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**MINUTES
OF THE
FINANCE COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2015
7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM
130 MAIN STREET, SANDWICH, MA**

Present: Gene Parini, Linell Grundman, Tom Hickey, Mike Dwyer, Rich Reilly, Mark Snyder, Bob Guerin and Jim Lehane

Absent: Matt Terry

Also Present: Town Manager George Dunham, Financial Director/ Town Accountant Doreen Guild; Chief of Police Peter Wack; Fire Chief William Carrico; Deputy Fire Chief J. J. Burke; Jim Kinsella of the Enterprise SCT

ITEM #1
CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

ITEM #2
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ITEM #3
REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes of Tuesday, February 3, 2015-

***MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. GRUNDMAN TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 3, 2015 AS PRESENTED. SECONDED BY MR. SNYDER
VOTE – MR. PARINI, MS. GRUNDMAN, MR. HICKEY, MR. REILLY, MR. SNYDER, MR. GUERIN AND MR. LEHANE IN FAVOR. MR. DWYER ABSTAINING**

Mr. Parini thanked the Police Chief Peter Wack, Fire Chief William Carrico and Deputy Fire Chief J. J. Burke for coming to this meeting.

ITEM#4
TOWN MANAGER UPDATES

The Special Town Meeting scheduled for Monday, February 9, 2015 was recessed and continued due to the weather to Monday, February 23, 2015 at 7 p.m. in the Sandwich High School Auditorium. The 'Declaration by the Town Moderator' dated February 9, 2015 and signed by the Town Moderator has been posted by a constable.

Overview of Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'16;

FY'16 Budget Totals; Board of Selectmen Workshop – Nov. 10, 2014 (GHD Draft 2/9/2015) Executive Summary including Initiatives # 1 & 2 for the Police & Fire Depts.

Mr. Dunham noted that the Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School should be voting their budget at the end of February or the first of March.

Referencing the most recent storms, Mr. Dunham mentioned that the larger storm made us realize we need new equipment.



Overview of the health insurance budget, the snow and ice deficit, damage to the Boardwalk and some of the walk ways to the beach. We have initial damage assessments that have to be submitted to MEMA and FEMA for storm related expenses. It is a very long reimbursement process. We have not received money from Sandy and NEMO yet. Mr. Dunham explained that if we get reimburse the same fiscal year that the money is expended, we can pay back the department(s) that incurred the expenses directly usually the DPW, Police and Fire Depts. If we receive reimbursement into the next fiscal year the money has to go into General Funds.

Discussion regarding funding for the Boardwalk.

Mr. Hickey – on the matter of the communications issue (for public safety) for about \$100,000 or more.
Mr. Dunham – yes, substantially more particularly as we will be getting better equipment if we get a new building. The equipment is less likely to go down if the public safety depts. are in a new location.

Mr. Parini on the matter of the \$1 million for beach re-nourishment...can you use those funds immediately?

Mr. Dunham – yes, we also use other funding to other town departments. About \$725,000 of the \$1 million would be committed.

Chief of Police Peter Wack offered a handout and gave an overview of his budget including department staffing, Cape Cod staffing comparisons, Capital Items, Budget Concerns, Future Personnel Request. Brief discussion on the matter of overtime costs for mandated training. The budget is \$200,000 over in the overtime account noting that one officer has been out of work for almost two years.

We have a Lieutenant who used to be a Sergeant who built the current computer system. We hope that in future budgets we would like to cover the position.

General overview of staffing and cruisers on the road etc.

Mr. Dunham – making inroads that we are asking for an additional detective position; joint civilian dispatch will allow us to put police officers out on the road. The Fire Dept. adding four EMS fire positions...all in the 4.25% budget submitted last week. More money should be put in the police for overtime...funding is the problem. We only go over in the overtime account trying to keep the minimum staffing. We have had some serious injuries with some of the employees. Former Chief of Police Mike Miller never had a full complement in ten years. We are always fighting that. We are paying for police to go to the academy and paying to fill the shifts.

Chief of Police Peter Wack noted that the recent storm impact to the stations...power went down in both headquarters and there was no heat. Communications went down. We relied on the AT&T generator at the water tower. Couldn't get the police department system up because it draws too much energy. We also relied on the State Police for help out. We don't want to have to wait for AT&T to come out to help us in an emergency situation.

Brief discussion regarding the number of cruisers the police department currently has on the road and the affordability of adding one more.

Discussion about the public safety communications system. It was noted that if we have a new building the generator that would support that building would also support the communications system.

Ms. Grundman asked if there is a 'Plan B' in case town meeting does not vote the safety building for the emergency communications. Can we just enrich the Reserve Fund to be sure we have the funding mechanism for the systems the town needs.

Mr. Parini asked for an explanation of the communications systems failure. Is there an issue with 911 if someone is calling in?

Chief Wack – we have kept the old system going and during NEMO we used every resource we had.

Mr. Guerin noted that with a \$72 million dollars budget we should be able to find the money for emergencies. Supports the position of the IT person but is the nature of the IT support...could this be contracted or out sourced or does it make more sense to keep it in house?

Chief Wack – We are currently it in house. The IT position could be overseeing several departments.

Mr. Guerin – is one IT position enough?

Chief Wack – Yes, thinks one is enough. The Town’s IT Director Mike Twomey has helped the public safety departments out in the past and feels sure that if an IT position for public safety needs any help Mike Twomey would be able to help.

Chief Wack noted that each cruiser has a tablet computer system and we have other computer systems that have to be maintained. The system is very specialized.

Mr. Dunham noted that we were trying to put about \$25,000 into this budget item incase Lieutenant Nurse, the computer person for the Police Dept., retires.

Mr. Guerin asked if it is possible to get a breakdown of the types of public safety calls and percentages.

Mr. Dwyer – referring to information offered by Chief Wack, noted that Bourne has forty-seven (47) officers full time and we have thirty-four (34) officers.

Chief Wack noted that that comparison was given in the hand out because the Town of Bourne has approximately the same number of square miles to cover as Sandwich.

Mr. Dwyer asked if training money could be taken out of the line item and put into the overtime account if you have predictable expenses...instead of overtime that is not a predictable expense.

Mr. Dunham noted that under tab #3 in the FY’16 Budget Binder, pages 46 & 47 show staffing comparisons for Sandwich, Yarmouth, Bourne, Mashpee and Duxbury. The Town of Yarmouth sends one check to their schools for paying their bills...the Town of Sandwich Accounting Office gets all the bills from the schools and makes out all the checks through the Accounting/Treasurers Depts.

Mr. Dunham offered that every five (5) years or so the Human Resources Dept. gets a consultant for comparing the municipal departments...not sure if the School Department does this also.

Brief discussion of the number of public safety vehicles in service and replacement.

Ms. Grundman asked if the IT person for the public safety in this budget?

Mr. Dunham noted that a half a person is included.

Mr. Parini – How does over time impact the stress level of the officers?

Chief Wack noted that he has never been at full staff in his department. It can be stressful.

Fire Chief William Carrico spoke about the Lucas Chest Compression Device (for CPR) which is standard gear now. Discussion regarding joint civilian dispatching and overtime. Would like to purchase some equipment to help the EMS personnel lift stretchers which could help eliminate some of the back injuries. There was approximately \$23,000 in overtime for the recent two-day storm. Chief Carrico reiterated information that was mention earlier that the Public Safety Depts. are at the mercy of AT&T in storm emergency situations. When the departments lost power recently due to the storms, tried to restart the battery many times. Have been looking into a new special battery as the backup to the generator...not just a car battery.

Regarding the proposed replacement of the radios, Chief Carrico noted that they are expensive but they are the best in the industry. It is anticipated that in a few years the state will be switching over to the digital system and every one of our radios will not work because we are analogue. We need to be ready for the switch over. Chief Carrico noted that there is no plan, that he is aware of, for the state to help communities to switch over. We should start with updating our batteries and then move forward. The Ambulance Fund, which is currently at about \$1.2 million, is often used to replace equipment. We have not increased our ambulance rates over many years. We keep most everything operational in house. We get some grant money and keep it operational trying not to have it cost the town anything. The ISO (Insurance Services Organization) just looked at the Town and our ISO rating went from a 4/9 to 4/8, which means a lower insurance rating. Deputy Chief Burke is extremely diligent at fire prevention efforts. We are mostly an EMS department...the number of fires is down.

Mr. Dunham noted that the budget is proposing four new FF/EMT’s.

Discussion on Fire Dept. overtime.

Mr. Dunham noted that he interacts a lot with other communities. Chief Carrico and Chief Wack as well as Deputy Chief Burke work well with our other departments. This is not always the case.

In response to Mr. Parini's question about the number of ambulances on the road, Chief Carrico noted that there are four ambulances on the road...two at Forestdale, one at East Sandwich and one at the main station.

Ms. Grundman – about \$23,000 was the cost of a recent storm...is that potential reimbursement money?

Mr. Dunham – yes, but probably not this year.

Ms. Guild – reinforced...not this year.

Ms. Grundman – grant program for replacing equipment...is there anything like state support in terms of legislation?

Chief Carrico – Nothing that I am aware of.

Mr. Dunham noted that if you drive by the water tower near the Human Services Building, it is like a metal storage building...with our radio equipment, generator etc.

Mr. Parini asked about grant money for staffing and maintenance of equipment.

Chief Carrico noted that they apply every year for grant money. It covers some of the fuel costs that are pretty expensive. We have staff that train for the emergency/rescue boat in 12' seas. We can be used by Home Land Security. Thirty percent of the Fire Dept. staff is boat qualified.

It was noted that the Department of Public Works and the Recreation Departments will be coming in in two weeks on the 24th of February. There is no meeting next week (Feb. 19th due to the School Vacation).

ITEM #5 **FINANCE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

School Budget Discussion-

Mr. Parini noted that recommendations on the budgets need to be given to the Board of Selectmen by April 1. Has received some very good thoughts from the members of the FinCom. Would like to see the FinCom have a recommendation on the MOU on the Wing School. South Sandwich Village (SSV) - would like to take a look at the impact analysis and make a recommendation.

Mr. Snyder noted that he was very impressed with both Public Safety presentations and thinks we are in good hands and fiscally responsible.

Ms. Grundman asked if Mr. Parini wants Committee members to submit potential recommendations to him directly.

It was noted that they will be discussed and it will be on an agenda to vote the recommendations.

School Budget Discussion-

Mr. Parini noted that there is still a lot of discussion to be had. We have heard talk about the school savings do to the Wing School closure, but he still has a hard time with it.

Mr. Reilly noted as well that we were going to get significant savings from the Wing School closure. Mr. Parini offered that he has done some calculating and still doesn't have a good handle of what that savings number is.

Ms. Grundman spoke about the percentage increase over the last year's budget. Thinks the savings is important to talk about...she doesn't see it either. They are now pursuing increases in staffing. This is going to be complicated. Is there really savings in closing the Wing School? Doesn't think we are going to see it in the closure budget.

Mr. Snyder noted that at the work shop we asked for a list of school employees and positions...we have not received that from the School Department yet. We have received it from the Police and Fire. We need to see current list of employees. Positions this year compared to last year.

Mr. Parini noted that the Town Manager has always had a complete list of staffing for the Municipal Departments. The School Department has issued the 'program and staffing report'...we have not been given a list of employees and enrollment. Some of the frustration is that we don't have a clear picture and we don't have a complete picture of the closing of the Wing School. It will be difficult to make a recommendation on the school budget.

Ms. Grundman noted that the school department numbers are by schools in some way and by departments in other ways. We cannot force them to calculate the way we want them so.

Mr. Dwyer doesn't think it is that complicated. Thinks we have a structural issue between the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee and School Committee. Suggested we need to have a conversation with the Board of Selectmen because they are the ones in the town that are elected and they have the power to support the Chartered. Has talked with committee members about changes to the Charter. We need to have a conference to level the playing field. Where is the savings at the Wing School; let's not forget the cost to reposition the other two schools (Forestdale and Oak Ridge) and cash to support the MOU. Would like to have that all made public. We need to make it less complicated by having a conversation with the right people. We need the information more transparent than what we have seen in the past.

Mr. Parini noted that the Town Charter was recently re-done.

Mr. Dwyer – if we want to have some new initiatives to provide better credibility, service to the town, we need to have Board of Selectmen and School Committee discussions or we will continue to have these frustrations and conversations each year.

Mr. Snyder asked if there has been any talk of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman from each Board/Committee speaking with each other off line...What the Board of Selectmen would like and what is comfortable with each board?

Ms. Grundman – It would have to be posted when it is leadership...it does need to be a posted meeting. Some towns have a budget steering committee.

Mr. Dwyer noted that the School budget discussion is a major issue...under 'office supplies' how do they purchase that...does everyone purchase from the same supplier?

Mr. Dunham noted that W.B. Mason is on the County bid list and other purchases are made from the State bid list.

Ms. Grundman spoke about foundation funding noting that on Saturday the Mass. Commission of Foundation Funding came to Cape Cod. We should write a letter that speaks to changes in foundation funding. It could make a difference to our overall municipal funding. The formula in 1993 only took into account real estate not money income. Will work with Mr. Parini to put the letter together. This year there could be some important progress in amending the process. Will be encouraging the Board of Selectmen to send a letter also.

Mr. Dunham noted that Assessing will be coming in. The Committee can learn about how assessments are done and how it translates into our tax rate and PILOT money.

Capital Budget – Mr. Dunham noted that once this budget is done Mr. Lapp will be coming in...he has been spearheading that.

Mr. Dwyer asked, referencing the Capital Budget, would it be helpful to have the Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPA) come in. Could we have a discussion on how this capital plan compares to last year's plan and future plans...how does it relate to our Long Range Plan (LRP). The SSV (South Sandwich Village)...is that our prevue? Mr. Dwyer was asked to be on the pre-selection committee to figure out who would be selected for the SSV project

Mr. Parini – It has a huge impact on the town or potential for a huge impact what would be the anticipated revenues over time as opposed to the impact on our Police & Fire and roads. Is it really a plus or a minus...we really don't know 'til we see the estimates. Impact analysis is important. Thinks that it is important that the committee sees that information.

Mr. Snyder – The Town Manager and Board of Selectmen chose that group. The forms that have been filled out have all this information such as revenues and employees etc. You can look at it if you want on line. Not sure what relevance there would be for us to make a recommendations on something the Board of Selectmen have already decided.

Mr. Parini noted that it is our opportunity to look into things a little bit more. It is incumbent upon us to have a role to look at it.

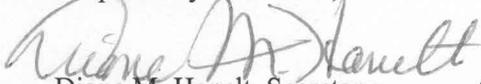
Mr. Dunham noted that the SSV group will be submitting information to the Cape Cod Commission for their permitting process. Once they show that information to the Cape Cod Commission they will have to show all their needs etc. We are just going by what they gave us. It will show a lot more when they file for the permits with the Cape Cod Commission. Principal Assessor Ed Childs will be prepared to talk about this when he comes in.

ITEM #6
ADJOURN

9:25 p.m.

***MOTION TO ADJOURN WAS MADE BY MR. SNYDER. SECONDED BY MS. GRUNDMAN VOTE – UNANIMOUS.**

Respectfully Submitted,


Diane M. Hanelt, Secretary

Approved: 3/3/15

Supporting Documents:

- Projected Revenues and Expenses – FY'16 (GHD Draft 2/4/2015)
- FY'16 Budget Totals (GHD Draft 2/4/2015)
- Board of Selectmen Workshop – November 10, 2014 (GHD Draft 2/9/2015)
 - Executive Summary – Initiative #1 and #2
- Department: 210- Police (GHD Draft 2/9/2015)
 - Public Safety Dispatch (GHD Draft 2/9/2015)
- Department: 220 – Fire (GHD Draft 2/9/2015)
- Department: 294 – Forest Warden (GHD Draft 2/9/2015)
- Police & Fire Overtime Reserve Fund History
- Police Department – Finance Committee Presentation (2/10/2015)