

**BOARD OF FINANCE
TOWN OFFICE BUILDING
40 OLD FARMS ROAD
WILLINGTON, CT 06279**

BUDGET MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, February 15, 2018

Members Present:

Jim Bulick, Chairman
Mike Makuch, Vice-Chair
Randy Belair, Secretary
Barry Wallett
Peter Tanaka
Laurie Semprebon
Fred Schoen – Alternate
Bill Rankin – Alternate

Members Absent:

None

Also Present: Donna Latincsics, Business Manager; Tish Ignatowicz, Treasurer; Erika Wiecenski, First Selectman; Chief Alex Moore, WFD #1; Chief Tom Snyder, WHFD; Dick Palmer, Fire Marshal; Stuart Cobb, Emergency Management Director; members of the public.

Chairman Jim Bulick called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

SEATING OF ALTERNATES – not needed

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

2/08/2018 Budget Meeting Minutes

Suggested corrections to the minutes were given to the Chairman at the beginning of the meeting. He suggested tabling the minutes until they can be reviewed.

Mike Makuch **motioned** to table the minutes, Peter Tanaka seconded. All were in favor, **motion carried**.

PRESENT TO SPEAK

1st Selectman Wiecenski distributed a copy of the Animal Control Officer's Annual Report with the statistics for last year and a copy of the call spread sheet.

NEW BUSINESS

Budget Presentations

0518 Emergency Preparedness

Donna Latincsics informed the Board that the request for this year is \$0.

0231 Fire Marshal

Dick Palmer presented his budget request. The request is for \$24,658 total from the General Fund, a +1.17% increase over last year's adjusted budget, stipend's for deputies reduced slightly. No changes in operating expenses as there were no major code changes implemented recently. The Board thanked the Fire Marshal for his presentation.

0221 Ambulance

Chief Moore presented (3) scenarios for the board's consideration:

Scenario #1 (the recommended request with no service cuts): \$511,242 +1.84% increase in Expenses, \$470,742 +2.01% increase requested from the General Fund.

Scenario #2, a flat funding request (same funding as FY17/18) or \$501,987. This option requires cutting 52 12-hour shifts, or 1-part time shift per week and \$19,000 loss in ambulance revenue.

Scenario #3: -2.24% decrease in expenses \$490,756, requiring 114 12-hr shifts to be reduced or 2+ part time shifts per week and about \$29,000 loss in ambulance revenue.

Since health insurance is the next biggest expense after wages, the board encouraged the chief to check insurance quotes with Capital Region Council Of Governments (CRCOG) or Chief Littell in Tolland. These groups are trying to bundle the buying power of dozens of towns to get better rates. The Board thanked the chief for his analyses and presentation.

0232 WFD#1

Chief Moore presented a request for \$119,365, a -2.24% reduction as requested by the board of finance. This was accomplished with difficulty, including using more of their tower revenue. The board thanked the chief for working with the town during these challenging fiscal times.

0232 WHFD

Chief Snyder presented the budget for WHFD. He too was able to reduce expenses by -2.25%, only requesting \$110,905 from the General Fund. The board encouraged the chief to consider working with Capital Region Council Of Governments (CRCOG) or Chief Littell in Tolland to see if any savings can be gained in bulk purchases among county departments or if any savings can be had scheduling equipment testing in bulk for the county. The board thanked the chief for working with the town during these challenging fiscal times.

0234 Emergency Management Director Stipend

Stuart Cobb offered to take a reduced stipend for FY18/19. The request is for \$5,865 which is a decrease of -2.25% or -\$135.00. He added that his would also decrease 50% reimbursement from the Dept of Emergency Management & Homeland Security and that they have increased the amount that we can request to \$10,000. The board thanked Stuart (and all the chiefs again) for working with the Board of Finance during these challenging fiscal times.

Questions were taken from the Board. Laurie Semprebon asked why we have two fire departments? Chief Snyder answered that Willington #1 was originally set up by the Hall family to protect the mill area. Willington Hill was set up by the citizens to protect that end of town. It has continued because no cost savings have been definitively found by the consolidation into departments. The two fire departments do everything together (in terms of training, capital purchases, and going out on calls).

Peter Tanaka added that last year the Board was looking into cost saving in the Town. He met with both Chiefs with Barry Wallett. It is more than possible to achieve some minor savings and efficiencies in Administration. There are deeper desirability's in keeping the two departments.

OLD BUSINESS

Investigation to determine if the Teacher Retirement Benefit (TRB) collected will be part of the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) calculation – No update yet.

Annual Report for Fiscal Year July 2016 through June 2017 (update from Deb).

Adding last report and sending to Finance Dept for proof reading.

CORRESPONDENCE - none

GOOD & WELFARE

Reminder to the Board members to bring their packet that they received tonight to next week's meeting.

ADJOURMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Lewis

Debra L. Lewis
BOF Recording Secretary