



**THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE  
JOINT BOARD OF FINANCE / BOARD OF  
SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016  
6:00 PM**

A Joint Board of Finance/Board of Selectmen Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge was held in the Central Meeting Room at the Town Hall, Woodbridge, Connecticut on Thursday, January 28, 2016 at 6:00 pm

**Present Board of Finance:** Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Karen Cusick; Andrew Esposito; David King (arrived at 6:45 pm)

**Present Board of Selectmen:** First Selectman, Ellen Scalettar; Deputy First Selectman, Beth Heller; Anthony Anastasio; Joseph Dey; Susan Jacobs; Maria Kayne (arrived at 6:55 pm)

**Also Present:** Administrative Officer / Director of Finance, Anthony Genovese, Budget Analyst, Karen Crosby

#### **REVIEW OF FY15 AUDIT – SCOTT BASSETT – McGladrey RSM**

Scott reported that they reviewed the audit for FY15 and found a clean audit. They reviewed internal controls and found no deficiencies. This year GASB 68 was implemented where disclosure of liability of the pension plan. There were no adjustments were posted from the records and information they received from Tony and his team. This means that the information you receive on a monthly basis is timely and accurate. The fund balance remained at a healthy balance of 10% within the policies that you manage.

Ellen stated that when his staff is here they are here for so many hours and are so diligent; it gives her great confidence in your conclusions because she sees the effort that they put in.

Matt asked how many towns or cities apply and win the GFOA Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Finance Reporting award. Scott stated that there are 169 town and less than half apply. There are over eighty standards and it is getting harder and harder to obtain. A lot of the larger cities with more staff are able to apply. He thinks it adds more transparency for the residents.

#### **OPERATING BUDGET PRESENTATIONS**

##### **Police Department**

Deputy Chief Ray Stuart presented a budget of \$2,970,732 which represents an increase of .89%.

Ray stated that one of the increases in overtime and most of that is due to staff shortages. We have been down six officers and coming in March the shortage will be three officers. Hopefully the Officer Salary line will be able to cover the overtime this year.

Line 53510 Repair & Maintenance of Equipment – this is for the maintenance agreements for equipment in the building. There were some significant increases in the contracts.

Cell phones increase is due to the use of iPhones now.

Tires, Oil & Gas reduced due to the cost of the fuel that Tony bids.

Electric Street & Stop Light line increased due to the payment of the Bradley Road location of the Repeater. It was always paid for from his budget but was not budgeted for.

No increases in salary due to negotiations going on at this time.

Ellen asked if their goal is to maintain the staffing level and she knows that there was a study that was to be done.

Ray stated that he is not looking to add an officer at this time. He then explained that the study that was to be done needed information that the current software was unable to produce accurately. It was found out through a similar study being done in another town that the information needed was not being produced accurately.

Ray has contacted Charlie Sherwood and he will send a detailed explanation as to why a hold is being put on the study. Ansonia went through this and it is basically using officer generated time. The software can not break down the information of the officer time. The time would be inflated and benefit the police department but it would not be accurate.

Ellen asked Ray about the Dispatcher overtime requested is lower than what is projected for this year.

Ray explained that it is due to being short a dispatcher this year and for next fiscal year anticipating a full staff.

Joe Dey asked about the Communications – Telephone this year's budget is \$30,000 the projected expense is \$26,774 and you are requesting \$30,000 again for next year. Ray explained that there is no contract currently for telephones and there are expenses that are incurred and increases that come along.

Joe also asked about the increase in Repair & Maintenance –Vehicles. Ray explained that it is anticipated repairs to the fleet. There are several old cars that have not been replaced. There are more vehicles being used for Private Duty service.

Andrew Esposito asked what the uniform allowance is per officer. Ray stated that it was \$925.

Joe asked about the budget for Police Officer Salaries being \$1,425,960 and projected expenditures to be \$1,247,166 and you are requesting \$1,425,960 again next year.

Tony explained that you budget for a full complement of officers and due to staff shortage the projected expenditure is less than the budgeted amount. If we do not budget for a full complement of officers, it looks like we are cutting an officer.

When an officer is out on worker's compensation, the Town makes their salary whole for 15 months. The Town pays the difference between what the salary is and what comp pays them.

Beth asked if there are still two dispatchers on every shift. Ray stated that they try to keep two dispatchers on the primary shifts (during the day and evening shifts). They are down one dispatcher at this time.

The SSV (Special Services Vehicle) is a vehicle that allows the accident investigator to bring all the equipment he may need to complete the investigation. When the officers go to the range, there is a lot of equipment that needs to go – the ammunition and all of the long guns. This was they will not have to use four or five cars to get to the range with the equipment. Also, during storms the road barricades can be put in this vehicle for use.

The LPR (License Plate Reader) was approved by the Police Commission and they are now about the only department that does not have one. They can read a license plate and get information on registration, if there are warrants for the operator, etc. This is something that would be a good purchase with asset forfeiture funds.

Anthony Anastasio asked about the performance indicators and it looks like the stops will be increasing about 30% across the board, why? Ray reported that they will be getting a few young and aggressive officers who will be looking for these stops.

Andrew asked if there is still an officer at Beecher and at Amity. Ray responded that they are still at both schools. Officer Lynch at Beecher teaches the DARE program and teaches internet safety. He attends a lot of the after school programs and promotes a good relationship with students and parents. Good policing includes building trust of the community. What better way than doing what Officer Lynch is doing at Beecher. They are doing great community policing.

### **Fire Commission**

Chief Sean Rowland and Commission Chair Elia Alexiades presented a budget of \$770,222 which represents an increase of 10.10%.

Sean reviewed the budget and explained that Regular Clerical represented the addition of a full time administrative assistant position and the part time clerical went to \$0.

Part Time All Other is for the engineers that do the repairs of the vehicles they are anticipating an additional \$500 expense.

Data Processing – they are anticipating this to be \$20,000 for next year. That is the projected expense for this year and their budget was approved for \$16,000.

Medial Expense - \$4,000 increase due to addition of four volunteers and all physicals of current volunteers

Repair and Maintenance of Machine & Equipment – Sean stated that this is a difficult line to budget for because of the age of the equipment.

Repair & Maintenance – Vehicle – this is the testing line that does annual DOT inspections and other testing.

Repair & Maintenance – Building – All the maintenance contracts with the building, the fire alarm, the oil/water separator pumping.

Communications – Security will increase due to adding the public works building on to the S2 system.

Professional Development – Training – EMT certifications are expiring for some of the men and they have to be re-certified.

Programs and Publicity – this is strictly for the public. Buys the red fire hats, coloring books and crayons for the fire prevention program.

Tire – this line fluctuates every few years. Tires on the equipment must be replaced every 7 years regardless is whether they are good or bad. They check the date codes on the vehicle ties and they have to replace them 7 years after the date code. They buy the tires wherever they get the best price.

Elias stated that the tires that come off the vehicles are still in good shape so they donate them to public works for their use. They are not public safety and they don't have that 7 year mandate to abide by.

Susan asked if the tires can be purchased via state bid. Sean will look into this.

Matt asked Sean about the oil tank that is at the fire station. Sean stated that it is still in the ground and there is oil in it and he thinks they can pump it out for use elsewhere. They also talked about putting in another diesel tank using that tank so they can fill the trucks up. It could also be used in case of emergency to fill other trucks. Elias stated that they would rather repurpose it than go through the expense of removing it. Elias stated that when we have a blizzard and are shut down for days, it would help to have this tank to help with other town vehicles.

Sean stated that Hydrants need to be changed from \$77,458 to \$84,468. RWA have gone up on their rates for the last three years. RWA could not tell them last year for budget if they were increasing rates. They went up about 7.5% in July and they said the rates will go up in July, but they do not know how much. This increase will cover the increase this fiscal year and anticipated FY17 increase. The rate is not based on water used it is based on feet of pipe. There are 135 hydrants in town. Sean said it sounds like a lot but it only covers 8% of the town.

Matt asked about the swimming pool guys that fill up their trucks. They fill up on their own and they are issued a permit every year, the permit cost is \$100. It is based on the amount of gallons they use and it is based on the honor system. A few years ago, RWA wanted them to go to a metered hydrant where they punch in a code. The problem with that is, there are the Woodbridge residents who want to fill their pool and the closest metered hydrant is in Cheshire and they would be charged the additional fee for trucking the water from Cheshire to Woodbridge.

Sean stated if there is a bad winter and snow plows or pay loaders knock over hydrants we have to pay for it. A fix is between \$500 and \$6,000. If we know who did it, we can go after their insurance to pay.

Sean stated that the projected total would be \$770,586 and the requested would be \$770,232.

Ellen stated that she got a letter from a resident showing a picture of a Woodbridge hydrant and an Orange hydrant and how nice the Orange hydrants were painted. Ellen didn't realize that we had as many hydrants as we do.

Sean reviewed the capital outlay. The rescue roof saw is about ten years old and needs to be replaced. Rescue K12 Saw is a circular saw that will cut through shingles and concrete. Hazmat Decontamination Pool needs to be replaced as it has a few holes in it. This is used a few times a year after a hazmat call the firefighter gears up in a white or yellow hazmat suit and after the incident is over they need to be cleaned up and rinsed off and the suit is thrown away. If the water is contaminated DEEP will help in disposal. Bullex Fire Trainer - This is used in training and it simulates a fire. It comes with a hose and it rains the firefighter in how to put out a fire. Uses infra-red light instead of using water. They get the experience just like they were fighting a fire.

Minitor Replacement - this is the replacement program. This is the gadget they carry to be notified of a fire. They replace 5 or 6 each year.

Anthony Anastasio asked why the projection is 20% less in responses. Sean stated that the numbers were entered incorrectly.

Joe Dey asked about the Gas line, most departments are coming in with a reduced gas amount. Tony stated that he normally goes through those lines and adjust based on the bid price.

## **Public Works**

Warren Connors presented a budget request of \$1,341,739 which represents a decrease of .26%.

Engineering line item of a projected expense of \$10,800 and then we dropped it back to our normal request of \$6,000 for FY17. This was due to engineering work for speed humps.

Rental –Equipment – Warren is showing a reduction but won't have final numbers until we go out to bid. Sweeping services is included.

Highway Maintenance – the cost of salt has increased and he is carrying those numbers over to next year.

There was no hard information for utilities and he thinks there may be a decrease in those accounts.

On the last storm, the trucks were loaded prior to the storm and when the guys came in they were able to go right out on their routes.

Maria asked if during long storms, do the men sleep in the building during their breaks. Warren stated that there is some furniture that some sleep on, some sleep in the truck and others live close enough to go home. The last storm, the men were there about 24 hours.

Warren has increased his request for tree work due to the number of diseases infesting the trees.

### **Waste Management**

Warren presented a budget of \$503,418 which represents a decrease of 3.24%.

The tonnages have been adjusted for current use. The tip fees are currently \$61.50 and that is down from previous years.

### **Remediation**

Warren presented a budget of \$12,000 which is a 65.71% decrease in that budget. It is nice getting positive results in the well testing.

### **Country Club of Woodbridge**

Tony presented a budget of \$96,500 which represents use of the country club through December 31, 2016 and resulted in a decrease of 18.34%. The rest of the utilities and maintenance are for minimal use of facility starting with January 2017. Tony stated that once the decision is made on direction we will go in, these numbers can be adjusted.

Ellen stated that if we decide to continue with the country club, Billy Casper is interested in continuing with the contract. Ellen stated that there are boards and commissions that have asked for updates and Tony will be presenting information that the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance have already received. This way the other boards and commissions can hear the updates and they have an opportunity to present any questions or ideas for the Board of Selectmen.

### **Board of Selectmen**

Tony presented a budget of \$483,459 which represents an increase of .46%. Tony reported a small increase in Regional Services.

---

## **Employee Benefits**

Tony presented a budget of \$4,308,676 (7.46% increase) – this covers the employee benefits for all town employees and does not include the Woodbridge board of ed or Amity. It includes all benefits provided including Social Security and Medicare, health insurance, pension, the OPEB contribution amount, and workers compensation.

The items that are not final are the retirement accounts because we haven't received the amount from the State. This is a pool we belong to with several other municipalities. This a State-administered plan that we contribute to and it is the best funded plan because we all pay for it and State doesn't contribute.

Health Insurance is not final due to the current contract negotiations with the unions. Matt asked if our current health plan is considered a Cadillac plan. Tony stated that it would have been along the current trend be a Cadillac plan in two years. Matt asked if people retire, do they get this Cadillac plan. Tony stated that when they retire, they retire with the plan in effect. If there is a Cadillac tax, we would pay it only until the retiree reaches age 65.

Matt stated that it is a shame that someone who is not looking to retire are retiring because of losing a good health plan.

Workers Compensation will not be final until later.

## **Board of Finance**

Tony presented a budget of \$796,746 which is a 68.72% increase. This is mostly due to the fact of negotiations and this represents two years of increases. Any item that is related to salary including FICA and Medicare and pension are included in the contingency.

Tony stated that hopefully we will have negotiations resolved before the budget process is over.

## **Information Systems**

Tony presented a budget of \$117,983 which represents an increase of 3.08%. There is an increase in the Telephone line for the high speed internet via the Nutmeg Network.

## **Animal Control**

Tony presented a Woodbridge budget request for Animal Control of \$104,723 which represents an increase of 1.44%. Animal Control consists of Bethany, Derby and Woodbridge. This budget is constructed with the benefits included because it is billed to other towns. There are on-going negotiations on the payment from Derby and Bethany. They are also looking to add another town or two and that is not final.

Ellen stated that Tony came up with various ways of calculating the proportionate payments and no matter what way it was done, Derby is higher. Derby has acknowledged that there is an in balance, but they haven't agreed as to how much more they should pay. To date, they have only paid what they were billed last year; they haven't paid their full amount for this fiscal year.

## **Revenue**

Tony reported that he has some very preliminary numbers for revenue and one reason is that the Grand List is not ready yet. Tony expects the Grand List to be completed on January 29<sup>th</sup>. The revenue does not take into consideration the new car tax cap legislation implications. The Governor's budget will come out next week. We will then get more information on the car tax implication and the inter-governmental revenue.

The car tax cap is set at 32 mills. Ellen stated that the State is trying to even out the tax on cars. Tony will run the budget both ways, for the tax cap. Most people identify with the mill rate for the house. Next year, the cap goes down a mill rate of 29.

Ellen stated that the rationale is that there is an appearance of having the same car on one street and the same car on another street over in another town paying much more in taxes on the same vehicle. It is a perceived inequality and it is one that is very difficult to correct.

Meeting ended at 7:40 pm

Respectfully submitted,

*Karen Crosby*

Karen Crosby  
Budget Analyst