyann Peck, Kwame Dunbar, Jim Cretella, Bill Sawicki, Beverly Kennedy, John Stelma; Paul Wetowitz (alternate)

Members Absent: Richard Demko; Grace Brangwynne, (alternate)

Others Present: Tony Caserta, Jim Baldwin, Alex Danko, Tom Eighme, Timm Willis, Chris Edwards, Mike Lombardi, David VanWert II, Rich Grudzias, Doug Thomas

Item #1 – Call Meeting to order

Chairman Bill Sawicki called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance

Everyone saluted the Flag and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Item #3 – Public Comment

None

Item #4 – Deliberation and discussion of 2020/2021 Budget

Fire Department – Mike Lombardi, Fire Chief, presented the budget

- #101 (Chiefs Salary) - \$9,000 stipend – although we are volunteers, there is a LOT that is required of the Chiefs; this cuts into our full-time jobs.
- #110 (Apparatus Manager) & #120 (Clerk) – zero
- #125 (Secretary Fees) - \$1,500 - for Secretary @ BOFC & Board of Chiefs Meetings
- #220 (Social Security) - \$3,130 – same as last year
- #340 (Purchased Professional Services) - \$32,500 – Medical & EAP expenses
- #350 (Education/Meetings/Seminars) - \$36,500 – same as last year
- #430 (Repairs & Maintenance) - \$70,000 – increase from last year – our fleet is getting older and things are more expensive to fix; this number includes general maintenance for the trucks; earlier in the year replaced the piston rod in the ladder truck @ cost of \$22,000; replacing tires cost of \$10,000
- #530 (Communications/Telephone) - \$10,800 same as last year
- #580 (Travel) - \$50 – same as last year
- #610 (General Supplies) - \$4,000 – same as last year
- #615 (Clothing) - \$37,695 – for all of our turnout gear, helmets, gloves, boots, safety helmet, safety glasses, all PPE required from OSHA. Every year we buy 10 sets of gear. We can only keep gear in service for 10 years. (Per OSHA/NFPA).
- #622 (Electricity) - \$26,000 – same as last year – number given to us by the Town
- #624 (Heating Fuel) - \$28,000 – same as last year – number given to us by the Town
- #626 (Gasoline & Diesel) - \$17,000 – same as last year
- #720 (Building Improvements) - \$47,000 – same as last year
- #740 (Equipment Capital) - \$35,000 – small decrease
- #741 (Vehicle Lease) – zero

- #743 (Machinery & Equipment – OSHA) - \$48,800 – small decrease – for pump testing, ladder & hose testing, etc.
- #745 (Machinery & Equipment – Non-Capital) – small decrease - day to day needed items

If you take out the Heating Fuel, Electricity, Social Security & Building Improvements (which should go under Town Buildings) out budget would come out to \$328,565.

- Bill Sawicki asked if we have \$10,000 in there for air packs. Mike said that the harness that the air cylinders go in will become obsolete very soon. In trying to be proactive, we will need to replace one truck per year. They have new NFPA requirements. We can wait for a little bit to get cylinders but wouldn't want to wait too long. Maybe could do these in rotation. Currently our oldest cylinder is 3 years old. Both Citizens Engine & Great Hill Hose have air compressors that have both died. We were able to get a free one from the Town of Southbury (Great Hill) and got a used one with FEMA money. Bill said you should DEFINITELY put the purchase of the compressors into the Capital Plan. Mike said he missed the deadline for this year but will put them in for next year's plan.
- Paul Wetowitz asked if the Board of Finance can approve the stipend for the Chiefs. Bill Sawicki said that we can make recommendations for the budget. We cannot deal with HIRING people. The Board of Selectmen is charge of adding personnel.
- Paul Wetowitz asked if the 5-year Capital Plan from the Fire Department has been received. Bill said that we need to get a list of what items they have and when they need to be replaced. Mike Lombardi passed out this list, which was submitted to the Board of Selectmen in 2018. It is an inventory. The next thing we need to refurbish is the tanker (truck is from 1994) but the tank itself is "weeping". The welds are cracking. The chassis of the truck is fine. Just the tank needs work. Chris Edwards said we had it worked on about two years ago. Engine 11 is the next one to be replaced. Engine 15 is next. Engine 16 should be replaced about 5-6 years. Those three trucks were bought all around the same time. The purchases were not staggered. Bill Sawicki asked to have them provide a list BY YEAR which vehicles need replacing, best guess at cost. We need this information so that we can figure out if it needs to go into a bonding package. If an urgency arises with a different truck, they can be substituted in the Capital Plan.

Fire Marshal – Fire Marshal Timm Willis presented the budget

- #101 & 110 (Salaries) – contractual increase
- #120 (Stipend Inspector)– zero
- #130 (Overtime) – \$2,400 - same as last year
- #350 (Education/Meeting/Seminars) - \$1,200 – small increase – 2 full-time staff members and 2 conferences for continuing education.
- #411 (Hydrant Pricing) - \$409,672 – but Fire Hydrant Budget from 2/11 has a discrepancy on the cover sheet (\$394,974.93 vs. \$376,381.68) showing \$411,932.31 for a total. **Doug will re-print and distribute.**
- #430 (Repairs & Maintenance) - \$2,200 – has a small increase of \$200, but may not need this if the Capital Plan items were approved
- #530 (Communications/Telephone) - \$1,750 – same as last year
- #540 (Fire Prevention Week) - \$600 – increase \$300 due to not getting grants this year
- #610 (General Supplies) - \$1,000 – increase of \$200 due to addition of more volunteers
- #615 (Clothing) - \$1,200 – increase of \$400 due to additional position (Deputy Fire Chief)
- #626 (Gasoline) - \$3,000 – same
- #640 (Books & Periodicals) - \$1,600 – increase because we are on a two-year code cycle. Every other year the cost will be more because we need to purchase the code books to stay current.

- #740 (Equipment) - \$1,000 – supplies we use for investigations, inspections, plan review. Same as last year.

Total budget is \$148,355, which is a \$13,658 increase over last year. Of this increase, \$11,398 or 83% of that is Salaries. Taking out that, the increase we are requesting is \$2,260.

- **Capital Expenses:** Requesting a replacement of the Deputy Fire Marshal Vehicle - \$57,000 for a Ford Police Interceptor F150 – current vehicle is a 2008 Ford Escape which has been experiencing many issues: transmission, ignition switch, exhaust leak, fan control, rear window leaks, shocks & struts, brake job needed. Over the last 9 months have spent \$684 in repairs. We believe that this vehicle will not be road-worthy for the complete 2020/2021 budget year. We may receive \$1,500 for a trade-in on the current vehicle. Will request about \$16,000 for upgrades & new inspection software to coincide with code upgrades.

Questions:

- Bill Sawicki asked if Timm was all set with I.T. needs. Timm said that Deputy Fire Marshal Rockwell is very familiar with the software from his previous job. He is helping tremendously with the Fire Department software as well as the Assessor’s Office. I am hoping that with his expertise we can go a little further with what we have so we don’t have to ask for more. Nothing new is needed for now. Hardware is good.

Communications Commission – Tom Eighme , Director of Communications Commission, presented the budget

- #312 (Purchased Services Northwest Public Safety) - \$122,408 – same ask last year – dispatch service for EMS and Fire that we use. At this time Seymour Ambulance stopped being a community service ambulance and went to a private pay ambulance service. The Fire Department is still municipal. This was the easiest place to put the budget for this. Provides for dispatching of Fire & EMS calls, handling of paperwork for EMS, billing information. Tom Eighme said that this number should be \$117,408. We voted down the increase with Northwest.
- #430 (Repairs & Maintenance) - \$3,500 – same as last year - if there is an emergency breakdown; working with Frontier on the T1 circuits; we have to call a radio shop as well as the phone company.
- #530 (Communications/Telephones) - \$9,700 – increase of \$3,600 from last year; there are two circuits right now. One is a T1 circuit (on route 34) receive site and goes back to our transmitter site. The new one is another receive site on the east side of Town that we just set up. This is also a T1 circuit but this one is a little cheaper because it is an in-Town circuit.
- #740 (Machinery & Equipment) - \$20,000 – placeholder; reason is that there are still issues with antenna or transmitter sometimes. These could cost between \$15,000 - \$20,000).
- #745 (Machinery & Equipment – Tower Rental) – We have McConney’s Tower over by Progress Drive, and we pay usage fees and also now fees to Aquarion for use of their water tower on Skokorat Street.

Emergency Management – Tom Eighme , Director of Emergency Management, presented the budget

- #430 (Repairs & Maintenance) – \$3,000 - this is for our vehicles; group effort between me, Public Works, and others that these (older) vehicles are still in good shape.
- #530 (Communications/Telephone) - \$2,900 – for cell phone for myself and Deputy Timm Willis
- #610 (General Supplies) - \$1,901 – covers paper, toner, etc.
- #612 (POD Rental) - \$1,800 – going back to 2009 when we started using the Middle School as a Shelter – we use this as storage for equipment & supplies. This is the most economical way to store them.

- #650 (Clothing) - \$650 – covers Tom Eighme & Timm Willis
- #626 (Gasoline) - \$1,500
- #350 (Purchased Professional Services) - \$3,800 – training supplies (including) fire department, emergency management, police department.
- #700 (Code Red) - \$11,710

No increase from last year.

Office of Building & Code Compliance – Jim Baldwin, Director of the Office of Building & Code Compliance, presented the budget

- Over the last few years we have merged together. Land Use, Building & Code Compliance, Inland/Wetlands, Planning & Zoning.
- #101, 102, 103 (Salaries) – all contractual increases. Note that we do have two Planning & Zoning Officers that are all Code Compliance Officers along with Zoning Enforcement, Wetlands Enforcement, Ordinance Enforcement & Blight Enforcement Officers.
- #110 (Code Compliance Coordinator) - \$47,790 – Full-time position, contractual increase
- #120 (Development Code Enforcement Admin) - \$15,586 – small decrease; part-time code enforcement admin, mostly for Land Use, Zoning Board & Wetlands Board; backup for the Building Department.
- #105 (Per Diem Inspector) – dropped to \$2,000 based on the need we’ve seen over the past few years.
- #350 (Education/Meetings/Seminars) – decrease of \$2,400 – reflects the CEU Program that is required for our certification
- #355 (Professional Association Dues) - \$500 – same as last year – required to belong to the ICC & CT Building Officials Association
- #530 (Communications) - \$720 - for cell phone for Jim
- #550 (Printing & Binding) - \$500 – we don’t use outside vendors – mostly done in-house
- #280 (Travel) - \$7,500 – increased \$1,500 – picks up the other enforcement officers
- #610 (General Supplies) - \$3,000 – same as last year
- #125 (Board Secretary Fees) - \$2,500 – used for the commissions
- #310 (Legal Fees) – zero – advised by the First Selectman that this cost would go elsewhere
- #740 (Machinery & Equipment) - \$2,500 – software/hardware is up & running

Total increase is \$262 over last year’s budget. Jim said that the department is running great. We don’t need anything. Bill Sawicki said that there are Revenues of about \$150,000.

Town Operations - Buildings – Tony Caserta, Director of Operations, presented the budget

Tony said that the Building Department, Fire Marshal, Fire Department are all stepping up to address issues and help where they can. A great job of getting organized. They have done a really good job.

- #101, 102, 110 – (Salaries) – contractual increase
- The only items showing a significant increase are Overtime and Repairs & Maintenance.
- Overtime is an issue that some people think shouldn’t exist, but it does. We have many activities going on in Town. What happens is on the weekends & holiday (mostly Tim & Alex). In addition, they do a lot of work at night sometimes. Then there is the regular overtime (for snow, sidewalks, etc.) Also, we have one custodian on Worker’s Comp and the other custodian will probably not be available very soon. So, this will be a necessary expense.
- Repairs & Maintenance – way over budget on this. We have one other line item in the budget that will use to cover some. We are going to try to squeeze as much as we can out of this, but it just can’t be

avoided. The biggest expense was the oil tank for the Community Center. We still don't know what we are actually going to do with the Community Center, so we are trying to keep things together & working for now. We have been able to patch things up.

- We were able to purchase some vehicles for the department. We have had some extensive repairs in the past. Right now, we are looking at: \$40,000 for the Community Center, \$10,000 for the Library, \$10,000 for the Board of Education (@98 Bank Street). Hopefully we can get this sold.
- The Utilities – using the 3% increase as we were told.

Questions:

- Bill Sawicki asked if Tony has a list of the various issues that need work. Tony said that he does. We are somewhere around where expected. Bill said we are probably looking at about \$150,000 to \$200,00 to finish off the list. Tony said we are right now addressing some issues with deficiencies in what has occurred. Currently bring in some professional expertise. Bill Sawicki said that we are currently being “Reactionary” – would like to be proactive. Once we get rid of the Community Center and 98 Bank Street, we could save \$250,000 a year. Some of the positive things are the monitoring systems in the buildings.

Item #5 – Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:16pm.

Submitted by:

Monica Dimon
Recording Secretary