

## **Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

### **January 9, 2007**

Those Present: Al DeVito - chair, Sharon Estrella, Richard Knabel and Brian Athearn

Guests: Bruce Stone, town accountant; Glenn Hearn, selectman

This meeting was taped for airing on MVTV

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m.

During tonight's meeting the fire and Emergency Management departments will review their proposed FY '08 budgets with the FinCom. Sharon recused herself for the discussion of the Fire Department budget since the chief is her husband.

**Fire Chief Manny Estrella** was the first to discuss his budget. Richard started by telling Manny that he had asked for a 3-year maintenance costs plan. Manny said that there really wasn't much of a change from year to year. He takes his maintenance costs from his budget. He spends about \$12,500 for building maintenance. Grounds maintenance is a separate item. Richard would still like to see a 3-year plan. In a review of the budget Manny explained that he had moved some items around to comply with town requests. This accounted for the fact that some line items varied significantly from this year to the proposed FY '08 budget. The only considerable change in the proposed FY '08 budget is in the chief's salary. Al noted that Manny had not requested a raise in about five years. Manny presently works 40-50 hours a month primarily on paperwork. This does not take into account the time spent on calls and inspections. The department receives app. 200 calls a year averaging an hour per call. These calls include actual fires, false alarms and burn permits.

The only income the department receives is from inspections. Smoke/CO2 alarm inspections bill out at \$50 each; oil burner inspections bill out at \$40. The state now requires all new buildings have CO2 alarms. Manny estimates that 70% of inspections at this point are for liquid propane. This money goes into the general fund.

Al asked what was included in the education line. This is for books and materials for required classes. The line "other property services" is used for purchasing fire equipment. Manny said there is a need to replace outdated air packs. He has applied for a grant for this, but if he doesn't get it he will move money around to replace 4 or 5 each year.

Richard moved to accept the Fire Department budget, Brian seconded. The motion passed 3-0.

#### **Minutes:**

The minutes of the November 12 and 18 meetings were approved.

#### **Bruce Stone:**

Bruce informed the committee that the budgets from the police and highway departments were close to being finalized and that those departments would probably want to meet with the selectmen first. The Affordable Housing committee should have its budget in by tomorrow.

Bruce has placed all the new items at the end of the first 3 pages. He has the second quarter YTD figures including all the appropriated amounts.

**Budget Schedule:**

Al informed the committee that the police, personnel and conservation departments would have to be rescheduled. Also, the Regional Housing Committee would like to meet.

The warrant closes the third Wednesday in February. Richard wants to have the recommendations of the FinCom publicized in a way that would inform the public before the town meeting. He mentioned the possibility of an insert in the papers or an ad. Al did not feel an ad would be readable since there is so much information to be printed. Al asked that there be discussion of publicity at a future meeting.

Al will rework the schedule of meetings with departments trying to keep to Tuesdays, but there might be the necessity for meetings on other days.

**Correspondence:**

School superintendent Dr. James Weiss submitted two version of a proposed warrant article that would change the manner in which capital costs are calculated. He would like to have the FinCom's preference.

Al questioned Glenn Hearn concerning a legal bill he had received. Glenn will check with Jen Rand and get back to him.

**Chris Cini, Emergency Management Director:**

Brian began by asking Chris how much of his proposed budget had been predefined by the former director. Chris stated that the '07 figures had been set before he assumed directorship and that he had used the former director's figures as a benchmark. Richard noted that the only revenue was in the form of a grant. Chris said that grant is very scattered is not a reliable steady source of income. Emergency Management grants seem to be delayed and are hard to predict. The grant process is very fluid and many having matching gift requirements.

He discussed the Public Safety Information Project which is to be implemented in four phases and will replace the present system. This system will allow inter-departmental communication and instant access to information. Presently, 80 different agencies go through the Dukes County Dispatch Center. This is all being done with federal grants and if this is not done by '08 money could be withheld. In the future there will be maintenance fees for software. Al asked if the public education campaign was in the budget. Chris does not know the cost yet. Al asked what media would be employed. Chris thought it would be a multi-media event. Al commented that it did not seem to be very expensive or even not at all. Chris is not sure at this time.

Chris also discussed the storage problems he is facing for MREs (meals ready to eat) sent to him by FEMA. He has three pallets that need to be stored at a minimum of 40 degrees. He expects more pre-positioned supplies in the coming years. He must notify MEMA/FEMA if he uses any of the MREs. Brian asked if the county could reimburse for any storage needs. Chris said they are doing it now as a favor. They, too, have limited space.

Brian asked Chris how many hours a month he is working. Chris said he is working at least 60-70 hours.

Brian moved to accept the Emergency Management Department proposed FY '08 budget, Sharon seconded. The motion passed 4-0.

**New Business:**

All will have a draft report for the annual report in a week or so.

There being no other business, Richard made a motion to adjournment, Sharon seconded.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:48 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Nancy Rogers, Administrative Clerk