

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
FEBRUARY 12, 2008**

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. The following members were present: Jay Leary, Gordon Johnson, Tom Meehan, Ken Szajda and Pam Zicko. Mark Schultz was absent from the meeting.

Peter Tartakoff presented the Building Inspector's budget. He was able to come in on guideline. He was able to reduce the full time assistant's position to 24 hrs. for now because the 3 40 B's and the one over 55 project never came through. He has also cut money from professional development (from \$3300 to \$2500) and training budgets – may run into problems with the wiring and plumbing inspectors. He also took \$100 from vehicle maintenance. The revenues for FY08 are up – it is \$185,000 which is about \$10,000 less than last year's total. Tom Meehan asked why revenue is up and Peter said because of 3 large commercial properties being built.

Paul LeBeau presented the budget for the Sealer, which is \$500 under guideline.

The Police budget is \$135,000 over guideline. They need to cut 2 officers, which would save \$130,000. This would result in 281 shifts running below minimum standards. The Chief said that he could also take \$4800 from various accounts. There are many mutual aid calls; in the course of a year, Holliston was requested 32 times by other surrounding depts. and Holliston calls other depts. in about the same number. As for the short term goals of the dept., it would be impossible to maintain the public safety of the town. Overtime costs have gone up 15% over the last 4 years. The Chief said that the dept. can look into charging fees for accident investigations. They have begun to charge fees for false alarms. An alternative to cutting 2 officers would be to not purchase 2 cars this year (would save \$102,000) and cut out some overtime. It won't cause the safety concerns the first option does. Tom Meehan asked what other towns are doing to meet budgets and could the auxiliary police help out more. Gordon Johnson asked how staffing in Holliston compares with similar size towns. Keith Edison said it is hard to compare because we don't use civilian dispatchers. Some towns use part time officers as dispatchers to feed into their depts. Pam Zicko asked about the revenue stream from the diversion program. Ken Szajda asked about a 2-officer car and if staff is cut, would response time increase. The Chief said that his concern is back-up time, particularly in a domestic situation. Jay Leary asked about civilian dispatchers and how many would have to be hired – 3 would probably need to hire to cover 2 shifts per day for a week. Jay Leary suggested that the dept. needs to look into long term strategies and perhaps civilian dispatchers could be looked at. The Chief commented on looking into possible regional dispatchers.

The BOH was able to get to the guideline by making the following cuts: reduce food service inspections; not pay for vaccine deliveries; cut VNA services; move money from Professional services. The depts. long and short term goals were spelled out by the MMA study and the study also recommended keeping the consultant. The BOH is looking into adjusting the fee schedule, but is afraid that they may be charging too much now. The BOH wants to increase the services to the town, but can't with the guideline cuts. Revenue streams are down from last year – the 40B's are bringing in no money. There is \$5600 in grant money from last year and \$6500 to spend on emergency preparedness and \$200 for training. They have spent about \$3956 to Mark

Robert up to this point in FY08 and will have at least one more bill. The BOH has several big items out there – 1. Marshall Street landfill – went out to bid and heard only from SEA and looking for a compliance office for Covanta. The Water Dept. can do some of the work and save BOH some money. They can also save about \$1400 per round of testing by using Premier Lab. They need 1 inspection and 2 rounds of testing before the end of the fiscal year - \$15,200. 2. Legal Fees – BOH has spent more than the \$1000 budgeted. 3. Odor problem with Lista – are in non-compliance with DEP and the BOH wants to hire an environmental attorney – looking for about \$4000. Jay Leary asked if the BOH could scope out legal costs for Lista issue and back to the FinComm. Pam Zicko asked about the decrease in the Prof. Services. The BOH plans to pay Richard Westcott and Ray Izzo through use of applicant fees. Ken Szajda, seconded by Pam Zicko, made a MOTION to transfer \$15,000 from the Reserve Fund to BOH Professional Services, #52190. This is to SEA for the Marshall Street Landfill. Passed 5-0-0. The BOH also talked about an article on the warrant for \$30,000 for professional services for do evaluation of noise conditions of site assignment at the waste transfer station. The BOH would like feedback from the town.

At 10:20, Pam Zicko, seconded by Ken Szajda, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Faith Antonioli, Secretary

Date Approved: March 11, 2008