

FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

MAY 2, 2013

The meeting was called to order at 7:49 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. The following members were present: Ken Szajda, Michelle Zeamer, Charlie Kaslow and Dan Alfred. Michelle Johnson was absent from the meeting.

Fire Chief, Mike Cassidy, attended the meeting to discuss his request for a new brush fire truck. On this past Sunday, one of the trucks failed on the way to a call. It had to be towed back to the station and after being looked at, it was determined that it was structurally unsafe to drive and would not start. It has been taken out of service permanently. He notified the Selectmen of the situation. The Chief said he is aware that Capital is done in the fall, but by then, brush fire season will be over; so he decided to come with a last minute request to purchase the truck this spring. He received a quote from MHQ of \$48,500. This includes the cost of taking the existing pump and tank off the old truck and outfitting it onto the new truck. The truck that has been taken out of service is Forest Fire 2, a 1986, Ford 350. Ken Szajda commented that it's amazing the dept. has a 1966 tanker and Mike Cassidy said it is a tri-fuel - runs on diesel, unleaded gas and water. Charlie Kaslow asked what front line equipment is listed as fair or poor. Mike Cassidy told him they are listed in the fifth column over. Charlie Kaslow inquired of Chief Cassidy whether all the equipment listed is first line equipment to which he responded yes. In terms of vehicles he may be looking to replace in the fall, Chief Cassidy said he is back and forth between Engine 3 and Rescue 1. Engine 3 is a 1989, the only pumper that has not been replaced. When ISO Commercial Risk comes in to rate the fire protection capability of the town, they look at several things - dispatching, fire suppression capability and water supply system. The age of the vehicles is looked at under the fire suppression capability and full credit is not given if a vehicle is older than 20 years. Dan Alfred asked what the balance of stabilization is outside of OPEB money and Ken Szajda said about 3.8 million. Michelle Zeamer asked if they can make do with the 2 brush trucks they have now. Chief Cassidy said that they need 3 trucks based on the way the staffing is and the way they are dispatched. Often there are multiple brush calls at that the same time. The Dept. has 5 assets devoted to brush fires -- 3 brush trucks and 2 tankers (with no pumps). Charlie Kaslow stated that the following questions need to be addressed in that order: does the vehicle require replacement now, what would be the funding mechanism and from where would the funds be obtained. Chief Cassidy responded that the vehicle replacement was required. He restated his earlier statement in regard to timing of the brush season fire risk and recommended that it be replaced now. Ken Szajda commented that the funding mechanism would be the capital fund. Charlie Kaslow asked FinComm members if they thought it needed to be replaced. Dan Alfred said "yes" and Michelle Zeamer said she would defer to the Chief's expertise. Charlie Kaslow and Ken Szajda both agree that it needs to be replaced. Charlie Kaslow then asked if it needs to be replaced now and if so, would it be able to be purchased before July 1 and Ken Szajda said "yes". Dan Alfred, seconded by Charlie Kaslow, made a MOTION to recommend that the town appropriate \$48,500 from the capital expenditure fund for the Fire Dept. for the purchase of a replacement brush truck for a 1986, F350 that is no longer in service. Passed 4-0-0.

After a comment from a member of the audience, Ken Szajda asked Paul LeBeau why we purchase through Plymouth County buying group. If there are multiple buying groups provided by the state, why do we go through this group? This is done without going through the bid process. Ken Szajda asked how you compare prices through a buying group. You have to pay to join the group and be listed as part of the municipality. How do you comparison shop -- is there a list of all groups and what they charge for various vehicles, etc.? The Chief Procurement Officer (Paul LeBeau) makes sure that the price is in line with a cooperative purchasing agreement and the Town Accountant will check to make sure the invoice states that.

At 8:18 PM, Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 4-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Faith Antonioli, Secretary

Date Approved: May 14, 2013