

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**APRIL 4, 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM in the Selectmen's Meeting Room of Town Hall. The following members were present: Ken Szajda, Dan Alfred, Charlie Kaslow, Michelle Zeamer and Michelle Johnson. Kathleen White was absent from the meeting.

Chuck Corman presented the FY14 Technology budget, having prepared both a level funded budget and a +1.5% budget. He said he was able to meet all the guidelines. He included information on a capital expense request for October Town Meeting. This includes a quote to take all computers at Town Hall off Microsoft Office 2003 and updating. Mr. Corman said that he will have to install the more expensive and professional version of Office 2013, because the various departments in Town Hall use Access for some of their files. He will need to purchase the 2013 version, but will install it as Office 2010 because the system runs off XP and Office 2013 doesn't work on XP. Dan Alfred asked if the amount shown is a onetime fee and was told yes. When asked if they could use Windows 2007, Mr. Corman said that he could not purchase site licenses for it. Charlie Kaslow asked how training is handled and was told that there have been no new soft wares that need training except in MUNIS and the Tax Collector's or Accountant's office have helped anyone who needed it. If there is a demand for something, it will be set up. Charlie Kaslow commented that there may be many new functions with the various updated versions and asked how is it handled to let people know about these. Chuck Corman said that whole packages need to be purchased and some things people will never use. Charlie Kaslow then asked if the Access on the 2013 wouldn't look different than what they were used to using and if so, how is that handled. Mr. Corman said that it would look different and added that they work their way through it; no outside trainers are brought in. He also said that he is available and always answering questions as needed. Charlie Kaslow said that he didn't think that it was the most efficient way to handle it and sees the possibility of a lot of lost time with no formal training on it. Chuck Corman said that they are not set up as a classroom, but Charlie Kaslow said he meant individual instruction. Chuck Corman said that it's what he does. Charlie Kaslow then asked how many people actually write reports and Chuck Corman said that the software is provided to the town and the various offices run it. Ken Szajda said that Access is being provided by the system they are running, but Charlie Kaslow is asking how the data is verified. When rolling out a new program, Charlie Kaslow asked if it wouldn't be more efficient to train the department heads and have them train their employees. Chuck Corman said that he finds it better to work with the individuals as they are on line and as the questions arise. He said there is no facility at Town Hall, where people could be trained as a group, while operating computers. Dan Alfred asked about the decrease in Professional Services and Mr. Corman said it is due to the elimination in servers when they went to the "cloud" in MUNIS. There is also a \$360 decrease because the new website will come out of a different budget. There is an increase of \$949 in Town Hall computers (supplies) to make the +1.5% budget guideline. When asked the age of the computers in Town Hall, Chuck Corman said that they are between 4yrs. old and some are new. Some computers need to be replaced and some just need to have RAM added; some monitors may need replacing (he tries to keep some in stock and add stock each year). Dan Alfred asked if they had looked into a virtual system and was told it is a lot more expensive than using PC's. The Town Hall had that type of system at one time. Ken Szajda asked if

the IP phone system costs had decreased and was told it had. Ken Szajda also mentioned that he thinks site licenses can be purchased for Windows 7 and asked Chuck Corman to check into it.

Chuck Katuska, the Conservation Agent, presented the FY14 budget for the Conservation Committee. He began by handing out some additional information (dated 3/5) that FinComm had requested. He then reviewed year to date reductions (which apply to both budget scenarios): 1- increased use of email has allowed them to reduce communications by \$150; 2 – requiring applicants to pay for 3<sup>rd</sup> party peer reviews when necessary has allowed them to reduce it down to \$1400 (this also includes litigation); and 3 – reduce office supplies from \$423 to \$400. The level funded budget will have to fund the clerical position at 37 hrs a week, with a step raise. They will forego \$200 from Professional Development. It is critical to spend \$600 to keep membership in MA Association of Conservation Commissions. Mr. Katuska is asking for a modest raise of \$253 for the year, equaling .93%. This closes a flat, level funded budget. Under the +1.5% budget, he is asking to bring his salary up the full 1%, to \$27,608 for 20 hrs. a week. The ConComm is proposing to upgrade the clerk position to a principal clerk. The reasons for this are as follows: Sheri O'Brien has to function in Mr. Katuska's absence; they would be able to separate the staff and be open another day (right now, they are open 2.5 days per week, when both the clerk and Mr. Katuska are there). If they opened an additional day, Sheri would be functioning as a principal clerk because she would be the only person in the office on that one day. This would be a \$990 increase in the FY14 budget and put Sheri O'Brien at grade 8, step 2. Dan Alfred asked about the \$200 for Professional Services in the +1.5% budget and was told it is for Chuck Katuska and Sheri O'Brien to attend a local conference. Dan Alfred asked why the revenue numbers are all over the place and Mr. Katuska explained that the revenue figures are based on filing fees. He then explained that in the additional information provided to the FinComm dated 3/5 there are 3 revolving funds with an explanation of how they can be spent. Charlie Kaslow asked what the process is to increase a job classification. It must be presented to the Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee, the Personnel Board and put on the warrant to be voted on at Town Meeting. Ken Szajda asked about the salary and was told it is figured on a 1% increase and he asked about the change in grade and was told the ConComm wants to bring it to a grade 8 to be in line with the other land offices in Town Hall. Ken Szajda commented on the reduction in communications and was told it largely because of postage – many notices can be sent out electronically. Actual permits must be sent out by certified mail. Mr. Katuska said that it is hard to predict how filing fees will go from year to year. With a little extra money in the budget (+1.5%) the ConComm is hoping to be able to begin some work with the open space property that the town has.

Police Chief John Moore presented his budgets – both level funded and the +1.5% budget. Both budgets reflect a request for a monetary raise for the administrative aide, with a request for reclassification as well. He was not sure how it was handled but heard the process as described to Chuck Katuska previously. The +1.5% budget also includes money for an additional dispatcher, going from 2 to 3. This would cover all night shifts and would reduce the money from overtime – both scheduled and unscheduled and only day shifts would have an officer on the desk. The collective bargaining agreement is an obstacle they have to work with. 95% of the budget is personnel. To go along with this agreement, the operating budget for purchase services of repair and maintenance and

supplies and materials has suffered, but the Chief thinks it will work. Michelle Johnson asked how it reduces overtime and the Chief said that it puts an extra officer on the roads and if one officer calls out sick, they don't need to replace him with an additional officer, who would be paid overtime. The Chief said that a dispatcher can be hired for about \$36,000, whereas a 2<sup>nd</sup> year officer on the top step would be paid about \$61,000, up to about \$72,000 with the Quinn Bill. Michelle Zeamer asked how realistic the "realistic numbers" are in the budget. Chief Moore said that he basically took the first 6 months of the year and doubled it. He said that the numbers showing may not be where they should be at the end of the year with a +1.5% budget. Dan Alfred asked what happens if they expend their overtime budget. The Chief said they would notify the Selectmen and FinComm and sometimes they can work out agreements with Union if not safety issues. The Chief can do line item transfers at the end of the year if there is money or if absolutely necessary, he can request a Reserve Fund transfer. Dan Alfred then asked about special details and was told they are outside of the budget. Ken Szajda asked if the money for reclassification of the administrative aide is in both budgets and was told it is. Chief Moore said that they just had an officer resign and he is planning to meet with the Selectmen and FinComm to discuss keeping the 3<sup>rd</sup> dispatcher and adding a 4<sup>th</sup> dispatcher instead of a new officer. This would leave only 2 shifts a week without a dispatcher when there would need to be an officer on the desk. Michelle Zeamer asked about the funds the Chief was trying to get from the court and the Chief said he has been turned down by the presiding justice at the court – but he is continuing by contacting someone else.

Tom Smith, the Highway Superintendent, presented the FY14 Highway Dept. budget. He has a level funded budget and a +1.5% guideline budget, both with the 1% increase for personnel. The changes to the budget for the +1.5% are: \$2000 increase in Professional Services for the recycling area; a \$3000 increase in Grounds & Buildings & Repairs; a \$2,169 increase for Fuel System repairs; and a \$600 increase for capital improvements for drainage maintenance. Dan Alfred thanked Tom Smith for the work done during the snow storms and asked if he has the big truck yet and was told "no". Tom Smith said that items that have to be made (such as this truck) need to be put on the Spring Town Warrant in order to have them for winter. Michelle Zeamer asked about plows out when roads seem clear and was told they go back to widen streets at the end and remove any slush before it freezes. Ken Szajda said he noticed a couple of anomalies: the foreman line is short of the 1% increase in pay (should be \$61,660, bringing total labor line to \$475,361. Tom Smith said he would go back and look at it and adjust the figures. The Road Rehab line is also up because he has a lot of paving to do. Ken Szajda also asked about the Upbranch Account and Tom said that they have been doing a lot of tree work with NStar and NStar is paying for a lot of it. Ken then asked if the salary for the position split with the schools and parks is included in the budget and was told it is. There is enough sand and salt left for 1 more storm and the budget is over spent by about \$18,000.

At 9:05 PM, Michelle Zeamer, seconded by Dan Alfred, made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Passed 5-0-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Date Approved: May 14, 2013

Faith Antonioli, Secretary