MINUTES
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2020
7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA

Present: Mark Snyder, Matt Anderson, Bob Guerin, Gwenn Dyson, Laura Wing, Nancy Crossman, James McCormick, Jim Pierce.

Absent: Megan Terrio

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham, Finance Director William Jennings, Chief of Police Peter Wack, Fire Chief John Burke, Tao Woolfe/Enterprise and SCTv.

ITEM #1
CALL TO ORDER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Meeting called to order at 7:00p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

ITEM #2
PUBLIC FORUM

None.

ITEM #3
REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of February 11, 2020 -
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ANDERSON TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2020 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. CROSSMAN. VOTE - UNANIMOUS MR. PIERCE AND MS. DYSON ABSTAINING

ITEM #4
CORRESPONDENCE, STATEMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ITEM #5
TOWN MANAGER REPORT

FY’21 Budget Presentations – Chief of Police Peter Wack & Fire Chief John Burke

Mr. Dunham noted that no new positions and no new huge funding issues being requested. We are really fortunate to have such qualified leaders and thanked both chiefs for their cooperation between them and other department heads. This is not necessarily the case in other towns.

-Chief of Police Peter Wack gave an overview of the proposed 2021 Police Department Budget. Information presented is listed under Supporting Documents at the end of these minutes.

Discussed personnel (retirements and hiring), computer budget, cruiser replacement, meals and travel allowance for personnel to take classes, Capital Budget, Tasers, micro waves. The Police Department now offers a new program “Shop with the Kids”…each child is given $100 which is all donated.

Chief Wack (and Chief Burke in his segment) answered questions sent to them in writing prior to the meeting (included under Supporting Documents).

Solar panels will be installed soon. There may be some extra revenues for the town.

LED lights and motion detectors have been installed.
There are some additional costs necessary because of the new building. We have new maintenance agreements; HVAC & phone system. We are going to have more expenses due to the share size of the building compared to where we were.
The budget (FY’20) is currently FY’19 #’s because the contracts weren’t settled at the time. FY’21 #’s are accurate and funded.
Vehicle maintenance has been level funded since FY’15 and probably through FY’21.
Computer maintenance was discussed briefly
Mr. Snyder asked about retirees and hiring new officers and what will be the difference in salaries.
Chief Wack – not sure because we have not received the retirees paper work yet but savings is usually very small. Sometimes we get people through training and then they might go to another town.
Mr. Snyder – Can we reduce the number of people leaving, after we pay to train them?
Chief Wack – we work at it but, some people use us as a starting point.
Mr. Dunham – we have made changes in the ‘steps’.
Mr. Anderson – are we fully staffed…or not?
Chief Wack – we are in a good place right now. We are an outstanding Police Department. We are a Civil Service town. We should try to leave Civil Service like the Town of Falmouth did.
Mr. McCormick questioned the increase in personnel money.
Mr. Dunham explained that the numbers that you see is a two year jump because we had not settled the contracts in time for the FY’20 budget that we are in now.
Mr. McCormick inquired about the Schools Resource Officer and what the person does when the schools are not in session.
Chief Wack – The Schools Resource Officer, Christa Cabral, is on patrols if she is not on vacation time.
Mr. Guerin asked about the Town’s investment in the tech, particularly support.
Chief Wack – we have Deputy Chief Michael Nurse who is a ‘tech Guru’. He will be retiring at some point so he has been asked to take a new officer and train the officer from the start on everything Deputy Chief knows about technology.
Ms. Wing asked how seasonal changes in the town effect the police department.
Chief Wack – our call rate does not go up because of seasonal people, it goes up because the weather is better for outside stuff.
In response to a question about crime in Sandwich, Chief Wack noted that he looks at how safe are our houses, vandalism etc. We have an extremely active Detective Division group.
Mr. Dunham – one of our officers is assigned to the Cape Cod Drug Force.
Brief discussion on new law about hands free driving. Chief Wack noted that distracted driving is killing people.

Fire Chief John (J.J.) Burke gave an overview of the FY’21 Fire Dept. budget:
Information presented is listed under Summary Documents at the end of the minutes.
FY’21 is level funded. We have Cloud based technology support which gives us 24/7 back up.
The FY’20 #’s were based on FY’19 salaries budget…did not include any increases because the contracts had not been settled in time. The FY’21 budget does include the settled contracts so it is high. Some people who were hired three or four years ago decided to go back to school so some of the numbers are up.
The EMS Statistics 2017-2019 numbers are very interesting i.e. the percentages of Advanced Life Support calls (ALS).
We are finding that minor, less acute issues are being handled by Ride Share/Uber etc., so the Fire Department is getting more urgent calls.
Ninety percent of calls from facilities are paid. We have a better ambulance billing company and reports done by Fire Department employees are being completed with more detail which helps. We are looking at uncollected revenues and trying to capture additional revenues.
The increase in ALS calls is very expensive. We try to bring in supplies in bulk to stock up.
Response times are better in the area of East Sandwich. It was a good thing when the East Sandwich station was re-opened. Response times are much better with three stations and the staffing we have. Discussion of staffing – we have eleven personnel on a full shift. We maintain a recall minimum of seven. The ‘living radius’ for Fire employees has been extended to sixty miles. Chiefs from border communities get together often and discuss mutual issues, we are able to back up each other.

In response to a question raised by Ms. Crossman, Chief Burke noted that our people can work on the billing end of things and tech wise, the new building has been a huge help.

Chief Burke thanked the tax payers and town staff for supporting re-opening of Station #2 in East Sandwich and supporting the new station.

Mr. McCormick asked about the staffing for each shift…is the number for each shift your standard as Fire Chief or the State’s.

Chief Burke – it is mine…you need coverage down town. We’ve got the power company, the Wing School, older homes down town, Town Neck area and nursing homes.

Ms. Crossman asked if the Fire Dept. is planning offer another Citizen Fire Academy again?

Chief Burke – yes, hopefully in the Fall.

Mr. Guerin – really well done presentation. I grumble about the fact that we still have three addresses that still get most of our calls. But, I am glad about better billing and payments.

In response to a question raised by Mr. Anderson, Chief Burke noted that we are trying to keep a person in the station. We are trying to keep someone in the station…then we call other towns for assistance. There are not a crazy number of times we have to call another town.

Mr. Anderson asked if there is an increase in the hiring rate to 60 miles out of town…what is their motivation with work on Cape Cod?

Chief Burke – nice new stations, hospitals and progressive technology and enough staff.

Mr. Dunham noted that Chief Burke is wide open to trying things and also acknowledges if things are not working and he works so well with other departments. Chief Burke is always reaching out to help other towns. Years ago there used to be educational incentive…they were really expensive so we decided that anyone hired after a certain date…we will give the incentive if you stay on board for a certain amount of time.

Mr. Snyder thanked everyone.

FY’21 Budget Updates-
Mr. Dunham noted that Emergency Management is part of Public Safety. In an emergency, the Director technically takes over the town. Has added money to that budget to add some people.

Draft List of Warrant Articles for 3/23/2020 Special Town Meeting & Finance Committee Recommendations-
Mr. Dunham gave an overview of the Special Town Meeting warrant articles-

Article 1- Appropriation to Fund 100 Route 6A Renovations…$2.1m additional and the $1.8m appropriated from the 2019 Annual Town Meeting last year.

Mr. Snyder noted he thinks the Committee should wait until we have the exact #’s before voting on this article.

Mr. Guerin asked did anyone but town people see the job before the purchase.

Mr. Dunham, yes, we spent some money for four separate groups to go through and check such things as the HVAC system, the septic and internal wiring.

Mr. Guerin – we should have a Capital Committee…how we would spend the money.

Mr. Anderson – do you feel the architect did what they were asked to do for the money we paid them?

Mr. Dunham – yes.

Mr. Anderson – nobody didn’t do what they should have done.

Mr. Snyder – We didn’t do due diligence.

*No vote was taken on Article #1 at this time.
Article #2 – Appropriation to Public Employee Committee Fund & FY’20 Health Insurance Budget.
Mr. Dunham noted that we still don’t have an answer from the Department of Revenue (DOR) as to what we can do with the money that the town received when we changed health insurance benefits from Cape Cod Health to Blue Cross/Blue Shield through MMA. If we don’t hear from the DOR, it may not even be an article. Mr. Dunham and Town Treasurer Mr. Jennings feel strongly that 25% of the money has to go back to the Public Employee Fund Account. Town Counsel has said…that’s fine…just do it.
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. GUERIN TO RECOMMEND THE NUMBERS SUBJECT TO RADIFICATION BY THE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE. SECONDED BY MR. MCCORMICK. VOTE – UNANIMOUS

Article #3 is a non-financial article…no vote needed.

Article #4 – Capital Appropriations
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. PIERCE TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF THIS ARTICLE. SECONDED BY MR. MCCORMICK. VOTE – UNANIMOUS
Question was raised if the Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School be asked to build the life guard chairs as noted on the Capital list in the warrant.
Mr. Dunham said, yes, they can be asked.

Article #5 – Amend Purpose for Fire Department Capital Appropriation-$25,000 was appropriate at the May, 2017 ATM (Article #7) for Fire Dept. ‘IV Medication Pumps’ to EMS Equipment and Supplies.
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ANDERSON TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLE #5 FOR RE-APPROPRIATION OF FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL FUNDS AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. DYSON. VOTE – UNANIMOUS.

Articles #6, 7, 8 & 9-
-Chapter 90 money – State Aid to Highways Program
-Sandwich High School cellular antenna lease receipt funds
-Beach Re-nourishment receipt funds
-Funding the FY’21 Sandwich Promotions Fund
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ANDERSON TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLES 6, 7, 8 & 9 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MS. DYSON. VOTE – UNANIMOUS

Article #10- Disposition of the Wing School…to transfer care, custody and control of the H. T. wing School property effective December 31, 2021 from the School Committee for School Department purposes to the Board of Selectmen for the purpose of conveyance for general municipal purposes.
*MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. ANDERSON TO RECOMMEND PASSAGE OF ARTICLE #10 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. GUERIN. VOTE – UNANIMOUS

ITEM#6
OLD BUSINESS

Meeting Schedule –
Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School budget presentation next Tuesday.

ITEM #7
NEW BUSINESS

Liaison Reports –
None

ITEM #8
ADJOURNMENT
8:35 p.m. *MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. SNYDER. SECONDED BY MS. DYSON
VOTE – UNANIMOUS.

Respectfully Submitted,

[Signature]
Diane M. Hanelt
Secretary

Approved: __/__/2020

Supporting Documents:
-Police Dept. FY’21 Budget
-Staffing: Police, Emergency Telecommunications, Clerk
-Account Increase Requests / FY’21 Operating / FY’21 Capital
-Police Department Statistics
-Community Accomplishments
-Fire Dept. FY’21 Budget
-Fire Statistics 2017-2019
-EMS Statistics 2017-2019
-Ambulance Billing
-Response Times
-Firefighter Staffing (Operations)
-Firefighter Staffing (Station)
-Firefighter Staffing (On Duty)
-Firefighter Staffing (Future)
-Firefighter Staffing (Overtime)
-Firefighter Staffing (Hiring)
-Overtime
-Ambulance Supply
-Questions from FinCom member (Nancy Crossman) sent to both Chiefs.
-210 / Police Department Budget (GHD Draft 2/20/2020)
-210 / Public Safety Telecommunications – Personnel Costs (GHD Draft 2/20/2020)
-220 / Fire Department Budget (GHD Draft 2/20/2020)
-294 / Forest Warden (GHD Draft 2/20/2020)
-Projected General Fund Revenues and Expenses – FY’21 (GHD 100 Route 6A Balanced Draft 2/27/2020)
-FY’21 General Fund Operating Budget Totals (GHD Draft 2/20/2020)
-FY’21 Recommended General Government Budget / Summary of Significant Budget Changes at 3.00%
(+- $10,000) (GHD Draft 2/20/2020).
-Funding outside of General Government Operating Budget / Summary of Significant Budget Changes (+/-
$10,000) (GHD Draft 2/20/2020).
-FY’21 Capital Budget – Final Recommendation (CIPC Approved 2/20/2020)
-Special Town Meeting Warrant Monday, March 23, 2020 7 pm / Sandwich High School Auditorium
(GHD Draft 2/29/2020)
-100 Route 6A Renovation Cost Estimate
-Town Offices Study @ 100 Route 6A / Preliminary Project Budget – Courtyard (No Addition) 12/9/2018
-Proposed Upcoming Finance Committee Meetings (GHD Draft 1/2/20)