

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS District
Budget Public Hearing
Meeting Minutes February 6, 2024

Commissioners Present: Paul Auger, Timothy Sattler, Eric Pyra

Budget Committee Members Present: Jason Wright, Jane Alden, Katherine Dawson, Paul Blaisdell, Scott Lewandowski, Eric Pyra

Absentee: Charles Broughton

Also Present: Jean Samms, Michael Sitar, Sean Valovane, Kathy Tobine

Katherine Dawson opened the public hearing of the proposed 2024 budget at 6:00pm at the Tilton Police Station meeting room.

Commissioner Dawson asked the public to review the presented 2024 proposed operating budget and ask any questions they may have.

Concerns were raised about the unexpected increase in the operating budget of \$799,719 centering around personnel cost increases and the water services increase of \$165,302.

The questions were answered by board members as well as Chief Sitar. The personnel costs are due to a proposed pay raise, to keep the District competitive with surrounding communities, the addition of a 4th fireman which was covered by a grant for the past 4 years and the increase in insurance costs.

The increase in the water services line is due to the court mandated settlement that was reached by both entities upon the insistence of the court. The District will have to raise this amount for the next 7 years in order to pay past due charges from prior years. After 7 years a new agreement should be reached.

Other questions revolved around the difference between the Budget Committee recommended operating budget and the Commissioner's budget. The difference was due to denial of an upgrade to the radio system. Chief Sitar was questioned as to whether the District really needed as many firemen. He explained that last year 2200 plus calls were handled, an increase of approximately 1000 calls. The department runs on 4 shifts of 4 people and every shift has at least 1 paramedic. At times more than one call comes in at a time stretching the department's manpower. Response time has improved over the years and the department has highly trained professionals.

There was confusion over the calculation of percentage increases. It was requested that someone recalculate those percentages before the District meeting on March 18th.

Ms. Dawson closed the public hearing and adjourned at 6:58pm.

Minutes recorded by Jean F Samms, District Clerk

