

**BUDGET WORK SESSION  
FINAL**

**PRESENT:** R. P. McDermott, Chairman; M. Kasprzak, Vice Chairwoman; C. P. Graham, Selectmen; E. N. Small, Town Administrator; R. Dirsa, Police Chief; J. Lord, Fire Chief; Abigail Tonry, Acting Secretary

**POLICE:**

Item 635: M. Kasprzak asked why the Police do not use the State gas pumps. Chief Dirsa stated that he did not want his cruisers out of town any more than necessary. R. McDermott asked if the credit cards were helping with the cost of gasoline. Chief Dirsa stated that he did not get a better price but the card did take off the gas taxes (approximately \$80/mo) and gives him detailed statistics on fuel usage by vehicle. R. McDermott asked the Chief to approach the local gas stations for possible discounts. J. Lord stated that the Fire Department has an 18 month contract with the State for diesel fuel at \$2.65 per gallon. He takes the fire vehicles to the Route 95 State garage to fill up. He uses about 500 gallons a year. Chief Dirsa stated that he uses about 4,900 gallons requiring many more trips to fill-up. C. Graham asked Chief Dirsa to inquire of the State a gas price for the Police Department.

Item 820: M. Kasprzak inquired about the increase in Uniform & Clothing. Chief Dirsa stated that cleaning costs are up a bit but he is preparing to clothe a new officer.

Item 630: R. McDermott inquired about the decrease in maintenance. Chief Dirsa stated that he has two older cruisers which are in good repair and although they are high in mileage he hopes they continue to run well.

Item 120: Chief Dirsa stated that the increase was for 2 extra hours a week for field training of a new officer.

Item 110: Chief Dirsa stated that the increases were step increases, not COLA.

**ANIMAL CONTROL:** Chief Dirsa stated that he felt the Town was getting a good deal for the price. M. Kasprzak asked about the new State law removing responsibility of dog damage from towns.

**AMBULANCE:**

Item 125: Chief Lord stated that the increase was due to the number of volunteers who are qualified to receive the stipend has increased.

Item 835: The increase in medical training is to cover the additional new people.

Item 390: Chief Lord stated the billing services price might go down with the new contract. C. Graham asked why the cost of collecting for services was not offset by the revenue received. Chief Lord stated that it was not set up that way, that the proceeds go to the Fire Vehicle Fund. E. Small stated that he would check to see if a warrant article was needed to transfer the billing charges back to the budgeted item. Chief Lord stated that he would agree to lower this item to \$4,500.

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Chief Lord stated that most of the ambulance increases are due to training.

Item 430: Chief Lord agreed to a lower this item to \$3,000 as he expected to only need repair/maintenance on one vehicle.

**FIRE:**

Item 120: Chief Lord stated that the large increase in the part-time positions is the hiring of a Fire Inspector one day a week. He stated that Mr. True has lots of knowledge and experience that neither he nor K. Kelley has. He knows the inspection codes, has sprinkler knowledge and is a great resource to both officers. He also acts as a forest warden or EMT when necessary. R. McDermott asked how long the Chief expected to need Mr. True. Chief Lord stated that he hoped to employ him for a number of years. Chief Lord is looking into a SAFER grant that would fund the position for 5 years with step down contributions. The grant window closed in September so he hopes to apply for next year. Another increase in part-time positions is the number of volunteers who show up at each call. Chief Lord stated that it has taken 4-5 years but the Town now has about 40 volunteers who are trained and qualified and eligible for the stipend.

Item 430: Chief Lord stated that Tank 2 has a drain issue and Tank 4 needs repair to the pump which he cannot tell how much it will cost until it is taken apart.

Item 560: E. Small stated that Hampton dispatch will be increasing its fee. The amount of the increase is tied to the September Consumer Price Index. The exact amount cannot be obtained until sometime in November. E. Small will continue to monitor this item.

C. Graham stated that he would like to see the Fire budget reduced by \$4,000-\$5,000. Chief Lord stated that around November 1 he could provide a more accurate amount. The Board will revisit this account in one month.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:**

Item 835: Training increases are due to two required exercises and one graded drill which is totally reimbursed by Seabrook Nuclear Plant.

Item 740: This increase is to install the generator, tank, electrical hook-up and hardware. The generator is provided to the Town by Seabrook Nuclear Plant.

Item 390: Chief Lord explained about Code Red, a mass notification program. He said for \$3,500 annually the Town could have a web-based notification system that would allow authorized administrators to send notices to any Town resident who voluntarily provided their contact information. He stated that it would take about two weeks to get it up and running and the Town would need to do a campaign to get people to sign-up. It would replace the redundant system of cell phones and pagers currently required by the Seabrook Nuclear Plant. Reverse 911 is hardware based and cannot let out telephone numbers due to privacy issues. C. Graham stated that he would not be in favor of being one

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of the first towns to sign on to Code Red. If and when the State or Seabrook Nuclear Plant decides to pay for this service he would reconsider. R. McDermott was concerned about possible abuse that could result from this service. Chief Lord agreed to reduce this item by \$3,500.

**STREET LIGHTS:** No changes needed.

**SOLID WASTE:** C. Graham stated that he was preparing a chart analyzing the costs associated with recycling and solid waste pick-up. The decrease in costs is believed to be due to the location the solid waste is being dumped and not a decrease in quantity. It is felt that recycling has decreased while solid waste has increased.

**HEALTH:**

Item 365: E. Small agreed to reduce by \$1,100 as the yearly number of test pits is unpredictable.

**HEALTH AGENCIES:** No changes needed

**WELFARE:**

Item 411: Welfare is increased due to the reduction in State contributions. The heating contribution has also been reduced. R. McDermott suggested increasing this item by \$1,000.

**PARKS & RECREATION:**

Item 390: The craft fair money was supposed to go to supporting the band concerts. E. Small will schedule the Parks & Recreation Committee to come to the next meeting and defend their budget.

**LIBRARY:**

Item 390: The Library will bring forward a special article to spend Library money on software.

Item 411: This item is increased to pay the amount the Library has already paid for 2011 heating oil.

Item 670: Books and Periodicals have been cut for years as an easy way to stay within the budgeted amount.

Item 210: C. Graham asked why the Library personnel pay 10% contribution for Health and other Town employees pay 20%. It was suggested that that amount was part of the job offer to the Director.

Item 630: Repairs have gone up as the building is now 10 years old.

E. Small will invite the Library to the next meeting to defend their budget.

**CONSERVATION:** No changes needed.

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**BOND:** No changes needed.

**BOND INTEREST:** No changes needed.

**INTEREST ON TAX ANTICIPATION NOTES (TANS):** E. Small stated that he got an interest rate of 2.3% from Citizens Bank and 1.62% from Peoples United Bank. Peoples United Bank requires approval from bond counsel before issuing the TAN. E. Small will check about this requirement. He stated that the \$1,500 increase could be allocated to legal fees. He has repeatedly asked for a monthly breakdown of payroll and expenses from the School Board. He will continue to pursue this information. C. Graham stated that he was glad that E. Small is doing research on what it takes to do TANS. E. Small stated that the Town could need \$300,000-400,000 for a couple of months twice a year before taxes are paid. A TAN might not be needed as the DRA may allow the first half estimated taxes be increased to cover rising costs.

E. Small will invite the Highway, Library, Parks & Recreation, and Employee Benefits committees to attend a meeting the week of October 24<sup>th</sup>.

R. McDermott will e-mail the Volunteer Fire Department list to J. Lord for updating.

**MOTION:** To adjourn at 12:05pm.

**MOTION:** M. KASPRZAK  
**SECOND:** C. P. GRAHAM  
**UNANIMOUS**