

**TOWN OF WOLFEBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**November 16, 2020
6:30 PM**

Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall and Virtual Access

Chairman MacDonald opened the meeting at 6:47 pm.

I. Preamble and Roll Call of Members in Attendance

Good evening and welcome to the November 16, 2020 meeting of the Wolfeboro Budget Committee. Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order #2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically. **However, the Committee has jointly decided to proceed with a 'hybrid' meeting format allowing for members of the public and Board to attend and participate in the meeting in-person or virtually.**

In accordance with RSA 91-A: 2, III, the Board has 4 members joining the meeting remotely, which a public body has the authorization to allow.

At this time I would like to take a roll-call vote of ALL members present. For those participating virtually, please indicate why your attendance is not reasonably practical and if you have any other individuals present in the room with you.

Members Present (In-person): John MacDonald, Chairman, Bob Loughman, Matthew Plache, Steve Johnson, Bob Moholland, John Burt, Brian Black, Members.

Members Present (Virtual): Bob Tougher, Vice-Chairman (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), Paul O'Brien, Selectmen's Representative (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present), Linda Murray, Selectmen's Alternate Representative (indicated she is at her residence and no one is present), Tom Bell, Member (indicated he is at his residence and no one is present).

Votes taken during this meeting will be via roll call vote for ALL members.

In accordance with Emergency Order #12, for members of the public, this is to confirm that we are:

1. Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means through GoToMeeting. All members of the public and Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the GoToMeeting platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #+1 (646) 749-3122 followed by the audio access code 918-242-429, or by video following the directions on the Town of Wolfeboro Website posted on the home page under the Virtual Town Meeting Login Information page.
2. Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting; we previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting in-person or using GoToMeeting and in, and instructions are provided on the Town of Wolfeboro website at wolfeboronh.us on the Virtual Town Meeting Login Information page.
3. Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access; If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via phone or computer, please immediately call 603-486-2692 OR email hendrickson.leeann@gmail.com In the event that the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Staff Present (In-person): Kathy Carpentier, Finance Director, Lee Ann Hendrickson, Administrative Secretary.

Staff Present (Virtual): Dean Rondeau, Mark Livie, Police Department, Steve Wood, Robert O'Brien, Police Commissioners.

II. 2021 Budget

WELFARE

Referencing Direct Assistance Rent, John Burt stated in 2018 \$60,641 was expended and asked why the 2021 budget request is \$20,000 less.

Amy Capone-Muccio stated the line varies from year to year and is unpredictable. She stated this year the County received funding from the federal relief program due to COVID.

Bob Tougher asked Ms. Capone-Muccio if she is comfortable with the lesser funding.

Amy Capone-Muccio stated based on her trends she feels comfortable but, doesn't know given the current circumstance. Referencing the Direct Assistance Utilities, she stated last year the Energy Committee put forth a warrant article and created the Warmth and More Fund which has been used for utilities.

John MacDonald expressed concern regarding the \$40,000 appropriation for 2021 due to COVID and current circumstances.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to increase 01-44410-845 Direct Assistance – Rent from \$40,000 to \$50,000. Roll Call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Bob Loughman - no, Steve Johnson – no, Tom Bell - yes, Matt Plache - yes, Bob Moholland - yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black - yes. The motion passed (7-2).

ANIMAL CONTROL

John Burt questioned the \$18,735 figure; noting the approved budget for 2020 is \$18,455.

Dean Rondeau stated the \$18,735 was the approved budget.

John MacDonald asked if the Animal Control Officer will receive the 2% pay increase approved by the BOS.

Dean Rondeau replied yes and noted the 2% has not been added to salary line.

John MacDonald stated the 2021 department request for part time wages is \$18,470.

Dean Rondeau stated with the 2% increase the figure would be \$18,751.20.

Kathy Carpentier confirmed the final figure for 01-44140-117 Part Time Wages is \$18,751.

John MacDonald asked if the Animal Control Officer is on call.

Dean Rondeau replied yes, it is a 24/7 part time position and is paid by a stipend.

COMMUNICATIONS

Steve Johnson asked why the telephone request is so high (\$6,144).

Mark Livie stated the number is provided by the Town; noting the line includes all telephone lines.

Matt Plache stated he recalls a discussion last year about pulling out the land lines from the Police Department budget and placing it in the Communications budget.

John Burt stated the five year average is \$1,282.

Linda Murray requested the Committee revisit such.

Steve Wood stated the landlines were moved from the Police Department to the Communications budget to streamline the budget process.

Dean Rondeau stated the figure is provided by the Finance Department.

Matt Plache asked if there are any land line expenses in the Police Department.

Dean Rondeau stated the lines are managed by Central Dispatch and in the Communications budget. He stated the number fluctuates from what the vendor charges.

John Burt noted safety equipment has increased a lot from previous years.

Bob Loughman stated in 2019 \$1,793 was expended and year to date expenditure for 2020 is \$2,050 yet the 2021 request is \$2600. He stated he would like to reduce the line to the 2020 approved budget.

Mark Livie stated some of that line is per the union contract/collective bargaining.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Steve Johnson to decrease 01-42990-680 Safety Equipment from \$2,600 to \$2,050.

Discussion of the motion:

Bob Tougher stated the cost is part of the union contract and it is not legal to reduce the figure.

Steve Wood stated the dispatchers may not have yet used all the funding to acquire the uniforms for the year.

Brian Black asked if the dispatchers are given a cash amount every year and charged with purchasing their own uniforms.

Steve Wood stated full time dispatchers receive \$250/year and part time dispatchers receive less. He stated there is a new dispatcher that needs to be outfitted; noting the initial outfitting is \$500.

Brian Black asked if the money is paid to the individual.

Mark Livie replied no.

Steve Wood stated purchase orders are written for the expenses.

Matt Plache asked if the uniforms for both part time and full time dispatchers and the outfitting of the new dispatcher are covered in the union contract.

Steve Wood stated the outfitting for the new dispatcher is not covered in the union contract.

Bob Loughman verified that if the funds are not expended it goes back to the General Fund.

John Burt stated the five year average is less than \$1,000.

Dean Rondeau stated the union contract requires a certain expenditure per individual. He stated some years there may be money left over; noting the unused funds get put into the General Fund.

Bob Moholland stated the new dispatcher outfitting is not required by the union and was added therefore, the \$500 can be cut from the department request (funding request would then be \$2,100).

Bob Loughman amended his motion to decrease 01-42990-680 Safety Equipment from \$2,600 to \$2,100. Steve Johnson seconded the amendment.

Dean Rondeau stated if the line is cut there will not be enough money to outfit the new dispatcher.

Roll Call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – no, Bob Loughman - yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Tom Bell - no, Matt Plache - no, Bob Moholland - yes, John Burt – no, Brian Black - no. The motion failed (4-5).

Referencing Machinery and Equipment, Steve Johnson questioned the increase in the funding request (\$4,000); noting \$552 was expended in 2019 and \$0 has been expended this year.

Dean Rondeau stated it depends on improvements and needs of dispatch at the time. He stated there are outstanding invoices from Two-Way Communications. He noted the line is level funded.

Bob Tougher questioned the five year average.

John Burt replied \$3,522. He questioned the under expenditure for travel and meetings.

Dean Rondeau stated many classes were cancelled due to the restrictions relative to COVID-19. He stated online classes and training have now been made available.

It was moved by John MacDonald and seconded by Bob Loughman to decrease 01-42990-810 Travel and Meetings from \$1,500 to \$1,000. Roll call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Bob Loughman - yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Tom Bell - yes, Matt Plache - yes, Bob Moholland - yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black - yes. The motion passed (9-0).

It was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by Bob Loughman to decrease 01-42990-820 Professional Development from \$2,500 to \$2,000.

Discussion of the motion:

Dean Rondeau stated online training has become available and noted there is an expense to such.

John Burt asked if the new dispatcher is trained.

Dean Rondeau stated there is one new part time dispatcher that will need training. He stated dispatch training is critically important. He stated when he does not have well trained employees the Police Commission gets bombarded with citizen complaints.

John Burt stated the five year average is \$244.

Matt Plache stated training is critical and techniques change. He stated more can be done and lives can be saved with a highly trained dispatcher.

Roll call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Bob Loughman - yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Tom Bell - no, Matt Plache - no, Bob Moholland - no, John Burt – yes, Brian Black - yes. The motion passed (6-3).

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Steve Johnson questioned the increase in part time wages.

Dean Rondeau stated the Department has determined the need for a juvenile services officer; noting the officer would prosecute cases and serve as a permanent part time position. He stated it has to be a special officer relative to his or her ability to prosecute those types of cases. He stated the increase is also a result of the wages for the seasonal traffic control officer for Downtown.

It was moved by Steve Johnson and seconded by Bob Loughman to decrease 01-42100-117 Part Time Wages by \$12,560 from \$110,560 to \$98,000.

Discussion of the motion:

Dean Rondeau stated reducing the line by \$12,000 is far too much.

John MacDonald stated he is disappointed in the prosecutor position. He stated a full time prosecutor in the County Attorney's Office was added to handle domestic violence cases for the entire county. He stated he was hoping that such would free up the Town's prosecutor to focus on other cases. He stated it doesn't make sense to him to hire an additional prosecutor for 50-60 cases; noting he doesn't know of any other town in the county that has a juvenile prosecutor. He stated the Town's prosecutor can only handle violations and misdemeanors and the County Attorney's Office handles felonies.

Bob Tougher agreed with Mr. MacDonald. He stated he would reduce the line by \$8,323.20; noting such is the cost associated with the juvenile officer. He stated he would not support the current motion but, would support a motion to reduce the amount for the juvenile officer position.

Steve Johnson stated the intent of his motion is to get back to the 2020 approved budget and wants to move forward with his motion. He stated this year's budget hasn't been spent.

Dean Rondeau stated the position is a critical position to the Department. He stated there are two high schools in Wolfeboro and the Department gets saddled with a lot of juvenile cases.

Matt Plache asked if most of the cases originate in the high school or if the cases originate elsewhere. He asked if Wolfeboro prosecutes juveniles from other towns that attend the high school.

Dean Rondeau stated he doesn't have the numbers however, his gut tells him yes that the cases do originate from the Middle School / High School complex. He stated the school is kept safer by having a SRO at the school for longer periods of time and having a separate officer prosecute the cases.

Matt Plache asked if the Department receives a larger reimbursement for the SRO because the SRO is in the school for more hours.

Dean Rondeau replied yes.

John MacDonald requested Dean Rondeau to provide the agreement that states the Department receives a larger reimbursement because the SRO is in the school for more hours.

Tom Bell requested clarification of the motion.

John MacDonald reviewed such.

Bob Loughman stated the motion is to reduce line 117 and not the bottom line of the budget.

John MacDonald stated the Committee cannot reduce salary lines; noting only the Police Commission is authorized to do such. He stated per the statute, the Police Commission is authorized to hire, fire and set compensation therefore, the Committee can only reduce the bottom line.

Dean Rondeau and Steve Wood agreed with Mr. MacDonald's statement.

Paul O'Brien read the statute, Section 105-C:4.

Steve Johnson requested a copy of the statute.

John MacDonald confirmed the State RSA was passed by legislature.

Steve Johnson amended his motion to decrease the bottom line of the Police Department budget by \$12,560. Bob Loughman seconded the amendment.

Steve Wood stated the figure also includes the traffic control officer.

Kathy Carpentier confirmed the motion will remove \$4,000 from the traffic control officer's salary.

John MacDonald asked Mr. Johnson if he would like to continue with his motion to decrease the bottom line of the Police Department budget by \$12,560 or change it to decrease the bottom line of the budget by \$8,500 to reflect a decrease to the juvenile service officer.

Steve Johnson amended his motion to decrease the bottom line of the Police Department budget by \$8,500. Bob Loughman seconded the amendment.

Discussion of the motion:

Matt Plache confirmed the reason behind the motion is because there is disagreement of the Police Commission's authority.

Brian Black stated the only vehicle the Budget Committee has available to them is to reduce the bottom line of the budget.

Tom Bell stated he doesn't believe there is enough evidence to support the decrease.

Roll call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Bob Loughman - yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Tom Bell - no, Matt Plache - no, Bob Moholland - yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black - yes. The motion passed (7-2).

John Burt requested the subject be revisited to discuss what the Budget Committee can and cannot do.

John MacDonald requested the Town Manager request an interpretation from Town Counsel regarding the authority of the Budget Committee relative to Police Department wages.

Steve Johnson questioned Other Compensation.

Mark Livie stated such includes buyouts and differential pay. He stated at the guidance of the Town Manager, holiday pay was removed from hourly wages and placed in Other Compensation.

Steve Johnson asked what lines would reflect a partial decrease of the holiday pay.

Dean Rondeau replied Police, Supervisory Salaries and Hourly Wages. He stated he supports the shifting of funds; noting such is the proper way to budget. He noted a 4% COLA was agreed in the union contract.

Steve Johnson stated that even with the decreases there is still a \$30,000 increase.

Bob Loughman asked if the \$30,000 increase contract related.

Mark Livie stated it sounds right.

Referencing Rentals and Leases, John Burt asked if such is a lease purchase.

Mark Livie stated the increase is due to the addition of two tasers to the contract.

John Burt asked if the agreement has an escape clause if the budget doesn't pass; noting the default budget wouldn't include the two additional tasers.

Dean Rondeau stated the Town is still obligated to pay for the lease of the tasers.

Linda Murray stated contractual items are included in the default budget.

John Burt requested review of the agreement to determine if there is an escape clause. He noted an increase of 60% of the Police Department budget since 2010 and stated the General Fund has only increased by 34%.

III. **Other Business**

N/A

IV. **Public Comment**

None.

REVISIT ITEMS

- Communications telephone expenditures
- Police; Dean Rondeau to provide the Committee with the agreement that states the Department receives a larger reimbursement because the SRO is in the school for more hours
- Police; RSA 105-C:4 – Town Manager to contact Town Attorney to receive an opinion/interpretation on the authority of the Budget Committee with regard to Police Department wages
- Police; review 2020 Taser Contract for escape clause

It was moved by John Burt and seconded by Bob Moholland to adjourn the November 16, 2020 Budget Committee meeting. Roll call vote: John MacDonald - yes, Bob Tougher – yes, Bob Loughman - yes, Steve Johnson – yes, Tom Bell - yes, Matt Plache - yes, Bob Moholland - yes, John Burt – yes, Brian Black - yes, Paul O'Brien - yes. The motion passed (10-0).

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee Ann Hendrickson

Lee Ann Hendrickson