

Finance Committee Minutes

February 20th 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM. Present were Mr. Edgar Zukauskas presiding, Mr. David Herrick, Mr. Mark Carson and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding. Guests were Ms., Tara White, Mrs. Michele Shalaby, and Mr. Scott Farrell. The minutes for January 23rd were circulated and accepted as amended Mr. Herrick 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Mr. Farrell came into to present the police budget. When Mr. Zukauskas noticed that there was a \$5,000 increase in the police salaries budget Mr. Farrell explained that he expects to have only one year left as Police Chief since his other professional as well as personal lives are becoming increasingly demanding. Thus he is increasing Mr. Frank's responsibilities in running the department. Mr. Farrell stated that Mr. Frank is an excellent police officer and is already taking many of the day to day operations, and should be rewarded. The police department has increased their offering motor citations (this year about 230, although many of these were warnings). And these brought in about \$20,000 to the town. Also if the policeman was required to be present in court a whole day could be used in this process. Mr. Farrell told of an incident where the police had to go to Pittsfield, spent the whole day and at the end of the day the case was cancelled! Some calls come in during the night and can last from 2-5AM making it difficult for an officer to go to work again the next day! Also Mr. Farrell reported that there was an increase in the number of domestic and motor vehicle calls! Thus Mr. Farrell sees Mr. Graham being transferred to police chief and with the hiring of two part time officers in the future. With the use of the new computer program some of the desk work will be streamlined. Mr. Zukauskas asked how these plans would impact the 2016 police budget. Mr. Farrell stated that he did not anticipate any radical increase in the budget for that year.

The committee then reviewed the police expenses budget. Mrs. Spaulding questioned the "subscriptions, legal references, and professional associations" part of the budget which was \$1,300! Mr. Farrell stated that the legal references came in and were very expensive, although very necessary, and networking with other policemen in the professional associations was equally beneficial. Mr. Zukauskas then asked if Mr. Farrell had explored any possible grants to help on the radio and radar expenses. Mr. Farrell stated that many Homeland grants are attached to crime statistics which makes New Marlborough unable to apply for them! Mrs. Shalaby stated that the town has a young lady looking into grants, and hopefully perhaps will come up with a grant that might apply to our police department.

Mrs. Spaulding thanked Mr. Farrell for including his "capital expenses" budget which will be added to those already received. With no further questions for Mr. Farrell he left and the committee began reviewing existing budgets,

Police Expenses [60210.99] (\$18,600) now requesting {\$21,550} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Herrick 2nd passed unanimously.

Police Revolving [5517.00] (\$6,000) level funded {\$6,000} Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Website Expenses [10116.00] (\$2,400) now requesting {\$2,425.}, the committee expressed concern about the fulfillment of the website promise, stating that many town activities were not put on the website. Mr. Carson 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Accounting Officer Expenses [10135.03] (\$3,635) now requesting {\$4,105} Attached was the explanation for the increase in the Contract Services from SoftRight, and Ms. White explained that the "Training" part of the budget included a 3 day educational program in Worcester, and a 3 day program in Avon Massachusetts, both of which were important to attend. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Carson 2nd passed unanimously.

Audit [10134.44] (\$8,000) level funded {\$8,000} Ms. White stated that if the town borrows federal money an audit is required, otherwise the audit takes place every two or three years and the cost runs from \$16,000 to \$20,000. This year the town did not get any federal money so the town is figuring on the cost being \$16,000 and will use last years \$8,000 together with this year's \$8,000! Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Selectmen's Expenses [10122.01] (\$4,000) level funded {\$4,000} this account is used for incidental expenses incurred by the selectmen. Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Zukauskas 2nd passed unanimously.

Contingent [10122.02] (\$3,000) level funded {\$3,000} this account is used for some supplies, some unscheduled meetings and other unscheduled expenses. Mr. Carson 1st, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed unanimously.

Town Hall Expenses [10192.70] (\$38,000) now requesting {\$41,400} within this account there was an item titles "salaries", and thus the account was put on hold .

No further budgets were scheduled to be reviewed, however Mrs. Spaulding reported that she had talked to Mr. Ira Yohalem, who stated that he would not be available to attend the next two or three Finance Committee meetings. She also added that she had given a list of budgets yet

to be reviewed to Mr. Skorput on February 11th and many of these budgets had, as yet, not been submitted to the committee for review.

An informational pamphlet regarding the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission was given to all the members of the committee.

Prior to the close of the meeting, Ms. White stated that she had suggested to Mr. Skorput that an account be established titled "Computers" so that when a computer needed replacing there would be money for this, and also there would be a list of ages etc. of the existing computers being used by the town staff.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20PM with the next meeting being scheduled for February 27th at 7:00PM at the Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Prudence Spaulding Secretary.