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Stephen M. Carrier, Chief
Michael Robinson, Deputy Chief



TNFD Budget Public Hearing
February 8, 2010

Kevin LaChapelle opened the Budget Committee Public Hearing at 19:06PM.

In attendance from the Budget Committee were Kevin LaChapelle, Dennis Allen, Paul Auger, Peter Fogg and Vicki Virgin. Chairman Donny Stevens arrived at 19:44PM.

Account Category 100's – Salary & Wages - \$843,286

Leif Martinson asked about line item 110 – Career Salaries & Wages. Why do the Budget Committee and Commissioner's totals not match? LaChapelle stated that the difference is based on the Budget Committee allotting a 1% merit raise for full time staff, based on insurances. Due to rate increases in insurance coverage, the Budget Committee felt the small increase would help offset this increase. Peter Fogg stated that the increase was a .55% average. LaChapelle also noted that part of this increase was due to an increase in Chief Carrier's contracted pay.

Kevin Waldron asked for clarification on part of the wage increase being due to the increase in insurance (health benefits). There are currently no career staff paying in to their insurance. Increase in health insurance is 16.4%. LaChapelle stated that the pay increase will help those with single plans to pay for things like Healthy Kids.

Roland Seymour asked about the increase in pay for position Lt. EMT-1. Chief Carrier stated that this may be a typo and would have to look into it. After checking through his notes, Chief did find that the rate was a type. The actual wage for 2009 was \$46,350 not \$42,785 as typed.

Waldron asked about line item 110.6 – Overtime. The overtime line for 2009 actual was \$86,812. He would like to know why there is a significant increase in this line item. Budget Committee is going to stay with the recommended \$112,500. In 2009, Chief and Inspector Ober were able to cover more overtime than expected. Chief felt \$112,500 could be reasonably worked within. When Chief worked out all the vacation, personal and sick time, the overtime projection number was much higher – estimated at \$130,000-\$140,000. Waldron still feels this is high. Fogg noted that 2008 actual was \$115,833 and in coming up with the 2010 figure, they were just looking for a balance.

Pat Clark – line item 120 – Call Salaries & Wages. Should this number be based on an average between 2008 and 2009 rather than based on 2009 alone. Chief stated that this is a hard line to forecast. 2009 did go over budget. 2010 may go over budget. If we do go over budget on this line, Chief feels it is money well spent. Clark asked why call numbers were down by 100 in 2009. Was this due to Franklin putting on another ambulance? Chief feels it may partially be due to the new ambulance, summer weather and economy. Waldron stated that there will also be less calls from Canterbury in 2010. Chief said the we have been removed from Canterbury. In 2009, we only received 28 calls.

Account Category 200's – Benefits - \$332,284

Tony Blair asked what the actual increase in the health benefits cost is – line 210. Chief stated that there is a 16.4% increase in health benefits which equates to just under \$20,000. Leif Martinson wanted to know if we have shopped around for better prices. LaChapelle stated that the Budget Committee did not shop for other prices. Waldron confirmed that we are locked in a 3-year deal with LGC which end this year. Pat Clark asked if the rate was increased by LGC or was the total dollars due to plan changes within the department. Chief stated that the increases are due to LGC price increases, not plan changes.

Kevin LaChapelle stated that the increase in retirement – line 230 – is based on the rate set by NH Retirement system. Blair asked which group the retirees fall under. LaChapelle stated that it is Group 2 and Chief noted that one employee in Group 1. Scott Davis asked where the \$3,000 difference between the Commissioners and Budget Committee comes from. LaChapelle stated that is was based on the proposed raises.

Account Category 300's – Prof. & Tech Services - \$45,002

Lief Martinson asked about the increase in legal services – line 320. Paul Auger stated that this increase was due to a foreseeable need for legal services if dissolution is agreed upon after elections. Martinson asked if this number will be reduced if the Town of Northfield votes No on dissolution. LaChapelle stated that this number was agreed upon with no consideration to dissolution. It is based on routine legal maintenance.

Blair asked why auditing – line 320 - is set below the actual for 2009. Waldron stated that this number is a quote for a review for 2010, not a certified audit. Certified audits cost about \$10,200.00. Blair asked why the audits are not being certified. Was it certified last year? Seymour stated that 2009 was a review. Blair asked how long reviews can be done before a certified audit needs to be done. Seymour said he doesn't believe there is a legal requirement to have a certified audit. Tom Gallant stated that the plan is to have a certified audit done in 2011. This is a way to save money on the budget. Blair asked if this meets GAP's principles. Gallant feels it does meet the GAP's principles.

Davis asked why the Chief's number on the School/Training Tuition/Fees – line 335 – is different from the Commissioners and Budget Committee. Chief uses this line for paying registration fees and class costs. The overtime line covers the attendance of the class. One line would need to go up as the other goes up. Gallant stated that there is currently one in

paramedic training. Blair asked if there was any annual re-certifications necessary. Chief stated that the EMTs do have training every 2 years at a minimal cost. LaChapelle stated that there are some re-certification hours required for EMTs that do need to be paid for by the Department.

Account Category 400's – Property Services – \$47,465

Martinson asked by heating and oil – line 411 - costs are expected to be lower today than they were in 2009. LaChapelle stated that this line item is based on average increases, the unknown and current prices. It is middle of the road between the Chief's number of \$12,000 and the Commissioner's number of \$8,000. Davis asked if the District buys a contract. LaChapelle does not believe that the District signs a contract. Chief said they have not signed a contract in the past 2 years.

Blair asked about the property and liability insurance increase – line 480. Chief stated that this represents a 6% increase in rates as well as in 2009 the addition of replacement insurance on the ambulances which is about \$2,000.

Account Category 500's – Purchased Services - \$53,200

Martinson asked about why there is such a big difference between the Budget Committee and the Commissions and Chief's numbers on pressurized hydrants – line 590.2. Chief said his number comes from the quote given to him in September. Auger stated that they sat down with the water district and negotiated a price. This includes some new hydrants coming on, others that we were not being charged for and still will not be. The Commissioners entered into a signed agreement with the water district for the \$115,000 rate for 2010. Blair wanted to know if the rates would be increased in 2011. Fogg stated that the Budget Committee felt the water district's number was not a fair price compared to other communities and the fact they we have to shovel out our own hydrants. They chose to put this number in the budget and work negotiations from there. Scott Davis according to municipal law, the warrant articles are added to the final budget and Article 14 should not be in both places – should be either in the Budget or in the Warrant. Budget Committee to make corrections to that line at the District Meeting. Commissioners are legally committed to the \$115,000 that was agreed upon with the water district. If the Warrant article does not pass, it will have to be brought to court. The Commissioners were asked to negotiate a price, which they have and are bound to that price. Blair advises to take the \$50,000 out of the budget and if Article 14 fails, the budget could be amended at the District meeting. Should not be in both places. Line item can be adjusted at the District Meeting. Davis Warrant articles are stand alone and have no relevance to the Budget line items.

Account Category 600's – Supplies - \$68,711

No questions.

Account Category 700's – Capital Outlay - \$2,503

No questions.

Bottom Line Budget Committee Operating Budget - \$1,392,451

Apparatus and Equipment Replacement Fund Expenses - \$103,418

Martinson wants to know what the \$1,000 difference in line 960.5 from the Budget Committee includes. LaChapelle believes it is additional equipment. Chief said it is for a set of interchangeable tips for the Hurst tool. Waldron stated that the Commissioners did not have that information when they completed their budget. Martinson wants to know what makes up lines 740 and 741. Chief passed out a list to the public. Other money in this section that can be used to cover that cost. Chief says there is no room in this section to add additional purchases. LaChapelle said this itemization will be available at the District Meeting. When monies are set aside for purchases, they are expected to be made during the year. Seymour wanted to know if the Chief would not need permission from the Commissioners to make a purchase on this list. LaChapelle said the Chief would still need permission from the Commissioners to make a purchase. If Commissioner did not approve the purchase, they would be responsible to the District – since they had voted on it. The amount should be spent and the purchases should be honored. Auger stated that the Chief made out a list, which may not all be needed, but if it is really needed, the Commissioners would approve the purchase. Waldron stated that the budget is a bottom line budget and we are not required to spend all the money. Martinson suggested that the Commissioners may find better deals. Clark said we are limited to that amount only. Gallant stated that all reasonable requests would be honored. Davis said this is a list of things the Chief is looking to purchase, not necessarily what will end up being purchased. Like a grocery list.

Apparatus and Equipment Replacement Fund Revenues - \$148,382

Scott Davis asked why there is an increase from 2009 actual revenues. Is this because there were less ambulance calls in 2009? Chief said it is due to both rate increase in 2009 and more aggressive collections efforts - 71%.

Meeting Adjourned at 20:06pm.