

Advisory Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

January 16, 2014

The following members were present: Dick McDanolds, Barb Dutile, Dick Fabrizio, Andrew Maffei, Christopher Luurtsema, Peter Conrad, Laraine King and Howard Hatch. Also present: Selectboard members Tom Friel, Robert Roudebush (in at 8:45 due to conflicting meeting) and Lynn Wheeler; Town Manager Glenn English; Admin. Asst./Finance Officer Jo Lacaillade (in at 8:45 due to conflicting meeting); Police Chief Byron Charles; Sargeant Wallace Trott; Police Secretary Lori Peterson; and Clerk Karen Hyde.

Members Excused: Jon Hobbs

Dick McDanolds called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Chairman McDanolds asked if anyone had anything to bring up. TM English stated that the Police Chief's budget was not usually cut much by him because the budgets come in good. There are some things that are beyond the Chief's control. One is health insurance and that is up for a couple of reasons: (1) There was a new officer that came on during the year, who had a 3-month waiting period that ended so he became eligible for health insurance; and (2) there was a young officer that came on with a wife and who is planning a family, so a family plan had to be budgeted for just in case. He then turned it over to Chief Charles.

Chief Charles thanked everyone for their support. The job doesn't get any easier every year and it really helps them when the Town supports them the way they do. He then presented statistics for 2013 which included the number of arrests and phone calls. In the first 16 days of 2014, he stated that the Police Department is investigating one (1) new felony, 57 incidences, 13 arrests, 1 protective custody and 5 accidents. The Police Department made 28 referrals to the Grafton County Attorney's office. These referrals did not include the felony cases carried over from 2012 into 2013. There are additional cases the officers have to investigate. He gets several complaints in his office throughout the year about why there isn't a cruiser on the person's road at this time to watch for speeding vehicles. He explained that the Police Department does the best that they can with what they have. Investigations, especially large investigations which include sexual assault, child pornography cases, they field them all. They do those investigations and they take a lot of time as they are very delicate. They work with all kinds of different people to bring these cases to a conclusion. The Police Department's focus is on these delicate cases right now.

TM English brought up the heroin problem, which is the drug of choice right now. It is causing a lot of problems, such as burglaries. Those statistics are all rising. Chief Charles stated that the drug culture is rising and Haverhill is not immune to it. Haverhill has had a heroin problem going

on for about three years now. The heroin takes the place of Oxycontin and Oxycodone, which used to be the drug of choice. People can't afford them so they now use heroin. With any type of drug issue, there is the problem of theft; just crime in general. They run hand in hand. TM English stated that one of the ways to prevent break-ins is the presence and he has been fighting for 18 years to increase the Police Department's presence on the streets. He feels that there should be 2 cruisers out for the day and evening shifts at least. Chief Charles stated that as far as resources are concerned, the Police Department is more focused on the investigations. Going forward, they need to take a better look at some sort of detective or investigator for the Town of Haverhill to take some of these cases and be able to sit down and do them day in and day out and let the patrolmen go out and do patrol.

Howard Hatch asked how much surveillance equipment would help the Town. He stated that a few years ago, he had asked why computers couldn't be put in the cruisers. They are now in the cruisers. TM English stated that most of the bigger towns do have major intersection cameras. It is a relatively cheap technology. The challenge for Haverhill is that it could be done in our own right-of-way, but we would have to work with the State. Chief Charles stated that he would look into it. Laraine King stated that security cameras were installed at the Community Center, the Lodge and also at the Water Pumping Station in Mountain Lakes. There was a fight to get those cameras as people didn't want them, but they have stopped so much damage to the general property. Chris Luurtsema asked if there was anything, from a community standpoint, that the Town could invest in to help curb these actions. TM English stated that the Police Department is basically a reactive organization. They have to deal with what happened and not necessarily prevent what's happening. Chief Charles stated that education is the key to a lot of things.

Peter Conrad made the motion to approve the Police budget; seconded by Barb Dutile. Dick Fabrizio asked about the Social Security line item. There are only 2 employees who have Social Security taken out. Mr. Fabrizio also wanted to know where the proceeds of the Calendar Sales went. TM English stated that the Selectboard had recently set up a separate fund for those proceeds, which come from businesses. Chief Charles stated that the Police Department is setting up a scholarship at the High School for any graduating senior who is looking to go into law enforcement. Laraine King asked about the increase in the Vehicle Lease budget. Chief Charles stated that the Police Department would be adding a "new" cruiser this year. TM English clarified that it was not a new vehicle, it was a replacement vehicle. The Board then voted on the motion and the vote was in the affirmative.

The following expenditures were reviewed:

Town Administration – Motion to approve by Laraine King, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Town Meeting – There are four elections this year; the moderator is paid \$100 for each election, so that is the increase in salary. There was some discussion about the election for Ray Burton’s Executive Council position. Motion to approve by Laraine King, seconded by Chris Luurtsema and all approved.

Trustees of Trust Funds – Motion to approve by Dick Fabrizio, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Town Clerk – TM English explained that the budget was down due to personnel changes. Bette Pollock retired; Sandra Roy was appointed to the position of Town Clerk by the Selectboard. Tina Hebert was hired as Sandy’s Deputy. Motion to approve by Dick Fabrizio, seconded by Peter Conrad and all approved.

Voter Registration – The budget for Voter Registration is up due to the fact that there are four elections this year. Peter Conrad made a motion to approve, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Accounting and Auditing – Peter Conrad made a motion to approve, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved. Howard Hatch asked if the audit could be in an abbreviated form in the Town Report. TM English stated that the Selectboard wanted a full copy in the Town Report.

Tax Collection – TM English stated that the biggest expense for Tax Collection is postage required for mailing out tax bills twice a year. There were questions regarding the Tax Collector Salaries. TM English and Dick Fabrizio recommended postponing a decision on this budget until the Tax Collector/Deputy Tax Collector salaries could be explained further by AA Lacaillade.

Treasurer – Motion to approve by Peter Conrad, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Information Technology – TM English explained the new categories under Information Technology. The Advisory Budget Committee requested that Jim Marshall be brought in to explain the software upgrades in laymen’s terms before making a decision on the Information Technology budget. It was agreed that Jim would be asked to attend the January 23, 2014 meeting.

Revaluation of Property – Peter Conrad made a motion to approve, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Legal Expense – Motion to approve by Laraine King, seconded by Chris Luurtsema and all approved.

Planning Board – TM English explained that this budget is staying relatively flat. Peter Conrad made a motion to approve, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

ZBA – Motion to approve by Peter Conrad, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building – TM English stated that he is in negotiations with a possible renter of a 3-suite office. He also explained that the Town had inherited the storage facility behind the Armory from the State this year. This facility is set up as 12 individual storage units, which could be potential income-generating property. Laraine King asked about the salary and TM English explained that this was part of Rich Clifford’s salary, as well as for part-

time people when Rich was out. Rich did the custodial work at the Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building. TM English then explained about the renovations on the bathrooms to make them ADA compliant. Work on the kitchen and the heating system also needed to be done. Motion to approve by Howard Hatch, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Haverhill/Bath Covered Bridge – TM English stated that the Covered Bridge was restored a number of years ago. He put in \$2,000 for repairs and maintenance this year as there was some ice damage done to the Bridge last year, as well as some vandalism. Motion to approve by Chris Luurtsema, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Insurance – TM English explained that this was the deductible account for claims. Motion to approve by Barb Dutile, seconded by Dick Fabrizio and all approved.

Regional Associations – Motion to approve by Barb Dutile, seconded by Chris Luurtsema and all approved.

JRM Building – TM English explained that the biggest expense for JRM will be the parking lot renovations, which will be taken out of the reserve and not from the tax rate. Motion to approve by Peter Conrad, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

Sewer/Business Park – Motion to approve by Howard Hatch, seconded by Barb Dutile and all approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Minutes transcribed by Karen Hyde.