



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING MINUTES
Monday, October 21, 2019
6:30 PM**

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Nancy Rollins (Chair), Janet Kidder, John Cannon

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Rob Prohl (Chair), Joe Cardillo (Vice Chair), Suzanne Jesseman, Jerry Coogan, , John Raby, Michael Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Kimberly Hallquist, Town Administrator; Wendy Johnson, Finance Officer

OTHERS PRESENT: Jay Lyon, Fire Chief; Ed Andersen, Police Chief; Lieutenant Emily Cobb, Lou Botta, Emergency Management Director; Donna Larrow, New London Police Department Administrative Assistant

Chair Rollins called the joint meeting to order at 6:41 PM.

FY2021 Budget Preparation: Public Safety: Police, Fire, Dispatching, Emergency Management

Police

Police Chief Ed Andersen reviewed the line items in the budget that are changing:

Telephone - the request is for \$15,500

Computer support and services - This line is for the company that takes care of the department's computers, laptops and servers. Currently the police work with CCI and are billed by the hour when service is needed; they are going to a new program where it will be managed using their complete care service which will be a flat rate and not billed by the hour. Going to this service will mean a significant increase. The Police Department has tried using other services that are less expensive but have not been successful. Complete care covers all day to day requirements for network security and includes anti-virus software, network security testing and recording, next generation of firewall and secure wireless. This system will increase security for all the department's computer use. Equipment can be provided and brought in if there is a failure and we need data recovery. The department will be assigned a team leader from the company to help if we were having issues. This would be a three-year contract. Chief Andersen split the total between the Police department (\$39,800) and dispatch (\$27,400). This company has approximately 20 employees and is located in Claremont NH. Their response time is within an hour and they have always been very responsive when needed. The towns of Sutton and Newbury have also purchased the complete care package.

Uniforms and Cleaning - this amount has gone down.

Cruiser Maintenance - this has increased to \$11,000 as tires, oil changes etc. are getting more expensive.

Other Services - this is the contract with the County Attorney's office. There is a new County Attorney and would like to meet to discuss fees but has not done so yet. Chief Andersen added in \$1,400 in case the services cost more.

Conference and Meals - The officers are attending more specialty type training and classes which can include overnight stays and mileage. There are approximately 25 different training classes that include firearms training, active shooter training, accident reconstruction, Taser certification, supervisor training and behavioral and mental health training.

Gasoline - Gas is starting to go up and there is an additional officer and car on patrol. Chief Andersen estimates fuel will cost in the \$22,000 - \$23,000 range.

Uniforms and Equipment - This is up by \$2,000 and this includes shirts, pants, boots, flashlights, handcuffs and vests.

Canine Program - The Canine program did a great job and funds were raised to get the program up and running. This fund was used for training, equipment and to purchase the dog. Chief Andersen is proposing for 2021 to put in a line item for \$3,000 for expenditures. There is a cost for insurance on the dog and veterinary bills. Joe Cardillo stated that he recalls that the taxpayers were told they would never see a line item noting that he understands things change but Chief Andersen should be prepared to address this with the taxpayers. Chief Andersen responded that they are still doing fundraising, observing that there are many people that support the canine program. Chief Andersen pointed out that there was a change in the canine handler which caused them to have to dip into the reserves that were built up.

Dispatch

The Dispatching Department budget is up by 2.1%.

There is a request for an increase in part time hours with a total budgeted amount of \$5,000. It is very busy and calls for service have gone up significantly (there has been a 30% increase in just over two years). This increase is shared with the towns that get services from the town; New London's share is approximately 60%.

Equipment Repair and Maintenance - Chief Andersen stated many warranties have expired. Their cost is \$11,800 to come out and maintain all the equipment within in the Police Department. \$2,200 is the amount budget for anything that is outside the contract.

Conferences and Training - Dispatchers attend two conferences a year. This amount has been reduced.

New Equipment - The \$6,800 amount was reduced by \$4,800. This cost was for the DVR that was installed which records cameras and video equipment that comes into the Police Department.

Fire Department

Fire Chief Jay Lyon attended the meeting to discuss the Fire Department budget.

Chief Lyon reported that the operation budget remains almost the same as past years.

Personal Protective Clothing - Each set of gear which includes a pair of fire pants and a jacket costs \$2,500. This is significant. Many fire departments are issuing their firefighters two sets, but our fire department is lucky to have some gear in reserve. They are also having the firefighters keep a set of their old gear if they are able to so there is a back-up set.

Chief Lyon explained that the major increase for the department is in the area of wage and salaries, informed the boards that the number of calls has gone up significantly. The culture of our society has changed and when people don't know what to do, they call 911. Population and weather also impact the number of calls to the fire department; last year the number of calls was 959 and there are only two full time people. They are able to do this because they have a quality group of on call officers that rotate calls. Recruitment and retention is challenging as well. The position that Chief Lyon is asking to be funded was approved in 1999 by town meeting voters but never funded. It is a full-time fire prevention officer position that would perform inspections for the 78 places of assembly in town as well as citizen's homes when needed. The new position would also assist with response to calls. This would be a very beneficial position for the department.

Emergency Management

Lou Botta attended the meeting to discuss the Emergency Management budget.

Mr. Botta stated that overall there is a substantial decrease in the budget. The CodeRED fee has been moved from the dispatching budget to Emergency Management in the amount of \$8,500. There is an increase in equipment repair and maintenance in the amount \$4,300; this is due to the inspection and maintenance all the town generators on a yearly basis.

Mr. Botta mentioned that last year they began phase one of a citizen's information campaign. This has been done and they held three town hall meetings. The next part is the update of the towns emergency plans; the most recent to be completed was the emergency operations plan (EOP) that must be done every five years. A plan that has never been done is New London and will be implemented is called the COOP and COG. A COOP is a continuity of operations plan; a COG is a continuity of government plan. The match we received is called "in-kind" and this is due to the job that our partners in the Emergency Management committee and volunteers do. The hours spent by these people gets tallied and this is used as the in-kind match for that grant. The third part of the plan is to update the Sydney Crook meeting room in the Academy building, which serves as the town's emergency operations center (EOC), with teleconferencing, television sets and audio/visual equipment. The grant amount is \$45,000 and then with the in-kind match we should have between \$65,000-\$75,000.

The next phase is the establishment of the CERT team. The CERT team will be certified by the state and approved by FEMA. They already have a good start on this and by the end of this fiscal year this will be in place. This will require training and equipment. Mr. Botta explained that the town has a good partnership with Colby-Sawyer College to help improve our resilience. There are students that will do a survey in the community to determine a baseline resiliency in the town. We need to know how many homes have generators, a three-day food supply etc. From this information we can make good determinations about the resilience in town and what needs to be improved. The general population needs to understand that all residents need to be prepared with at least a 72-hour supply of food and water in our homes.

Review Minutes from the October 7, 2019 meeting

IT WAS MOVED (Rob Prohl) AND SECONDED (John Raby) to accept the Joint Board of Selectmen/Budget Committee meeting minutes from the October 7, 2019 meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (John Raby) AND SECONDED (Suzanne Jesseman) to adjourn the meeting. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY

The Budget Committee portion of the joint Board of Selectmen/Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 8:14PM. The Selectmen continued with their regular meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Trina Dawson,

Recording Secretary
Town of New London