

**West Newbury Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
April 11, 2016**

Chairman Codair called the Finance Committee to order at 7:08 p.m. in the second floor hearing room of the 1910 Building with Mr. DeLena, Ms. Grammer, Mr. McGrath, Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Winch present. Mr. Bertino was also present.

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

Chairman Codair informed the committee members Chief Reed had requested an opportunity to restate his case regarding Police replacement vehicle.

Police Department

Representatives — Chief Arthur Reed and Sergeant Daniel Cena

Article 16 — To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer the sum of \$41,023.00 to purchase a new Police vehicle and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of the old vehicle in the best interest of the town. By request of the Chief of Police.

Chief Reed began by stating he didn't want to give FinCom the impression he was not concerned either way regarding the replacement of the older marked police vehicle. The Chief's goal, at this meeting, is to assure FinCom he believes it is important to maintain the current status quo. The Police Department, at this time, owns four marked vehicles and one unmarked car. The odometer on the older car displays 116,000 miles which is high for a police vehicle which may spend an extended period of time idling. He reported the combined mileage of all the marked police cars is approximately 110,000 miles annually. This averages out to 21,000 to 28,000 miles per vehicle. Chief Reed stated the greater the mileage leads to more required maintenance. As it now stands, if one car is in the shop, they can maintain the rotation of the fleet. The Chief stated the older vehicle is currently in for maintenance.

Chief Reed said if a car is used for detail work, the town earns \$10.00 per hour. The funds could be placed in an account to defray the cost for a new vehicle if another is retired from service. The Chief mentioned there is also a cost associated with stripping a car. Ms. Grammer asked if that was removing the special police gear. Chief Reed replied it involves removal of such items as the light bar, radio, and guns to be installed in a new vehicle. Mr. McGrath stated the cost of stripping the car did not involve a large amount of money. He further remarked the extra gear for a police car would most likely last the life time of one or two vehicles. There is continual improvements of items such as lights. The desire for safety would deem the gear be routinely updated. Mr. McGrath also noted the fourth marked car replaced a pickup truck a year ago. The pickup was not equipped with police gear.

Ms. Grammer stated she understands fleet management and wants the police to be safe and adequately equipped. Chief Reed remarked it has been proposed to retire the older vehicle. Ms. Grammer inquired if the police would be safe and able to carry out the job with three patrol cars. Chief Reed replied in the affirmative. However, he stated, if a car is out of commission, they

may not be able to commit to other things. Chief Reed stated four vehicles would be easier if there was a detail or if a SRO is hired.

Mr. McGrath suggested it has been a long standing policy, an officer on detail is not working for the town and generally would use a private vehicle. Chief Reed responded there are three reasons to use a police vehicle for detail work on a main thoroughfare. The reasons include: protection of the motoring public, safety of the officer, and safety of the work crew. Mr. McGrath inquired about Chief Reed's proposed fee. The Chief replied there would be a \$10.00 surcharge. Mr. Bertino stated a receipt reserve fund could be set up and dedicated for vehicle replacement. Mr. McGrath asked if the BOS had approved the surcharge. Chief Reed replied they had.

Chairman Codair asked Chief Reed to provide a list including the age and mileage of all of the police vehicles. *Chief Reed remarked he will forward the information in the morning.* Chairman Codair asked if there have been any issues with the older car breaking down. Chief Reed said there have not be issues.

Mr. McGrath suggested every few years, the Chief could approach the town in April to request a new car in the fall. Mr. Phillips inquired if the older Crown Victoria is not replaced, will the department continue to run it. Chief Reed answered he would consider it second line.

School Resource Officer

Ms. Grammer expressed she is a proponent of community policing. Chief Reed stated it is important for the police to reach out and talk with the residents. Ms. Grammer stated she has viewed some videos showing a SRO to be a problem for the school. Ms. Grammer also remarked she was aware Triton employed a full-time SRO and Newburyport employs a part-time officer.

Ms. Grammer said she is unsure how the SRO is paid at Triton, another regional school. Chief Reed replied he was not familiar with Triton. However, he himself had been a SRO for ten years. The Chief further remarked in some districts the employment of a SRO has failed, but there are also many success stories. In order to reinforce his request, Chief Reed stated on today alone there were 22 bomb scares in Massachusetts schools.

Ms. Grammer inquired if there are some federal grants available. Chief Reed replied there are some but they are mostly related to technology. Ms. Grammer suggested looking into the COPS in schools (CIS) grant which is sponsored by the Federal Department of Justice. Chief Reed replied grant proposals are very time consuming to write and to maintain.

Mr. McGrath stated it is necessary to obtain School Committee approval with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the vote. Chief Reed stated both the Superintendent and School Board are in favor. Mr. McGrath mentioned it is important to receive a vote from the School Committee.

Mr. McGrath inquired if the SRO is not available will the other towns provide a replacement officer. Chief Reed replied it would not happen because a replacement officer would alter the dynamics.

Mr. McGrath stated the town will need a funding Article with a dollar amount. Ms. Grammer suggested it is worth looking into Triton. *Chief Reed will contact Chief Riley in Newbury.* The Chief stated Pentucket offered to pay a portion of the cost of a SRO but approval will not occur before April 25th. Chief Reed plans to meet with Superintendent Mulqueen tomorrow. He will take the opportunity to request a letter of support from him.

Mr. DeLena asked why Groveland and Merrimac were not contributing. Chief Reed stated the towns will support the addition of the SRO but not with money. Both towns have less available funds. The West Newbury Police Department has more to work with.

Chairman Codair turned to Sergeant Cena to ask about his recent training. Sgt. Cena stated he had recently participated in an active shooter scenario. He said all of the surrounding towns were able to participate. Chairman Codair inquired if the entire West Newbury Police Department was able to take part. Chief Reed answered they were able to. He continued by stating it is important for police officers to be properly trained.

Chairman Codair remarked the SRO would need more training beyond shooting scenarios. Chief Reed agreed. The SRO would educate students on school safety, review and practice lockdown procedures, and address bullying of all types. The Chief expressed the importance of mentoring. He used the example of becoming a coach. The more visible an officer is, the more common place it will be to have them as part of the community.

Chairman Codair asked if the presence of the SRO would result in a reduction of drug use. Chief Reed responded for the reduction of drug use, it would be necessary to bring in drug dogs. The Chief continued stating education is a large part of solving the drug issue but it is a long process. Mr. Winch remarked he is excited about the program and he had seen it work successfully in Kingston, NH.

FinCom Business

Police Department Detail Fee

Mr. Bertino stated the fee will need the approval of the Selectmen. *Mr. Bertino will follow up with the BOS. He also stated he will need to find out if utility companies such as Verizon, will pay the contracted rate.*

Article 16 — Police Car Purchase Discussion

Chairman Codair expressed some concern if the Police Department went back to three cruisers and one was in the shop, they would be left with two cars. Chairman Codair stated West Newbury has funds available now. Ms. Grammer suggested since there have been some recent repairs on the older vehicle, the town could look to purchasing a new car in the fall. Regarding the purchase of a new cruiser, Mr. Bertino remarked a good argument could be made either way.

Mr. McGrath reaffirmed the opportunity to purchase a vehicle is not just an annual occurrence but rather it takes place on a biannual basis. Mr. Winch asked once approved what is the wait time to receive a vehicle. Mr. Bertino answered approximately two to three months.

Chairman Codair requested, as a favor to the Police Department, for a revote of Article 16.

FinCom voted 1-5-0, Winch in favor.

FinCom Booklet

Ms. Grammer stated the omnibus budget now reflects the budget recommended by the BOS and FinCom.

SRO

Mr. McGrath recommended a statement should be prepared for FinCom to weigh in on the subject of the SRO. Ms. Grammer remarked that is a good idea since the subject is high profile. Chairman Codair agreed to compose a statement. Mr. Bertino suggested it could be added to the introductory letter being touted as innovative.

Special Town Meeting Article 15 — Vote to transfer from available funds the sum of \$20,000.00 to fund the Snow and Ice deficit. By request of the DPW Director.

Ms. Grammer reported the amount of \$20,000.00 has been determined. Ms. Grammer inquired if it is necessary to make a snow emergency declaration. Mr. Bertino replied it was not necessary. Ms. Grammer stated a rationale had been provided but there is no vote listed from the BOS. Chairman Codair suggested Ms. Grammer report a no vote and add the statement FinCom opted to refrain from voting due to an uncertainty of the need to transfer.

Revenue

Mr. McGrath asked Ms. Grammer if the revenue is included in the booklet. She replied it could be found on the last chart.

Investment Advisory Committee

Mr. Bertino announced the committee will be meeting on May 9th. The committee's monthly report tabulates accounts and assets. However, the report is complicated with some monies not given. Mr. Bertino said the report should have been included in the annual report but it was not. Both Ms. Grammer and Chairman Codair expressed they did not want to include it in the FinCom Booklet if it was too confusing. *Mr. Winch (Investment Advisory Committee member) and Mr. Bertino will prepare a statement.* Mr. Bertino stated it was difficult to match as money is always in flux. Mr. Winch added they are dealing with two separate investment years; one January through December and the other July through June.

Omnibus Budget

Chairman Codair asked for a vote on the omnibus budget.

FinCom voted in favor 6-0-0.

Ms. Grammer requested everyone edit the booklet and examine the spreadsheet for errors or formatting issues. Chairman Codair also asked for feedback regarding the cover letter.

Mr. McGrath suggested FinCom set up a schedule to meeting with CIC and CPA after the Town Meeting and prior to the start of the meetings in the fall.

Upcoming Schedule

The next meeting of the Finance Committee is scheduled for Monday, April 25, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Annex.

The Committee meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elisa J. Grammer
Recording Secretary