

West Newbury Finance Committee
Minutes of the meeting
Monday, February 6, 2017

FinCom members joined the Board of Selectmen (BOS) at 6:00 pm. The Selectmen presented the Town Manager Proposal to interested parties. Due to legalities involved, a Town Manager position, if approved, would not be in place until 2018.

Chairman Codair called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building with Ms. Grammer, Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Phillips in attendance.

There being no public comment, the Committee considered its agenda.

Public Safety—Chief Arthur Reed, Police Chief and Ms. Sue Curry, Administrative Assistant

Police

Chief Reed explained the \$68,293.00 variance in Salaries and Wages includes that of the new midnight shift police officer. He further stated the figures do not factor in any contract changes. Negotiations for police union contracts take place every three years. The police contract is due this year.

Chief Reed stated he is hoping to provide more regional and in-house training for the West Newbury Police Department. The practice decreases expenses. Frequently, departments hosting training events will earn free spots for one or two officers.

A separate line item reflects the salary of the requested School Resource Officer (SRO). Chief Reed is a strong supporter of hiring a SRO. Not only would the SRO present a positive presence, they may help to reduce overtime at the Police Department by filling shifts when not in school and help ease traffic at the schools. The SRO is dedicated to the school during the 180-day school year, but then is free to fill in where needed.

Chief Reed presented his vehicle rotation plan. Ms. Grammer inquired if the proposed rotation would decrease maintenance costs. Chief Reed stated following the plan should result in a reduction of maintenance costs.

FinCom asked Chief Reed to explain the addition of a line item for advertising. The Chief explained the turnover in reservists in public safety requires him to advertise. Often times, the free search engines produce resumes of unqualified candidates. Chief Reed has found greater success when advertising in written publications. Currently, the Police Department is losing two reserve officers. Ideally, they will be recruiting five more reserve officers.

FinCom asked for an explanation of the \$2,400.00 increase in equipment purchases. Chief Reed explained ammunition and range time for officers are included under this line item. The officers are

required to train on a regular basis in order to maintain their weapons status. He further stated the cost of ammunition has increased.

Chairman Codair asked the Chief to clarify an increase of \$3,550.00 for uniforms and vests. Chief Reed stated the increase covers the purchase of reservists' uniforms, as well as bulletproof vests for all officers. Chief Reed stated, previously, reserve officers paid for their own uniforms. However, it is difficult to attract part-time officers when they have to lay out their own capital prior to working. Additionally, bulletproof vests maintain a service life of approximately five years. The cost per vest is \$750.00.

Dispatch

Chief Reed reported Dispatch is also seeking two more reservists. Advertising funds also covers recruiting reservists for dispatch. Dispatch salaries include Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA). The Dispatch contract is up for review next year.

Communications

Chairman Codair noted Communications increased \$3,529.00 this year. Chief Reed answered the police are implementing online scheduling software by Aladtec. Electronically purchased last year, installation of the software occurs this year.

Pentucket Regional Schools—Dr. Jeffrey Mulqueen, Superintendent and Mr. Greg Labrecque, Business Manager

FinCom members rejoined the BOS to meet with the school representatives. Ms. Grammer inquired if both the school and school committee are in support of the SRO. Dr. Mulqueen stated the school and committee members are in favor of an SRO. However, formal discussions and a vote on the subject has not occurred. The school committee will be meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2017. We should know of the Pentucket budget contribution to an SRO, if any, by March 10, 2017.

Fire Department—Chief Michael Dwyer and Deputy Chief David Evans

Chief Dwyer and Deputy Chief Evans joined FinCom in the second floor hearing room. Also in attendance was Finance Director Gould.

Status—Radio Repeater

Chief Dwyer reported that the communications improvements authorized at last fall's town meeting are underway and the installation of the next phase radio repeater is currently on hold pending the direction of Water Department plans. If the Water Department proceeds with land purchase for a well drilling and water tank placement, the Fire Department may locate the radio repeater at that site.

Communications—Phase II and III of Communications Network

Chief Dwyer stated the department is holding off moving forward with the lease of a fiber optics network. Comcast will be consulted regarding the lease of fiber optics once the site of the repeater is confirmed.

Capital Plan—Zodiac Boat Replacement

Chief Dwyer stated replacement of the rescue boat is a project on the 10-year budget. He mentioned departments are moving away from the current blow-up style. The cost is approximately \$7,000.00 to \$8,000.00. There is a possibility of acquiring a free aluminum boat and outfitting it with the current motor.

30 Air Packs—Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) —\$284,791.00

Chief Dwyer stated the purchase of the air packs is a fire department priority. Originally, Chief Dwyer was hoping to receive a grant for the apparatus. Unfortunately, due to diminished state funds, cities and towns in need of financial assistance will receive grant money. Deputy Chief Evans provided FinCom with a demonstration of the SCBA. Chief Dwyer explained the department currently uses SCBA manufactured by SurvivAir, which are no longer available. He received two quotes from two companies; Scott and MSA.

Current SurvivAir packs are on all trucks. The packs provide 30 minutes of air. An alarm signals when there are approximately 5 to 8 minutes of air left. The packs, themselves inspected weekly, have a life span of 15 years.

The fire department has met with MSA representatives. The facemask offers increased peripheral vision than the current equipment. The packs are more ergonomic and the cylinders are quick release. Department members will meet with Scott representatives this week. Chief Dwyer expects a decision next week.

Chief Dwyer explained, to date, the packs have never been on the Capital Replacement List. The chief would like them added to the Capital Improvement List. Chairman Codair inquired if the purchase of the cylinders can be separate from the packs. Chief Dwyer responded he would ask the Scott representative this week. He mentioned the cylinders alone cost \$100,000.00. The immediate need is for replacement are the cylinders. However, the recommendation is immediate replacement of both the packs and the cylinders. If anything could be deferred, it would be the compressor used to refill the cylinders, but the one currently in use is very old and in need of continual upkeep. When asked if the fire department preferred a specific product, Chief Dwyer stated they were leaning towards the MSA units, but will decide after meeting with the Scott representative. Ms. Grammer suggested fire department members demonstrate the equipment at Town Meeting.

Future Fire Department Replacements

Chief Dwyer stated future equipment replacements include the Jaws of Life.

Town Counsel/Clerk—Mr. Michael McCarron, Esquire

Mr. McCarron stated a 2.5% COLA was added to salaries and wages. However, it may be dropped to 2%.

Bicentennial 2019—\$10,000.00

Mr. McCarron announced there is now a Bicentennial Committee consisting of KC and Steve Swallow, Mr. John McGrath, and one other. The request is for \$10,000.00 this year and another \$10,000.00 next year. The committee is also planning a number of events. The celebration will be multi-tiered. A one-day event will mark the actual February event. Celebrations will also take place during the warmer summer months.

Revolving Funds

Mr. McCarron remarked there are two revolving funds in town; Parks and Recreation and Cable Advisory. Under the new Municipal Modernization Act, revolving funds need approval by bylaw. This proposed bylaw change will allow BOS and FinCom to increase, if necessary, rather than during Town Meeting. Mr. McCarron stated preparation of the new bylaw is in progress.

FinCom members requested some clarification of the status of the Pipestave Apartments. Ms. Grammer remarked a revolving fund was initially proposed at the Fall Special Town Meeting, and then withdrawn because such a proposal was appropriate for the Annual Town Meeting. Expenditures were authorized last fall, and the understanding was that West Newbury had taken over all maintenance at a savings in cost. Mr. McCarron explained the revolving funds are a function of the Finance Department. With the departure of Mr. Bertino, the Article was derailed. Currently, West Newbury maintains the exterior. However, Newburyport manages the apartments and collects rent receipts. West Newbury claims the apartments as part of the town's subsidized inventory.

Future FinCom Meetings

Monday, February 13, 2017

- BOS and Town Manager Status
- Water Department

Tuesday, February 21, 2017

- Whittier Vocational School

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa Grammer
Secretary

Meeting materials

Town manager handouts
Pentucket budget submissions
Police budget form
Police vehicle article

Police vehicle capital schedule
Excerpted prior minutes re SRO & police cars
Bicentennial article
Revolving fund article
Fire department budget form
Fire department breathing equipment article
Summary re ethics/conflicts