



THE TOWN OF WOODBRIDGE JOINT BOARD OF SELECTMEN / BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 31, 2017

A Joint Board of Selectmen / Board of Finance Meeting for the Town of Woodbridge was held in the Central Meeting Room at the Town Hall, Woodbridge, Connecticut on Tuesday, January 31, 2017 at 6:00 pm

PRESENT

BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

Deputy Selectman, Beth Heller; Anthony Anastasio;
Susan Jacobs

PRESENT

BOARD OF FINANCE:

Chairman, Matthew Giglietti; Vice Chairman, Sandy Stein;
Karen Cusick; Andrew Esposito; Paul Kuriakose

ALSO PRESENT:

Administrative Officer / Director of Finance, Anthony
Genovese and Budget Analyst, Karen Crosby

PUBLIC WORKS

Warren Connors presented a budget request of \$1,464,851; which is a 12.27% increase over FY17. Matt asked Warren to review the Rentals line in the budget. Warren explained that this is due to the tree program. The ash trees in town are problematic and have been aggressive this year in addressing them. He started the year with a list of 300 trees and the budget for trees have been expended and they have only been addressed a third of the list. The department is trying to address the high risk areas as priority. There is currently a problem in New York with oak trees and that may migrate to Connecticut. Maple trees are also declining. The ash tree is the biggest problem right now. He has increased the request for the tree work. The Town is responsible for 10' from the edge of the road. Warren is asking for an increase of \$40,000 for the tree work.

Matt mentioned that all the members received a copy of a letter from Michael Luther regarding the ash trees and supporting the increase in his budget for tree work.

Sandy asked Warren to explain the shift in personnel in the department. Warren explained a realignment of the department. They have taken on building maintenance and parks. Tony Genovese stated that the Parks and Building Maintenance are now under Warren's jurisdiction. Instead of a Parks Director, there is a Public Works Foreman and the Parks Director was not replaced.

Tony Anastasio stated that the Personnel Committee addressed this a few months ago, then it went before the Board of Selectmen and Tony had presented a good organizational chart that shows the department as it is now. Tony Genovese will provide that chart for the Board of Finance.

Warren reported that the bid has been opened for the sweeper and they are reviewing the responses and will be making a recommendation to Tony.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Warren presented a budget request of \$511,865 which is a 2.55% increase over FY17. Warren reported that the Town is in the third year of a three year contract with our hauler. Warren has estimated fee increases and included them in this budget request.

Things are going very well at the transfer station. The new office manager is working with the State for programs for the transfer station on improving recycling.

Matt stated that it is a well- run operation. The guys there are helpful. He has seen people struggling to take things out of their vehicles and the guys are right there to help.

REMEDITIATION

This budget is now at zero. There is no testing required.

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Chief, Sean Rowland presented a budget request of \$815,809 which is a 9.25% increase over FY17.

Sean reported that after the budget was submitted they were able to review and come in with some better numbers, he listed the following changes:

- 52225 – Volunteer Incentives could be reduced to \$70,000 (-\$10,000)

Matt asked Sean what happens when someone is no longer active in the department. Sean stated that they have a retired status that has minimums they have to make. Anyone after 25 years of service can remain active or go into retired status when they can no longer do firefighting operations any longer. They could still come and dispatch and do other things around the fire house. Currently fire fighters have to make 20% of fire calls, 50% of meetings, 50% of truck crews, and 50% of training. At retired status, the requirements are cut in half, but they have to meet the minimums. When someone in a retired status can't make it any longer, they do not get the incentive.

- 53520 – Repair & Maint – Testing could be reduced to \$29,000 (1\$1,000)
- 54220 – Communications-Cellular could be increased to \$12,500 (+\$3,000)
- 54710 – Programs and Publicity could be reduced to \$4,500 (-\$4,500)
- 55111 – Computer could be reduced to \$8,000 (-\$3,000)
- 55245 – Hydrants could be reduced to \$84,468 (-\$2,657)
- 57410 - Can reduce by \$13,000 so the line would be \$12,304

BORD OF FINANCE

The budget request is \$246,974 for a decrease of 65.78%

BENEFITS

Tony presented a budget request of \$4,263,510 for a decrease of 1.05%

The health insurance is a conservative estimate for an increase. The Town and Police have decreased while the Retiree has increased. Under the retiree there are 44 members over 65 that has just the Medicare supplement for \$270,000, the under 65 is 28 members and it is over \$500,000. There are a number of people who have just retired that fit into the under 65 number. Currently there are only a few people left who would be costly for benefits upon retirement.

Going forward, if you are hired after a certain the employee would not be eligible for benefits after retirement.

Sandy asked how the OPEB is used. Tony stated that the fund is about 60% funded. The idea is for the Town to get to the point where the OPEB contribution is the only thing you have for healthcare for retirees and you fund it similar to a pension where you use interest in the fund to control costs. There would no longer be a cash contribution which is what the budget line for retirees is currently. The fund is invested and overseen by the Investment Committee. Tony stated that in the next five years the Town should see a significant improvement.

Sandy asked if you remove the retiree benefits; what the benefit rate would be for current employees. Tony stated that he would have to calculate it.

Matt stated the healthcare after retirement is what is hurting municipalities.

DEBT SERVICE

Tony presented a budget request of \$2,844,911 which is an increase of 5.06%.

Sandy stated that the chart that Tony provided for them is really helpful.

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Tony presented a budget of \$578,753 which shows an increase of 20.13%. This is due to half of Tony's salary being split between the Board of Selectmen budget and Finance Department budget. The salary is a 50-50 split.

FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Budget request of \$289,267 which is a 16.53% decrease due to the split of Tony's salary with the Board of Selectmen budget.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Budget request of \$122,224 which is an increase of 10.80% increase. Tony reported that we are awaiting the report from the IT committee with their recommendations. Tony understands that the report is in the final draft form and that they are planning to report to the Board of Selectmen in February. This report may require adjustments to this budget.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Tony presented a budget of \$102,941 which is a decrease of .82%. Derby is no longer with the system and Seymour has joined.

There are plans to renovate the facility and there is a grant in the amount for \$400,000 and there is a drive to match that amount with donations for a total of \$800,000 for the renovation. Once the renovation is complete, there is a good chance to bring on another town.

Tony reported that the revenue is not yet ready; he is waiting to hear what the Governor's budget will be.

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Crosby

Karen Crosby
Budget Analyst