



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN / BUDGET COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING MINUTES October 15, 2018 6:30 PM

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Nancy Rollins (Chair), Bill Helm, Janet Kidder

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rob Prohl (Chair), Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Phyllis Piotrow, Lyndsay Lund, Lauren Chadwick, Suzanne Jesseman, Jerry Coogan, Chris Lorio, Bill Helm (Selectmen's Rep). Members absent: Mark Christensen

STAFF PRESENT:

Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator
Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Police Chief Ed Andersen, Fire Chief Jay Lyon

Chair Prohl called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

FY2020 Budget Review: Public Safety

Police and Dispatch

Police Chief Ed Andersen attended the meeting to present the FY2020 budget for Police and Dispatch. He noted that they are managing well under the current budget. Each line item was reviewed and he feels where the budget is currently at it is sufficient to get through the next budget cycle. They are doing a good job at maintaining their equipment.

Selectman Kidder asked what an imitate audit is. Chief Andersen replied it is when the state comes in due to confidential records and reviews how they are stored, where they are placed, who has access to them and is the internet line secure. She also asked about computer support and service. The line item is for \$16,000 and last year only used \$11,000. Why is this higher? Chief Andersen replied that he split this between the police and dispatch due to the way the computer company manages the system. It was previously being done on a monthly basis and this is changing so it will be a straight fee service to manage all of the computers. For Radio and replacement \$5,000 was budget and only \$200 was used and this year it is at \$10,000. Chief Andersen replied they have outstanding invoice.

Selectman Helm thanked Chief Andersen for adhering to the suggestion that they be frugal this year. He asked if now that they are fully staffed, do they need the \$15,000 for training? Chief Andersen replied yes, as this is for continuing education and training that is required. By adding another officer, it actually increases the amount of training.

Joe Cardillo asked about special detail wages and how this is going since it has gone to a revolving fund. Chief Andersen stated it has been a smooth transition.

Phyllis Piotrow is concerned about training. She hasn't heard much discussion about the content of the training and is concerned about what kind of training police are getting. How much of the

\$15,000 for training is devoted to non-lethal methods, use of good judgment and the opioid crisis. Chief Andersen responded that it is difficult to break this down. They train using Tasers, pepper spray and batons. Each officer uses the equipment they feel is best for them. Every year they qualify and train on Tasers and have certified instructors in defensive tactics and proper use of handcuffs. In the academy there is a class called verbal judo which is the art of using words as opposed to other methods. Ms. Piotrow doesn't think there is adequate training in communication and she would like a more detailed report on what communication training is done.

Lyndsay Lund asked Chief Andersen if they can pick and choose the mandatory training sessions. Chief Andersen stated there is mandatory training they are required to take each year for example, firearms training and Taser training. Ms. Lund asked if it pertains to the budget discussion to whether money is spent on certain training. Chief Andersen stated that outside of mandatory training, every officer is required to have an additional eight hours of training.

Ms. Piotrow stated again that she would like to see what percentage of the training for which we are budgeting money for is related to communication and non-equipment related training. Chair Rollins asked if we could get a description of what is expected for every officer for required training and then what other training they can take. Chief Andersen also commented that it is important to hire officers that fit your community. With respect to the Opioid crisis, Chief Andersen stated we don't have a big issue with residents in town; the larger percentage is the transient people coming through town.

Lauren Chadwick asked if there should be a decrease in overtime due to the ninth officer and being fully staffed. Chief Andersen replied that with adding another officer, you actually add more overtime per officer.

Jerry Coogan asked if the Buker building improvements would be included in this year's budget. Chair Rollins replied that the Board of Selectmen still need to discuss this. They have concluded that to meet the needs of the police department and dispatch, it would be cost prohibitive on the current site and they have asked Harriman for a more detailed explanation of what it would cost to do minimally to the building to allow a few years before they need to move forward.

Ms. Piotrow asked if there were any thoughts given to improve energy efficiency or the use of renewable energy. Chief Andersen stated a few years ago the Energy Committee came through the Police Department and did an audit. Rooms have motion sensor lighting and they made other recommendations and changes they thought would fit. Many of these issues would be answered with a new facility. The Energy Committee has agreed to do a review of the town buildings. Dispatch – Selectman Kidder asked Chief Andersen why he thinks Sutton and Wilmot have had no increase. Chief Andersen stated it seems that Sutton calls stays steady and they don't do anything to try to cut down on what gets called in. Wilmot has one officer and he averages the same amount per year and it's not a multiple officer department. Newbury has a new chief who has a different philosophy with enforcement so calls are going up. Selectman Kidder also asked about office supplies and the increased need for cleaning supplies for sanitary purposes. Chief Andersen responded that the cleaning company comes in and does basic cleaning but they are wiping down, phones, keyboards, surfaces every 8-12 hours to try to avoid getting sick.

Selectman Helm asked about the proper funding of capital accounts that is referenced in his memorandum. He doesn't see any capital accounts. Chief Andersen stated they are putting \$34,000 per year in this account and would like this to continue so in ten years when/if the equipment needs to be replaced they will be in good shape.

Joe Cardillo asked about the formula for calls for service. Wendy Johnson stated there is a three year average for calls for service and they take a percentage based on the town's percentage of the total. Each town is charged a \$3,000 administrative fee and that percentage of the calls for service is applied to the budget. New London has the most calls so pays the majority. Chief Andersen stated that of this budget, 60% is paid for by the Town of New London and 40% is paid for by the other communities that we dispatch for.

Ms. Piotrow stated the CIP recommends expanding radio communication coverage. The cost would be between \$100,000 - \$150,000. At what point will this be recommended. Is coverage limited and when should it be expanded. Chief Andersen stated there are issues with coverage. They are trying to get communication to 95% for better service. The last portion would be a tower on Mount Sunapee and this is phase three. At the beginning of next year they will try to begin phase three and hope to have Newberry help with the cost.

Fire

Fire Chief Jay Lyon attended the meeting. The New London Fire Department focuses on three things which include preparedness, training and code compliance. Preparedness is making sure the apparatus is ready to go at a moment's notice. The department has experienced a significant amount of turnover so this means a lot of training is required. Retention and recruitment is one of the biggest issues they have. They continue to try to maintain New Hampshire state level one or level two certification courses in New London. It is beneficial to the staff so they don't have to travel, but they are also taking the class with all the other towns contiguous to New London. Code Compliance is doing inspections. There are 76 buildings in town that are inspected once if not twice a year. This is a busy department and year to date there have been 660 calls. Weather and people are the main catalyst for their responses. Changes from last year to this year include a program called Active 911. This is an interactive program. In the past they had alpha pagers and these were \$12 a month per person. With the new system, with the use of a smartphone he can tell who can respond and what their location is. Decisions can be made based on responses. There was an increase in small tools and equipment and this is due to replacing hose. The cost for personal protective equipment to outfit a firefighter has gone up significantly. This is based upon technology and the need to reduce the inhalation of toxins correlated to cancer.

Selectman Kidder asked about the vehicle exhaust system referenced in the memo. Chief Lyon replied that there was a station expansion in 2004 and the firefighters association raised money to put in vehicle exhaust systems for the main piece of apparatus. On the back side of the building there was not funding to install this so now an additional hook up of hose would be installed to capture the diesel fumes. Now all four bays will have this installed. Selectman Kidder also asked about line item 350 – medical Services. This money was not used last year and is asking for \$2,150 again this year. Chief Lyon stated that funds have been encumbered so will be taken out of this year's budget. This is used for medical supplies, physicals, EMS tools and equipment.

Joe Cardillo asked if there were any new federal guidelines that dictate response. Chief Lyon stated it is mostly by choice and in New London he feels they manage their personnel well. Chief Andersen agrees that it is well managed.

Jerry Coogan noted that the Town of New London does not adopt the state building code and there is no building inspector. He asked Chief Lyon what his opinion is on adopting the code and having a part time building inspector. Chief Lyon responded that code compliance is important and advocates that minimum standards are met. If the town chose to have a building inspector he would be in favor. Lyndsay Lund commented that if a resident has concern

regarding a contractor, the fire department can be called to inspect. Selectman Helm clarified that all towns have to meet state building code but we don't have anyone that enforces it on the residential side. Mr. Coogan commented that it is his understanding that all of the surrounding towns have a building inspector. Phyllis Piotrow stated that this is a useful suggestion and perhaps we could share this service. She has mentioned several times that the Continuum project proposes building possibly over 100 houses without a building inspector and that seems dangerous. She would like consideration to be given to a consultant or sharing this service with a surrounding town.

Emergency Management

Kimberly Hallquist spoke on behalf of Lou Botta, Emergency Management Director. Mr. Botta has requested a 368.2% increase in the amount of \$13,555 for which the majority would be used establish a CERT team. This is a group of citizens who are deployed when there is an emergency and is an excellent resource to free up the police and fire departments so they can do their jobs. All of the members of the Emergency Management Committee are in support of this.

Selectman Helm asked if this needed to be done all in one year. This is a big effort and suggested spreading it out over a few years. He also asked what the follow up cost would be and would it be ongoing. Ms. Hallquist stated yes it would be ongoing as people will leave and others coming in will need training but it is worth the money. Once it is established it won't be as costly.

Chair Rollins asked that more information be obtained from Mr. Botta with regards to phasing in a few people at a time versus having a solid team to begin with. Also what are the potential costs moving forward.

Lyndsay Lund commented that you can't predict, you can only prepare and \$13,000 is fairly nominal in the event an emergency arises.

Minutes

IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to accept the minutes from the October 1, 2018 with one change. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

Next joint meeting: October 22, 2018, 6:30 PM.

Motion to adjourn

IT WAS MOVED (Joe Cardillo) AND SECONDED (Bill Helm) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson, Recording Secretary
Town of New London