

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS Budget Committee

Meeting Called By: Budget Committee

Date, Time: 12/04/2023, 5:00 PM

Transcribed By: Courtney Palmer

Location: Tilton Town Hall
Downstairs Meeting Room
257 Main Street
Tilton NH

Budget Committee Members

Katherine Dawson – Chair, Jason Wright – Vice Chair, Jane Alden, Paul Blaisdell, Charles Broughton, Scott Lewandowski, Eric Pyra – Commissioner Representative

Call to Order

Katherine Dawson called the meeting to order at 5:09 PM

Attendance

Katherine Dawson, Paul Blaisdell, Charles Broughton, Jane Alden, Scott Lewandowski, Jason Wright, Commissioner Eric Pyra, Chief Michael Sitar, Administrative Manager Kathy Tobine

Public: Matthew Gilman, Ryan Pelow

Minutes

Jason made a motion to accept the minutes of 11.27.23. Charlie seconded the motion. Scott requested to have more consistency in the minutes when it comes to reducing line items going forward. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

OPERATING BUDGET

560 Dues and Subscriptions: \$6,132

There were questions about the Haas Alert. Chief Sitar explained that it is a warning system in the engines and ambulances. It sends out an alert to people using GPS that there is an active ambulance or engine on the road. It helps prevent accidents with emergency vehicles.

Jason made a motion to fund line 560 at \$6,132. Jane seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

APPARATUS & EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT FUND

4332 Pressurized Hydrants: \$1

Jason made a motion to fund line 4332 at \$1. Scott seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

4723 Tan Interest: \$1

Jason made a motion to fund line 4723 at \$1. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken motion passed.

4901 Land: \$0

Jason made a motion to reduce line 4901 from \$1 to \$0. Scott seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion about whether land should be a warrant article. Katherine stated that she thinks they don't need this line item if there is a reserve fund. Discussion ensued.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

4902 Capitol Out Machinery, Veh, Equipment: \$0

Jason made a motion to reduce line 4902 from \$1 to \$0. Scott seconded the motion. A brief discussion ensued about the need for this line item.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

4903 Capitol Out Building: \$0

Jason made a motion to reduce line 4903 from \$1 to \$0. Scott seconded the motion. It was mentioned if they don't have land, there is no building. Discussion ensued about the \$2,200 that was spent in 2021 and the \$6,463 spent in line 4901 in 2021.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

4904 Design, Engineering & Architectural Fees: \$1

Jason made a motion to fund line 4904 at \$1. Scott seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

4909 Other: \$0

Jason made a motion to reduce line 4909 from \$1 to \$0. Scott seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

331 Ambulance Billing Services: \$37,501

Jason made a motion to fund lines 331 and 332 at \$37,501 in total. Jane seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

630 Equipment Maintenance & Repairs: \$14,525

Chief Sitar mentioned that most of these repairs are as needed.

Jason made a motion to fund line 630 at \$14,525. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

631 Service Testing: \$22,947

Scott made a motion to fund line 631 at \$22,947. Jason seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

660 Vehicle Repair: \$49,004

Chief Sitar discussed the warrant article for a new ambulance. Discussion ensued about the \$20,000 in line 660.000.

Jason made a motion to fund line 660 at \$49,004. Paul seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

740 Fire Equipment: \$45,690

Chief Sitar explained the Microwave Link in line 740.103. This would be just for the local channel. There was discussion about what value this would provide. Extensive discussion ensued.

Scott made a motion to reduce line 740 from \$72,980 to \$45,690 by reducing line 740.103 from \$27,290 to \$0. Paul seconded the motion. Discussion ensued about obtaining a grant for line 740.103.

There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

741 EMS: \$45,180

There was a brief discussion about what has been spent so far this year in line 741.

Paul made a motion to fund line 741 at \$45,180. Jason seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

960 Rescue Equipment: \$10,712

Katherine asked why the cost in line 960.600 is so high for this year. Chief Sitar explained that rope expires, and it is expensive to replace. Discussion ensued about line 960.400, replacing dry rescue suits.

Scott made a motion to fund line 960 at \$10,712. Jason seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

OPERATING BUDGET CONTINUED

4220 Fire

100 Salaries & Wages: \$2,061,704

Discussion ensued about the proposed 10.8% pay increase and the educational incentives. Chief Sitar stated that the current cost of adding the educational incentive would be \$89,428.79 over the 10.8% increase. He added that starting everyone at \$25 per hour would add \$132,397.61 over the 10.8% increase. If they offered a dental plan, it would add \$35,344.56. They have 11 employees who currently pay for their dental plan, and that is \$13,299.12 for next year. He mentioned that if TNFD pays for a dental plan, that would bring the benefit package up to what other fire departments are offering in the area.

Paul asked what the percent increase would be now to bring pay up to the average. Chief Sitar responded that it would be around 18%. That would get starting pay up to \$25 per hour. Extensive discussion ensued.

Katherine asked about longevity bonuses. Chief Sitar mentioned that he considered this. He mentioned that every year after 5 years there would be a 1% raise. That benefit would cost \$113,132. He also mentioned that they could do a 3% raise every 5 years, maxing out at 20%. That plan would cost \$92,069. Extensive discussion ensued.

Jason asked the TNFD employees in the public for their thoughts on this. Captain Matt Gilman responded that the main problem now is finding good talent and getting them to stay with TNFD.

Katherine asked why the Commissioners took \$15,000 out of call salaries and wages going from \$65,000 to \$50,000. Chief Sitar responded that it was because the call company's participation is slowly decreasing.

Captain Gilman added that they lost their #1 pick for the open firefighter position because he went to another department since they offered more money.

Kathy mentioned that if they went up to \$25 per hour for starting pay, line 110, career salaries and wages, would be \$1,559,761.34. Line 110.5, holiday pay, would be \$71,002.68. Line 111,

overtime, would be \$380,940. With line 120, call salaries and wages, at \$50,000, this would bring the total to \$2,061,704. Discussion ensued.

Jason made a motion to fund an increase in lines 110, 110.5, 111, and 120 from \$1,960.407 in total to \$2,061,704 in total. This would be the amount needed to bring starting pay up to \$25 per hour. Jane seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion about the figures and impact in Northfield and Tilton. There being no further discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

Line 110: from \$1,470,727 to \$1,559,761.34

Line 110.05: from \$65,996 to \$71,002.68

Line 111: from \$373,684 to \$380,940

Line 120: \$50,000

220 Social Security, 225 Medicare, 230 Retirement

Katherine made a motion to fund lines 220, 225, and 230 based on lines 110, 110.5, 111, and 120. Jason seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion passed.

Line 220: from \$11,720 to \$11,782.52

Line 225: from \$28,081 to \$30,032.46

Line 230: from \$543,050 to \$584,474.60

210 Group Health

There was a discussion about the cost of dental insurance. Kathy stated that for the 19 full-time staff members, the insurance would cost \$28,219.32. Discussion ensued.

Jane made a motion to add the cost of dental insurance to line 210 in the amount of \$28,220. Katherine seconded the motion. There was a brief discussion. A vote was taken. Motion failed.

Adjournment

Jason made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Pyra seconded the motion. There being no discussion, a vote was taken. Motion Passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney Palmer

Courtney Palmer
Administrative Assistant

Next Meeting Date, Time, Place:

December 18, 2023, 5:00 P.M.
Tilton Police Department
Community Room
45 Sanborn Rd
Tilton, NH