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**Enfield Budget Committee  
Public Works Facility, 74 Lockehaven Rd, Enfield, New Hampshire  
Meeting Minutes December 9th 2017 9:00 AM (Approved)**

**Members present:** Dominic Albanese, James Buffington, Fred Cummings, Eric Crate, Mike Diehn, Sam Eaton (Chair), Mark Eisener, Shirley Green (Vice Chair), Nancy Smith, Holly West

**Excused:**

**Absent:**

**Others Present:** Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager; Annabelle Bamforth (minutes); Richard Crate, Jim Taylor, John Pellerin, Lloyd Hackeman

## **I. Administrative**

Sam called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

## **II. New Business**

### **Budget Presentation: Police**

Police Chief Richard Crate presented the police department's proposed budget for 2018. Richard noted an overall 3.5% increase including a 2% increase in salaries, and added that several expenses are down. Richard said that the salary line was adjusted for overtime.

Regarding police activity in 2017, Richard said that arrests are down compared to the previous year. He added that while the number of arrests are down, the number of prosecution hours has not gone down.

Sam asked if there are any other significant expenses expected other than vehicles. Richard responded that constructing a dedicated area for computer equipment is being discussed.

Eric asked what services are included in the contracted services line. Richard said that this line covers a number of costs including membership to the Prosecutor's Association, special operations (SWAT) dues, a photocopier rental, and the server contract. Richard noted that the biggest portion of that line is Prosecutor's Association dues, and explained to the committee that being part of this organization has increased efficiency and offered cost savings.

Eric noted that the vehicle line went up 23% and asked what is included in this line. Richard responded that this line includes repairs and replacement parts. Richard said there are 7 officers using 5 cars in rotation and strives to make sure vehicle usage is spread evenly. Eric asked about the average life of a police vehicle; Richard said about 4 years per car is typical. He added that the CIP plan replaces the vehicles at intervals. Richard noted that a sedan is being replaced in 2018.

Dominic said he hoped to see an analysis of town vehicle usage to gain insight into planning long term for this type of purchase. Holly added that it could be useful to determine whether the town has seen previously-predicted benefits of certain vehicle and equipment purchases and to quantify the benefits, if possible.

Richard told the committee about the implementation of touchscreen devices to replace more conventional computers in cruisers and at the station. The devices allow for simpler transport from cruisers to the station; Richard said that so far, this option has been less expensive than traditional \$3K-4K computers.

### **Budget Presentation: Fire Department**

Assistant Fire Chief John Pellerin and Fire Ward Lloyd Hackeman presented the fire department's proposed budget for 2018.

John noted that the payroll line is dependent on fire level, and the number shown is a number that the department is most comfortable holding.

Ryan said that the fire inspections line may appear high, and explained that Phil Neily proposed shifting a few of his hours to fire inspections; there is a corresponding offset in building inspection.

John discussed a goal to train people for Firefighter One and the time constraints that pushed it back. Sam asked about loyalty stipulations such as with the Fast Squad. John said they haven't seen an issue with people training for free and then leaving.

Dominic asked if the firefighters hold CDL licenses. John said about half do, and this license is not a legal requirement. Eric asked if there is driving training. John confirmed and added that all firefighters must know how to drive the truck as well as use the truck's water mechanism.

Ryan asked if there are annual physicals for all firefighters. John said that currently only new hires undergo physicals, and the department is working on a protocol for all firefighters.

Ryan asked about the cost of Firefighter One training; John estimated about \$900 each. He said that classes must be paid upfront by the trainee and they are then reimbursed.

Eric asked how many fire calls the town had this year; John and Lloyd said there were 133. Lloyd added that about a third of those would be considered an actual structure fire, while the remainder are car accidents and other incidents. Lloyd noted that the fire department is called upon for many types of incidents.

Eric asked if there were any items the department needs or hopes to have. John said the department is doing well overall, and he noted that while technology is always updating the department does a good job keeping up. John said that airpacs are an item that will be needed and the department is hoping to get a grant for those replacements. Ryan offered his assistance with the grant process.

Fred noted that the Enfield Firefighter's Association has a lot of items donated to the department.

Nancy asked if there were significant purchases last year. Fred said a fire box was purchased, and the jaws of life unit was upgraded.

Mike asked if the department needs more people. John said yes, and added it's difficult to recruit younger people. Ryan noted that the demographic of Enfield skews older. John, Lloyd and the committee discussed ways to entice a younger crowd including various incentives and a competitive pay structure. John said a handful of solutions and incentives will be necessary to reach a large number of people.

Nancy inquired about the fire health & safety expense; Fred said he believed this was created by the Joint Loss Management Committee, which had called for making a separate line for safety vests.

Ryan said he plans to set aside funding for a consultant to visit in January to discuss adopting a strategic governance model; this discussion would cover a number of topics including strategic thinking and operational governance. Ryan said the the town of Amherst has pioneered this

model, which is adopted across all departments and even reaching residents. Ryan noted this would be relevant to Dominic's comment about a townwide vehicle review; strategic governance includes that type of analysis.

Eric asked if the department engages in hands-on or open-house events. John said there are during Halloween and Memorial Day, but not much outside of that. John said there's a need for a plan in place before implementation. Sam suggested a long-term educational program.

### **Budget Presentation: Department of Public Works & Municipal Buildings**

DPW Director Jim Taylor presented the DPW's proposed budget for 2018. Jim said the staff has seen change, including the upcoming retirement of the highway supervisor, the transitioning of the assistant highway supervisor to this position, and gathering applications for the now-open assistant highway supervisor position.

Jim said the professional development line is up to train new employees on equipment safety to get them up to speed. Holly asked if training alleviates insurance costs. Ryan said that in some cases, it does. Holly asked if has a benefit analysis been done regarding training. Ryan said that training costs vary and is sometimes free, online, or low cost.

Jim said that he has found many ideas taking root locally, such as treating with Ice-b-Gone, which was an idea that was hatched during a technical training session. He said the town used this idea and it's had great results.

James asked if personnel salary is competitive. Jim explained that some towns offer higher salaries, but other towns tend to require more demanding work than in Enfield; for example, Enfield's plowing route is not as challenging as other towns. Ryan said that some towns have been doing their own wage studies and he is waiting on results of these. Ryan added that Enfield is ahead of the state's pay rate, and explained that the town should be competitive but there are other factors that need to be included in the discussion such as different pay for different scopes of work. Ryan said it's important to look at the entire benefits package that accompanies pay; he said Enfield offers an attractive benefits package.

Eric asked if the benefits package is explained to employees; Jim confirmed that the department gives a printed breakdown of salary and benefits.

Dominic noted that some breakdown reports in other industries include vacation time, FICA, sick days and other benefits.

Jim said most lines are level funded; he said he reduced the winter salt line, as it's costing less per ton than last year, and he increased the gravel/road service treatment line.

Jim said there is a street lighting increase; this is a 6-7% increase based on anticipated costs if the town keeps same number of lights (about 240). Ryan noted movement from the Energy Commission to decommission some of the lights and the Commission is seeking to have Liberty Utilities identify where all the lights are. The Commission is proposing to take out about 90 lights. Fred said this issue is discussed every year. Holly said that residents who are affected negatively by street lighting on their property can go to the town and request them to be turned off, but this has not been communicated widely to residents.

Ryan said it's not likely that the town will decommission all 90 of the proposed lights. He explained that he learned that lights are under the authority of the town manager, although it appears some lights have gone up in the past without following procedure and this issue could be looked at.

Fred said that the town relies on the Police Chief for public safety advisory regarding lights, and added that he would not be opposed to a resident with proper grounds to request a light be shut off.

Jim noted that lighting is a third of total electrical costs. Holly added that the town is charged more more to "re-lamp" than to install a new light.

James asked Jim about general upkeep of the roads and said he recalled that the town was once losing ground; James asked how progress is going. Jim said the town is gaining ground, and added that CIP maintenance would help bolster progress.

Jim noted an early estimate of repair work on Crystal Lake Road at \$180K.

The committee discussed solid waste and the Board of Selectmen's recent vote to adjust and reduce transfer station hours. Jim said the budget has been adjusted to reflect the changes, which amounts to 23 hours a week year round, as opposed to the current 35 hours in summer and 31 in winter.

The committee discussed solid waste collection; Jim said the Casella contract is a significant cost center and noted a small adjustment of moving the transfer station hauling to its own line. Jim said in the last town newsletter, he let the public know about the lower cost for curbside pickup than when residents bring waste to the transfer station; Jim said it's important for the public to be aware of the cost difference.

Mike suggested that the townspeople also be made aware of the cost difference between hauling recycling and solid waste.

The committee discussed the topic of “pay-as-you-throw” (PAYT) for waste in the forms of stickers or bags. Ryan said that fairness is often discussed, and in that regard PAYT is more equitable. Fred said this discussion has been had before and PAYT was not supported. Members of the committee acknowledged that the town’s hybrid trash system makes possibility of adjustments more complex.

Jim discussed the budget for government buildings. He said that everything level funded outside of police building portion, which proposes a dedicated area for servers.

The committee discussed the \$2K cost for assuming responsibility and maintenance of the Lakeside Park. Ryan told the committee that the property was designated surplus by the state and there would be an extensive process for acquiring the land. There would need to be an appraisal and then the matter would move to a legislative committee, then a decision would be brokered on the property. Sam said there appeared to be several assumptions regarding likelihood of acquisition and that he did not see it likely that the state, which paid somewhere between \$700-900K for the property, would sell it back for a low price.

Sam asked for more information on the Lakeside Park donations process. Ryan said that donations would be made to the town and placed into a dedicated account, and the acquisition would ultimately go to a town vote. Ryan said that if fundraising falls short, or if the acquisition is voted down, the donations would be returned. Fred said in the meantime, the town will still be maintaining the property and is basically renting it. Jim added that the town has been maintaining this regardless, it’s just never been budgeted. Members of the committee discussed polling residents about their thoughts on the town acquiring this property.

Holly asked about the construction of the server room and if this budget accounts for things outside general construction. Ryan said he’s still waiting on a more extensive quote, and that this is an early estimate. Holly said that for this type of construction sometimes there is an underestimation of total cost. Ryan said there will be fine-tuning of this estimate.

Jim discussed the water & sewer budget. He said there was a shift from 2 full-time workers a couple years ago to an average of 1.5, which has been going well. He said this may change in light of the Lakeview sewer addition; right now the budgeted number is 2 for flexibility. He said the new system does not require a lot of supervision, but he is expecting an increase in readings.

Ryan noted that there's money programmed in for a rate study, which will be split 60/40 with the sewer department's share being the majority. Ryan added that the town is applying for a grant to help with cost; if successful, this number would be reduced according to the grant amount.

Jim said the sewer department will continue to maintain its employee average unless the Lakeview extension calls for a change.

Fred told the committee that the Board of Selectmen had discussed the town's sewer usage rates which are projected to increase 50%. Fred added that Lebanon raised its charge to Enfield 5% this year.

Ryan explained that the sewer department has seen an average \$100K shortfall every year for several years from not charging rates that cover the department's expenses. Following discussion with the Board of Selectmen, it was found that eliminating and reducing deficit within five years requires adding \$100K in revenue, and ultimately a significantly higher rate that would be in effect until the deficit is eliminated.

### **III. Public Comments**

none

### **IV. Admin items:**

#### Approval of Minutes:

James motioned to approve the minutes of November 21st meeting, and Mark seconded. The minutes were approved with no corrections; Fred abstained due to excusal from the previous meeting.

### **V. Adjournment**

Sam adjourned the meeting at 12:21 PM.