

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SPECIAL BUDGET WORKSHOP MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 2019
8:30 A.M. – COMMUNITY CENTER**

First Selectman Matthew Hoey called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Board Members: Matthew Hoey, Charles Havrda, Susan Renner,
Louis Federici and Sandy Ruoff

Town Officials: Board of Finance Members: Michael Ayles,
Veronica Wallace, Jonathan Trotta, Jeffrey
Beatty, Kenneth Gamerman, Kenneth
MacKenzie and Meghan Scanlon (joined the
meeting in progress). Finance Director Maryjane
Malavasi, Human Resources Director Mitch
Goldblatt, Clerk Traci Brinkman, Library Director
Rob McCooole and several members of the Library
Board and Friends of the Library. Joining the
meeting in progress: Human Services Chair Pam
Ellman, Parks and Recreation Director Rick
Maynard, Park Foreman Anthony Annicelli,
Recreation Supervisor Ellen Clow, Parks and
Recreation Commission Members Rose Dostert and
Claire Dunn, Police Chief Jeff Hutchinson, Deputy
Chief Butch Hyatt, Police Commission Chair Mike
Mikolay and Member Bob Welsh, Facilities
Engineer Steve Neydorff, Town Engineer Janice
Plaziak, Public Works Director Tom Fillion, PWC
Chair Mark Larkins and Member Richard Wallace,
Fire Chief Charles Herrschaft, Asst. Fire Chief
Mike Shove and Fire Commission Chair Ken
Wilson, Jr.

Media: Mike Graziano, taping for GCTV

1. To meet with the following town departments to discuss budget requests:

Library (Rob McCooole)

.5% or \$5,365 increase in budget

Mr. McCooole said the support they received from the Friends of the Library is exceptional. He added that last year they were able to cut \$15,000 from the previous fiscal year due to staffing

changes. He did not have the same opportunity in this budget. Mr. McCooole said he was able to reduce electricity which has been down because of energy upgrades. There was an increase in their copier cost when they joined with the town for the new copier lease. He added that there is also an increase in electronic materials for their digital circulation. Although their regular circulation has been holding steady, the demand for digital circulation has been increasing.

Mr. McCooole said they paid for professional carpet cleaning with private funds. They realized that this needs to be an annual event. They also have targeted maintenance to replace some carpet tiles. By doing these things they hope they can put off a full replacement.

Human Services (Pam Ellman)

3.5% or \$3,000 increase in budget.

Ms. Ellman focused on a few agencies. She explained that Literacy Volunteers was back this year requesting funding. They have a new executive director and served 26 Guilford residents last fiscal year. Their services are free since their tutors are volunteers. The funds are used for training materials for additional tutors. They have requested the same amount from previous years.

She added that the VNA has a huge presence in Guilford. They are known for their home based nursing care. A total of 629 Guilford residents received home based nursing care. They have a new Hospice Program. In addition they have a Community Education Program and their Flu Clinics are another benefit to the community. They are requesting a \$500 increase in their funding.

Ms. Ellman said they are recommending a \$2,000 increase for the Women & Family Life Center. They provide legal and financial services, girls coaching, networking, abuse and mental health assistance for men and women.

Mr. Hoey noted that Lifelix is not included this year.

Ms. Ellman explained that while they didn't miss the application deadline, they did miss the presentation. Numerous opportunities were given to work with them, but in the end they could not make any more exceptions.

Ms. Renner said in addition to the value and benefit to the community, she asked how else the Human Service Council determines the amounts for the organizations.

Ms. Ellman stated that the VNA is a large organization and the amount they are given is a small amount compared to what their operating budget is. They try to measure the amount given with the number of residents served.

Parks and Recreation (Rick Maynard, Rose Dostert, Sue Robins)

3.6% or \$56,509 increase in the budget

Mr. Maynard gave a brief overview of the department and how many people they serve through their various programs.

He noted a number of budget areas that have gone down including Utilities, Building Maintenance and Ground Maintenance. Mr. Maynard said Grounds Maintenance has been reduced by \$45,000 with the expectation that his department will now handle trash removal. They did add in the new office trailer rental fee in here.

He added that field maintenance has increased since they are introducing higher quality clay to the fields. They have also been switching over a little bit to organic fertilizer. Except for salaries all the rest of the accounts are the same or have a small increase. Besides wages the remainder of his budget is decreasing by \$19,000.

Mr. Maynard then went over the salary accounts. The part-time salaries increase is due to a wage increase and increasing the hours of the kitchen staff to keep up with the meal demands. He added that the increase in full-time salaries is mainly due to an additional full-time maintainer. Mr. Maynard said the employees do a great job, but it is a struggle to keep the fields up and his department continues to take on more responsibilities. To soften the blow for the new position they feel they can take on trash removal. The salary without benefits is \$36,000 and he removed the \$45,000 trash contracting fee from his budget. They have had issues with all the trash companies they have used. Trash has been left behind and it has not been emptied on a regular basis. He added that his department can do a better job and they used to do it prior to contracting it out.

Mr. Maynard said they would also need a trash truck so the employees are not lifting the larger barrels. The new employee would only need to spend two days on trash removal and the other three days can help out with other things. Mr. Maynard stated that if his department does not get this position, they won't need the truck requested in capital, but the board would have to add back in the contractual services.

Mr. Hoey noted the number of complaints he received during the spring and summer concerning the trash on the Green. There was a discussion about workers' compensation injuries for employees doing this type of work and the need for the proper truck as well as the amount of barrels.

Ms. Renner asked if any line items in the budget were being offset by program fees.

Mr. Maynard said the fireworks for \$10,000 is one area. They also are taking \$6,000 for recreational supplies and equipment from the program fees. He added that in the future they are going to earmark particular fees, such as pickle ball fees, and those funds they would use for purchases associated with those things.

There was discussion about the upper Cox fields and the possibility of those being considered park fields and not school fields since they are not used by the school.

Police Department, Municipal Animal Control (Jeff Hutchinson and Mike Mikolay)

3.9% or \$188,721 increase in budget

Chief Hutchinson explained that all of the salary increases are contractually related.

Mr. Hoey understands the increase in traditional salaries, but he asked why there is a significant increase in replacement and overtime salaries.

Chief Hutchinson explained that overtime is for unanticipated police needs. It is for large investigations when they call in more bodies or a large event happens and an officer needs to remain over past his/her shift. It is unpredictable. When he calculates this he takes a three-year average and projects that against the fiscal year's salaries. Right now staffing is 100%, but since last year they had a supervisor out on injury and another has been injured for more than a year. Two have been in training since October and won't be on the road until June. They have been seven to nine officers down even though it looks like they are at full staff.

He added that by June he hopes to be fully staffed and on the street minus one injured officer.

Chief Hutchinson then went over some of the other lines items and noted a significant decrease in utilities.

Town Properties (Steve Neydorff)

5.3% or \$51,602 increase in budget

Mr. Neydorff noted that salaries increased per the GEA contract. Overtime is the same. Utilities is up a little since this department has taken over electricity for the 11 Water Street parking lot lighting and the car charging station as well as 52 Church Street. Street lighting is up a little and Fire Hydrants went up as well. Repairs and Maintenance is up \$5,000 because they have to rebuild all the sprinkler valves.

Engineering/Public Works (Janice Plaziak)

6.4% or \$20,789 decrease in budget.

Ms. Plaziak said there is a decrease in full-time salaries due to the changeover in her department. Contracted Services has increased because of the MS-4 permit. Her department will have to start doing storm water testing. She added that 200 locations may be to be tested and one of the tests has to be done by a certified lab.

There was discussion about the new permit requirements by the state.

Ms. Plaziak added that Hazardous Waste Disposal is going up significantly because HazWaste Central is anticipating Guilford participation is going to increase. The fact that the town is no

longer collecting waste oil and hydraulic fluid has caused an uptick for people to dispose of it at that facility.

There was discussion about the reason the town stopped collecting at the Transfer Station. Ms. Plaziak noted that one of the pick-ups was found to have PCB's and the town was charged so the load could be properly disposed. Since the town does not have a means to test every load brought to the facility, it is best for residents to utilize the HazWaste facility. She added that even HazWaste had a load that tested positive for PCB's. It's an industry wide issue.

Ms. Plaziak said road striping and signs has increased slightly. She added that the center of town needs to be refreshed. Vehicle maintenance has increased given the age of the vehicle she and the assistant town engineer are sharing. Overall, however, there is a reduction in the budget due to the new staffing.

Public Work (Tom Fillion, Mark Larkins)

6.9% or \$139,510 increase in budget.

Mr. Fillion noted that there are contractual salary increases. They also have three upgrades from Maintainer II to Maintainer III positions. There is a little increase in part-time salaries since the Stump Dump is now open six days a week in November. They also added in a couple of more hours for snow plowing since they are always over there.

Mr. Fillion said Building Maintenance is up since they have the Wash Bay issue. He added that they have to wash inside and use an environmental service to get rid of the wastewater.

There is also an increase in contracted services to increase the amount of time for the tub grinder rental.

There was also some discussion on summer and winter road maintenance.

Fire Department (Charles Herrschaft, Ken Wilson and Mike Shove)

3.6% or \$163,042 increase in budget

Mr. Wilson noted that they took the last three years of actual expenditures and used it as a starting point of where they should be. There is no additional manpower proposed. He added that they are over 300 calls ahead of last year in the same time period and they are about to hit 4,000 calls per year. Last year since they accepted the SAFER Grant you will see an increase in the salary lines. Mr. Wilson said their revenues target is \$855,000, which is down \$21,000 over last year, mainly due to Medicare reimbursement reductions.

Mr. Wilson noted that largest increase (\$134,444) is in full-time salaries and this is due to 8 Safer Grant personnel as well as IAFF contractual and management agreements. He added that replacement salaries is down since they are no manning two ambulances, they do not need to replace one when a second call comes in. Mr. Wilson then briefly went over the increases and

decreases in the remaining lines. He also briefly went over the Capital Request. There was discussion about performing an ambulance remount versus the purchase of a new ambulance.

Communications (Charles Herrschaft)

18.7% or \$109,334 increase in budget

Asst. Chief Shove explained that the consolidation of all cell phones and data management are now in one plan under the Communications budget. The bulk of the increase in this budget is in Full-time Salaries for a new Public Safety IT Position for Police and Fire.

This position would enhance communication sharing and upgrades to the Veoci system. It would add redundancy to the communication system. A lot of this was recommended in the Blum Shapiro study and necessary due to the increases in technology.

Mr. Hoey said he set up a working group based on the earlier technology efficiency study. This group came up with a solution to provide better IT coverage with all three entities. Currently police and fire are contracting out services. In addition this position would provide backup to the one IT person currently managing the town side by himself.

There was a discussion on the Veoci System.

Motion: Upon a motion made by Ms. Ruoff and seconded by Ms. Renner, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 p.m.

*Vote: In Favor: Hoey, Havrda, Renner, Federici and Ruoff
Opposed: None
Abstaining: None*

Respectfully submitted,

Traci K. Brinkman
Clerk
Board of Selectmen