

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Lois Stearns, Dan Campbell, Bernhard Porada, Bonnie L'Etoile, Tony Matteo and Sue Kaczinski

**ALSO PRESENT:** Deb Mero, Town Accountant; Willie Morales, Town Administrator; Robert Leighton, Police Chief; Robert MacEwen, Board of Health Chair/Board of Assessors Co-Chair; and Bethany Walker, FINCOM secretary

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Stearns.  
This meeting was video recorded.

- **Transfer Request**

- Police Chief Robert Leighton submitted a Transfer Request from the Reserve Fund in the amount of \$5619.52.
  - Reason: The Plans to upgrade the IMC Mobile system had not been discussed until recently, long after the FY18 budget had been prepared and passed. This is a new county wide system that will allow officers to access information immediately. It will enable officers to complete incident and accident reports on the roadside, saving time and keeping officers visible and on patrol.
  - Chief Leighton provided his explanation to the need of this computer system.
  - Discussion included as to the need of it now vs. waiting until Town Meeting and possibly doing a Special Town Meeting before the Annual Town Meeting
  - **A motion was made by Campbell, seconded by Matteo and VOTED to approve the transfer in the amount of \$5619.52 to the Police Operating Expense account from the Reserve Fund.** In-Favor Votes: Stearns, Campbell, Porada, Matteo and Kaczinski. Opposed Votes: L'Etoile

6:24 Chief Leighton leaves FINCOM meeting

- **Board of Health Budget Request Presentation**

- MacEwen reviewed the increases/decreases to the Transfer Station Budget portion
  - Solid waste district assessment increased
  - New position of a Recycling Coordinator (MacEwen); MacEwen explained roll and duties
  - Total increase over last year's budget: \$8,906
- MacEwen reviewed the increases/decreases to the Board of Health
  - Adjustment to Secretary Wages; decrease, money not always used, hours worked do not add up to previous budget requested.
  - Advertising brought to \$0. MacEwen does not feel money is needed; such rare instances could be covered by other areas of budget.
  - Office supplies decreased by \$50
  - Animal Inspector decrease
- Capital Projects
  - MacEwen is looking to seek money from the State and/or Federal Government for a possible grant for a metal building, as opposed to asking the town for money.
  - Purchase 2 used vertical bailers
  - No capital projects for FY19

- **Board of Assessors update on Budget Request**

- Walker and MacEwen explained that the original request for the Assessors included \$1800 under the Capital Project for FY19 to cover the cost to purchase a copy of the Firstlight Assessment from the Town of Erving. Walker explained that money will actually be needed before July 1 and she had sat with Mero and the BOA department had enough funds to cover the \$1800.



- Stearns had brought up whether the Board of Assessors would like to move forward with increasing their budget by \$1500 under the Computer Support account to pay for online access to Property Record Cards. Walker stated that if there is enough money to do this, then yes, the board would like to have it, but if money is tight this could be the first to be let go of and can be revisited next year.

6:32 Mark Fortier and Tom Valley from EMS joins meeting

6:58 MacEwen leaves meeting.

- **EMS budget presentation**

- Fortier (EMS Chief) and Valley (new deputy Chief and paramedic) present the EMS Budget increases and decreases
  - Ambulance debt service now a part of the town's budgeting
  - Decline in anticipated revenue / overall call volume down (based on last year's figures)
  - Added money to wages to make a 2<sup>nd</sup> captain title. Previously had one captain responsible for both the building and vehicle maintenance but it proved to be too much for one person. Now the EMS will have a captain for Vehicle maintenance and a captain for Building maintenance.
  - EMS is in their 3<sup>rd</sup> and last year of the lease; estimating an increase in the rent. Short discussion on the possibility of purchasing the building. Fortier stated in all depends on Public Safety Facility and the status on that.
  - COG radio maintenance anticipated at \$3988
  - Matteo brought up a discussion about the possibility of merging with other communities. Thought has been entertained.
  - 2007 Van Ambulance is running good, low mileage; goal is to keep for another 10 years, unless operations change (i.e. merge with other communities)
  - Question was asked if Thomas Aquinas has approached EMS; No per Fortier

7:35 Fortier and Valley leave the FINCOM meeting

- **Building Inspector Budget**

- Morales increased the Building Inspectors budget by \$300 for office supplies
- Discussion on bringing up to the Selectboard whether we want to maintain our own building inspector vs. going with the COG. Morales looked into with the current building inspector the possibility of raising permit costs based on commercial vs. residential. Morales will still look into cost of going thru the COG for a building inspector to have figure available to FINCOM.

- **Dog Officer Budget**

- Morales stated that the Dog Officer budget would be level fund requested

- **Selectboard Accounts – based on the revision from 2/5/2018**

- Stearns wanted to revisit cell phones under the Selectmen's expense; was \$1776 now \$2500. Mero informed Stearns that this is for the hard lines not cell phones
- Morales' cell phone is under TA Expense Account under Telephone in the amount of \$612 (Verizon \$50.99 x 12 mos. = 611.88)
- Mileage is increased per Morales' contract (\$45 a month x 12 mos.)
- Computer Supply/Services increased due to the number of users.
- Finalized FRCOG Assessment for Northfield: 28,687
- Morales will send a total revised copy as changes have been made already several times since last print out. 2/27/2018 is last day for articles and Morales will have a better figure to give to FINCOM
- Pending figures for Street Lights

- Health Insurance discussion about the contingency amount. There is somewhat of a cushion in figure, Mero estimated perhaps (2) families.
- **Town Clerk and Town Accountant Budget**
  - Hold off until next meeting per Stearns
- **Estimate of Available Funds for FY19**
  - Mero reported an estimate of available funds.
  - 2-1/2% = 197,000
  - New Growth originally estimated at 100,000; however information from Assessors reporting on a figure of \$584,000 from WMECO/EVERSOURCE. There is some caution here as last year they reported a figure and then realized they provided the wrong figure.
  - Mero stated bottom line being, the omnibus being somewhat similar to last year, potentially the same amount of articles cost-wise (close to 1 million) could be presented and still be in the levy limit.
  - Free Cash is at 530,000
  - Mero has enough information in the omnibus to figure out COLA figures (should the FINCOM recommend). 1% COLA would amount to \$12,000 and a 2-1/2% COLA would amount to \$30,000.
  - Omnibus not finalized, pending several figures not yet available
- **MAIL**
  - Note from Rich Fitzgerald, Chair of Planning Board and submitted a decrease in the Planning Board budget. Morales noted that the Planning Board did not submit any articles.
- **MINUTES**
  - Minutes from the February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 to be reviewed at the next FINCOM meeting
- **MEETINGS ATTENDED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FINCOM**
  - Porada: No meeting of the Public Safety Facility scheduled at this time but hopeful to meet next week.
  - Matteo: Community Preservation Committee met. CPC had made their decision on 3 projects and determined how much to fund.
    - \$950 for a plaque to go on the 1<sup>st</sup> Fire Station in Town (currently the Boy Scout House)
    - \$25,000 towards the cost of running wires underground at the South/West corner of the Town Hall
    - \$30,000 towards the cost of a new “older kids” play structure at the Northfield Elementary School
    - Matteo stated they submitted article for these projects as well as an article to change the CPA amount from ½% to 1%
- **NEXT MEETING**
  - 3/5/18 6pm

*A motion was made by Matteo, seconded by Campbell and VOTED unanimously to adjourn the FINCOM Meeting.*

**Meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm**

Submitted by:

Bethany Walker

FINCOM Secretary

Approved On: 3-5-18

Approved By: Lois M Stearns