

EAST LYME BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 15, 2018

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
Feb 21 2018 AT 10:26
Brenda O. Hamer ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

MINUTES

PRESENT: Marc Salerno, Rose Ann Hardy, Kevin Seery, Mark Nickerson, Dan Cunningham and Paul Dagle
ALSO PRESENT: Anna Johnson, Mike Finkelstein, Mike Macek, Dan Price, Joe Perkins, Chris Taylor, Steve Wargo and Bill Rix

Mr. Nickerson called the Special Meeting for the purpose of Budget Reviews to order at 6:01 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Police #216

Chief Finkelstein and Sgt. Macek were in attendance to speak on this budget. Also in attendance were Chairman Dan Price and Commission member Joe Perkins of the Police Commission. Chief Finkelstein addressed the Board and reported that they had worked hard keep the budget as close to status quo as possible and still maintain services. He noted that they came in with less than 1% increase in their budget. Notable items that affected the budget this year were the new facility rental fees to the Waterford Police Department and the secretarial line item has increased with the addition of a part-time secretary in the evenings. Also, now that there is a part-time secretary, the full-time secretary has been taking some of her accumulated vacation time. Mr. Nickerson noted that this is the last budget that we will see the line item for the resident state trooper. Mr. Salerno asked how they are trending with training, and the Chief responded that they are a little below where they should be, but the biggest challenge will be to get some of the younger officers up to speed on the level of training that our seasoned officers have. Over the next few years there is a potential of numerous retirements so they need to start preparing the younger officers to bring them up to that level of expertise. Mrs. Hardy inquired about the Overtime line time for the police boat. Chief stated that we work closely with Waterford to make sure that all shifts are covered by two officers seven days a week, preferably one from each town. Chief Finkelstein reported that line item #331 scheduling software is a necessary expense to update the existing system. This new software will be more efficient and will work with our payroll software. Line #332 Towing is for expenses incurred with impounded vehicles. Mr. Nickerson asked the Chief to share his future vision for the department and budget. Chief Finkelstein reported that the Police Commission is currently conducting a study on personnel needs, and that report will be brought to the BOS at an upcoming meeting for discussion. There are five supervisory staff that are in the timeframe of retirement in the next few years, so they need to start training and preparing younger officers for those roles. Mr. Nickerson inquired if adding two full time officers would reduce overtime costs; and Chief Finkelstein responded that it would take hiring six full time officers to effectively reduce overtime. Line item #226 Animal Control is a shared service with Waterford; wages, uniforms and training are split 50/50. The mobile phone is shared and handed off to the employee on each shift. Chief Finkelstein stated that they are considering adding a per diem position to help cover shifts, and this will not add any cost to the budget. Mr. Nickerson stated that there has been discussion about possibly looking into a shared facility with Waterford, New London and possibly Montville. The current facility is below standard and a new facility is inevitable. Line item #215 dispatch has been moved out of the Emergency Management budget and into the Police budget. Chief Finkelstein reported that there are currently four full time dispatchers and a number of part time. Ideally the dispatch center should be staffed twenty-four hours a day seven days a week by two full time dispatchers. He also noted that our dispatchers are required to do EMD and that is not possible with only one person on a shift; two people per shift are required. The Chief believes this can be accomplished by adding two additional full time dispatchers. Mr. Nickerson noted that this current budget has been approved for one additional dispatcher now, but the topic is open for discussion should a way to fund an additional dispatcher comes to light. Mr. Nickerson thanked Chairman Dan Price and Commission Member Joe Perkins of the Police Commission for attending tonight's meeting in support of the Police budget.

Emergency Management #224

Chris Taylor was in attendance to speak on this budget, and noted that line item #213 is showing an increase specifically because of the schools project. Line item #348 increased for the first time in five years because of necessary battery replacements. It was reported that the Deputy Fire Marshal, Chris Taylor, is moving into the Fire Marshal position and the deputy position will not be filled. Chief Finkelstein will be appointed as the Emergency Management Director.

Niantic Fire Department #217

Chief Steve Wargo was in attendance to speak on this budget. Mr. Nickerson stated that he wanted to thank both of the fire department chiefs for their desire to work together. Chief Wargo stated that Ron Pringle will be retiring on March 30th, and a new full time fire fighter will be starting on April 2nd. He stated that he has a very old pumper that is going to need to be replaced, as well as two older buildings to maintain, but that he has managed to keep the budget steady. Mr. Nickerson asked for his vision over the next few years, and Chief Wargo responded that staffing is going to be at the top of the priority list. He reported that it is becoming increasingly difficult to rely on volunteer help and we will need to start staffing more full time fire fighters.

Flanders Fire Department #218

Chief Bill Rix was in attendance to speak on this budget, and he reported that his fire station also needs two new trucks soon. They have been saving money by having the Public Works mechanic do most of the maintenance, but the trucks are reaching the end of their life. He also reported that he too is experiencing difficulty in manning the fire house with volunteers. Mr. Nickerson noted that before coming before this Board tonight, all of the departments were asked to cut their budgets by five percent, and most were still able to come back with flat budgets.

Selectman's Review #101

Mr. Nickerson noted that because of the long time secretary in this office, the payroll line item went down, and that the line item for part time clerical will be increased to cover the Selectman's office when the executive assistant is out.

General Government / Miscellaneous #114

Ms. Johnson reported that in line item #123 workers compensation there is a 3% decrease in premiums over the current year due to a steady reduction in claims; and she noted that the 3% decrease includes the \$10,000 fee for the yearly audit. She reported that line item #124 Pension is under review and may be increased after the completion of the audit. Line item #127 Health/dental care is currently being reviewed and an RFP issued to seek out better rates. Line item #128 retirement liability is difficult to budget as employees don't always give advance notice to their intention to retire. Currently using a STEP system in which they receive 25% of accrued leave upon departure, then 50% the following July 1, and the remaining 25% the following July 1st after that. Line item #140 legal services is again very difficult to budget. Line item #290 insurance pd&l includes extra monies for deductibles. Mr. Nickerson reported that our Health & Safety Committee received a \$2,000 reward from CIRMA for doing an outstanding job; these funds will be utilized for our upcoming health and safety fair which is a very effective way of getting all employees together to complete necessary training. Mrs. Hardy asked if line item #238 conservation should be updated to be called Inland Wetlands Agency. Mr. Nickerson reported that line item #245 does include SEAT, but that he is not certain what the future of that line item is.

MOTION (1)

Mr. Seery Moved to adjourn the February 15, 2018 Special Meeting of the Board of Selectman at 7:25 p.m.

Seconded by Mr. Salerno. Motion passed 6-0.

Respectfully Submitted,



Sandra Anderson
Recording Secretary