Budget Committee Meeting Minutes 1-25-2017

Roll Call/Sign In

**Present**:

Bettie Harris-Howard Laura Bragg Sean Bright Deborah Wilson Skip Wood Rebeca Beal Becky Batchelder Judy Churchard Jeri Basko **Absent:**

Corinna Cole (alt)

**Selectmen:**

Christine Torno Royce Heath

**Public:**

Dana Coull Ben Thompson Mary Kinney

Dan Meehan

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER (ACO) BUDGET:**

Bettie presented the ACO budget. Mary Kinney was there to answer questions.

* **Wages** stayed the same. $7700
* **Travel expenses** are the same. $3,500
* **Staff development** includes going to training in Bangor.
* **Supplies** ($150) will go toward buying a new dog trap.
* **Outside Services**--($8,800) includes the contract with the Animal Welfare in Kennebunk. Mary has negotiated a “per animal” fee instead of the yearly contract. This should save money.
* **Dues and subscriptions** pay for membership in the Maine Animal Control Assn.
* **ACO used to be in the General Government budget, so data is somewhat new.**

Mary was able to get a chip reader donated by the people who lost a Macaw in Lebanon last year. They were very grateful for her help. The Chip Reader will save the Town money because she can read the chips on animals without traveling to Kennebunk. The ACO runs the local Rabies Clinic but makes no profit on it.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES:**

Chief Dan Meehan presented the Emergency Medical Services budget. He mentioned that January has been a really busy month. There have been 32 calls so far this month, mostly EMS.

**Wages** stay the same. The Chief makes $47,476. The Deputy Chief makes $7,800.

* The **on-call** ($24,000) budget included the Deputy Chief’s salary last year. There are 2 per diem employees on duty during the day. They make $10-$15/hour, depending on the level of training. The on-call budget is up $9,000 to cover additional personnel who respond to an incident. The Chief is there, also, but he is covered by his salary. The Chief said that the EMT’s work 18-25 hours a week. He never has enough and is always looking for more.
* The **Night staff** earns a flat rate of $35/shift. If they go out on a call, they make $10/hour plus their flat rate. The budget is $27,000, which is a decrease of $2,092 over last year.
* The minimum wage hike has had an impact on the wages category.
* The Chief said that his goal is to Cross-train Fire, EMT, and drivers. The schedule is determined by a voluntary sign-up. Drivers make $10/hour, but there are very few personnel that are just drivers.
* **Travel expenses** stayed the same.
* **Staff Development** budget is $8,000. The Chief explained that he looks mostly for training that is free and offer college credits. An example of these are EVOC, Pumps, and SCBA (Self-controlled Breathing Apparatus) which trains the firefighters to crawl through a dark, smoky maze with all their gear on. Some firefighters have also trained for Instructor 1 & 2 which trains them to train firefighters, teach fire classes, and do public speaking. There were 4 in the class this year and last.
* The department has a **Chaplain** who is training to be an EMT and firefighter.
* The volunteers come from all over. There is a midwife from Northwood, NH. Many firefighters live in E. Rochester which makes for a quick response time. He would love to find more people willing to put in the time involved in training 2-3 times a week from Dec. to May.
* **Supplies** include office and janitorial supplies, vehicle fuel, and Medical supplies. A tourniquet alone costs $40.
* **Electricity and Heating** request is down $6,000. They are only heating one station, but Station 2 must be kept at 55 degrees to preserve the meds and keep the pipes from freezing.
* **The phone and propane** budget requests stayed the same. There are 2 kinds of gas. Air gas is for oxygen for the patients. Propane gas is for the generators.
* **Building Maintenance** is $10,000 because the buildings are so old.
* **Vehicle Maintenance** includes things like the glow plugs on the ambulance which had to be replaced.
* **Radio Maintenance, SCBA Maintenance, and Equipment Maintenance** Stayed the same.
* **Firefighter Equipment** is up $2,500 because some gear needs to be replaced. They have only one set of gear per person. All the gear has to be professionally cleaned to reduce the risk of cancer for the firefighters. That means that a firefighter whose gear is out for cleaning is out of service. They have 4 sets of gear in reserve, but 3 of the pants are out for repair. They have a company (Fail Safe) which comes in to check hoses and pumps). This takes much less time that when the firefighters did it themselves and lowers the cost of liability insurance.
* There is no cost for **background checks**.
* Billing fees have gone up $4540 because of the increase in medical calls. The Chief was able to negotiate the fee down from 8% to 6 ¾%. Skip asked if the billing should come out of the General Fund because the money goes right into the General Fund. Some calls involve helping someone who has fallen or administering medications. Chief said that some medications, like the Epi-pen have gotten very expensive. They are $300 each and they must have 3 at a time. They do not bill if the patient is not transported to the hospital. Chief said that they view this as a community service that taxes pay for. Jeri mentioned that Sanford is charging a fee for all calls. Ben responded that it is a Select Board decision whether to charge. Christine said this has not been discussed by the Select Board. Judy expressed a concern that billing for each visit might discourage people from calling.
* **Postage** is staying the same even though stamps are going up $.02 each. Deb asked that the EMS uses the postage for. Chief replied that he sends a birthday card to the responders. He has to send reports and there are letters that have to be returned.
* **Medical/Physical exams** stay at $3000. Each physical exam includes drug testing. The department is very fortunate to have a Medical Director for $1500. The Medical Director gives classes once a month. He reviews tough cases and facilitates discussions about what went well and what can be improved. He hasn’t taken any pay yet because they are waiting for his I-9. Laura asked if we got more paramedics, would that bring down the cost of paramedic intercept. Chief Meehan responded that we would need 24/7 coverage. Sanford charges for paramedic intercept, but Milton and Frisbee do not. The charge is $375 and it is billed throughout the town, no matter where you live. The intercept charge is included in billing and goes into the General Fund. Judy asked about billing for accidents. Does not happen now unless patient is transported.
* The Chief stated that he watches expenses carefully so he doesn’t go over budget.
* Becky Beal asked about the new Fire engine the department has been requesting for years. The chief said that the most urgent need is for a new ambulance. The second one is over 14 years old. He talked about going in with Acton to get a discount. The new ambulance would have 4-wheel-drive, and all aluminum body and a new zoll (medical control system). There will be a referendum on the Ballot in May. The new ambulance would be about $300,000.
* The main ambulance is getting a lot of use. The New forestry truck goes on all calls. It is outfitted for fire and forestry.
* The old Engine 1 was sold for $1234.56 and broke down on the way to its new station. The old forestry truck sold for $1800. All money was put into the General Fund.
* Jeri asked about the Fire House on Upper Cross Rd. Ben mentioned that the corporation owns it. The Ladies Auxiliary needs to sign off, but they do not know who they are. Hagerman needs to sign off, but we can’t ask him because the Town does not own the building. Dan and the Selectmen have had discussions about the possibility of building a new fire station. Accessible roads are an important part of the location.
* The S. Lebanon Station needs a new roof, about $15,000.
* The revenue for EMS is about $9000/month in ambulance calls. It would pay for the new ambulance in about 3 years.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE PROTOCOL:**

There a lively discussion about a charge of $6.75 Deb incurred for talking with the Town Treasurer about some items in the Transfer budget that were in the wrong category. Deb wanted clarification on protocol for such incidents. It was decided to table the issue until Jordan can attend to explain. After a lively exchange, Deb motioned to table the discussion on procedure for questions until a future meeting. Judy and Sean seconded the motion.

**BUDGET PRINTING:**

Up until this week, copies of budgets were provided to us at the meeting. This week the budgets were not ready for us at the meeting. We are a volunteer group and cannot print the budgets at home, as we do not get reimbursed for ink or paper. It was decided to ask Jordan to email the budgets and print 9 copies before the meetings.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

* Conservation Commission Scholarship——still no answer
* Review minutes from Budget Committee Meeting on 11-10-2016—accepted
* Supplies for Budget Committee—Dale Fisk has dividers and a box of paper for us.
* Posting Meeting—a banner is on the Town website and a sign is on the door.
* Does anyone have minutes for the Budget Committee Meeting on 6-8-2016? --Sean and Jeri will look into this.
* We reviewed the questions for the Selectmen about the Transfer Station Budget. Sean will lead the joint meeting with the Selectmen. After the presentation we can ask questions.

**The minutes for the 1-18-17 meeting were approved.**

The next meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 1, 2017 at the Town Office.

Agenda:

New Business:

* Approve the Budget Committee Meeting from 6-18-16
* Highway Dept. budget.
* Joint meeting with Selectmen to discuss the Transfer Station Budget.

Old Business:

* Meeting with Jordan.
* Discuss Protocol for Budget Committee Work.
* Conservation Commission Scholarship.

Jeri motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m. Judy seconded the motion.

Respectfully submitted:

Rebecca W. Beal