

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH**  
Tuesday, January 22, 2019 – 6:00pm  
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

**Present:** Barbara Miller, Karen Hatcher, Tyler Ward

**Also Present:** Rodney Bartlett, Nicole MacStay, Peterborough Police Chief Scott Guinard, Peterborough Fire Chief Ed Walker, Alison Kreutz

Budget Committee: Bob Hanson, Richard Clark, Ronnie McIntire, Paul Sullivan, Carl Mabbs-Zeno, Ed Henault, Donald Parkhurst

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Chair Miller called the Joint Select Board and Budget Committee Meeting to order at 6:00 PM. It was noted that Budget Committee Chair Ronald Patten was unable to attend, and so Mr. Bob Hanson would be running the meeting.

Mr. Bartlett said the cover letters submitted by the Fire Chief and Police Chief might require some slight corrections to the numbers.

### **Police Department**

Police Chief Guinard said FY20 budget for the Police Department had a decrease of 1% from FY19. He said the decrease is not reflective of any one account, but reflected small changes across several lines.

#### *Dispatch Services*

Chair Miller said that the Board had previously talked about bringing dispatch services in-house if they reached a certain level, and asked if the Town had reached that point.

Chief Guinard replied that dispatch been stable for the last three years, and that “we couldn’t establish 24-hour dispatch for ourselves for the same amount of money.”

Chair Miller asked if the Fire and Police Departments would ever share dispatch services.

Chief Ed Walker said that if the Town were ever to invest in in-house dispatch infrastructure, it would be wise to do both, but it would be expensive, and he didn’t believe it was necessary to consider at this point.

Mr. Bob Hanson asked about how 911 calls are handled, and Chief Walker explained the rather circuitous route that 911 calls take to actually get to the Fire & Police Departments.

Mr. Paul Sullivan said that residents who have called for non-emergency assistance have encountered confusion at times talking to dispatchers who apparently aren’t familiar with the area. Chief Guinard explained that on weekends and after midnight, calls to the non-emergency number go to Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department in Goffstown, so often the person who answers is not always someone who is familiar with Peterborough.

Ms. Hatcher said that, since it had been eight years since the costs and benefits of in-house combined dispatch had been evaluated, it may be worth it to take another look at the numbers.

Chief Walker said the numbers could be updated, and Chief Guinard added that calls have certainly gone up since then.

#### *Building and Maintenance/Public Safety Complex*

Mr. Richard Clark noted the 45% decrease for building repair and maintenance expenditures. Chief Guinard explained that in the current fiscal year (FY19) there was money appropriated for in-house video systems. That expense will not be incurred for FY20.

Mr. Sullivan said there’s been talk about considering a Public Safety Complex, that would contain police, fire, and ambulance services all in one place. Chief Guinard said he would strongly support that idea, and it has proven effective for other small towns. There would be only one larger building to maintain, and residents would only have to go to one place for all permits. Chief Walker agreed, and noted that construction would be less expensive, and the departments could share facilities like training, IT, parking lots, etc. The consensus was that it would be something to consider.

*Parking Fines and Speeding Tickets*

Chair Miller asked why parking fines are down, and Chief Guinard answered that there has been more voluntarily compliance, and also less time available for parking enforcement.

Chair Miller asked where speeding tickets come in, and the Chief replied that the State gets the income generated by speeding tickets, but in return the State provides the department staff with almost all their necessary training.

*Pistol Permits*

Chair Miller asked about the decrease in revenue for pistol permits. Chief Guinard explained that prior to the State becoming Open Carry, a permit was required if someone wanted to carry a loaded and concealed weapon off their property. Now that residents are not required to have a permit, revenues have gone down significantly. Most people who get a pistol permit now are probably applying to a gun club that requires a permit for prospective members, as a criminal background check is run to issue the permit. The permit fee is only \$10.00.

*Special Details*

Mr. Ed Henault asked if Special Details pay for themselves and Chief Guinard confirmed. He explained that Special Detail is when officers that are not scheduled for duty that day assist companies like Eversource or tree trimming crews doing work along the roads. Those companies are then charged for the service. The department has been getting a lot of those requests.

Mr. Ward asked if the officers on Special Detail wouldn't then respond to an emergency, if they were technically off-duty. Chief Guinard said there have been instances where an off-duty officer has assisted with emergencies when absolutely needed, but that is rare, and typically only for a short amount of time.

**Fire Department, Emergency Management, and Ambulance Service**

Chief Walker noted that the 96% increase for retirements is an error, and should decrease by about 96%.

He said the phone system had been switched to full VOIP system, which had been very helpful. Salaries increased 7.88% overall, though the budget for FY20 will be \$14,000-\$15,000 less than FY19, total.

Ms. Hatcher noted that salaries are up by only \$2,000, and payroll tax was up \$5,000. Ms. MacStay said she would investigate.

Chief Walker said one thing not mentioned on the Fire Department budget is the request for the establishment of a Capital Reserve fund for the purpose of replacing radios. Previously, 100% of portable radios were covered by a state grant, which is longer available. The cost to replace radios would be spread out over the next three fiscal years, at \$40,000 a year. That expenditure would part of the Capital Improvement budget.

*Emergency Management/Repeater*

Chief Walker said Emergency Management budget had a large jump. He explained how the Police Department has a repeater at Monadnock Community Hospital (MCH), so their radio communications have the ability to cover greater distances. The Chief is requesting a repeater for Fire Department, Emergency Management, and Ambulance Service, as topography makes radio communication a challenge currently. In order to make that work, MCH needs to put a tower on the building. MCH will cover the cost of engineering and building the tower, and the Police Department will install the equipment. He said MCH has been a "great partner" in this project.

Mr. Donald Parkhurst agreed a repeater would be very beneficial, especially for dealing with issues out on the fringes of town.

*Ambulance*

Chief Walker said Ambulance is essentially self-funded. Reimbursements make up the majority of costs. There has been a flat \$50,000 tax-payer contribution over several years. He explained that the formula for calculating costs for each community is a blended formula, equally weighed between population and call volume. Peterborough contributes the most to that.

Biggest increase is in salaries, due mainly looking to increase the amount of full-time ALS providers (paramedic level) from four to seven. ALS providers are paid 100% out of Ambulance budget. Salary costs for per-diem and part time employees are spread across Fire, 911, and Transfer Service.

Chief Walker said General Supplies are up for FY20 as well. Majority of supplies are replaced through MCH, but there are some, like the auto-pulse machine, that must be replaced elsewhere.

Mr. Carl Mabbs-Zeno asked how much revenue has been lost due to Greenfield leaving. The Chief replied it's estimated at \$100,000. Mr. Mabbs-Zeno asked how much costs will be reduced. Chief Walker replied he wasn't yet sure, but transfer call volume is up 30% over the last two years, and the estimated 130 calls the Ambulance no longer has to answer in Greenfield mostly eliminates the need to call in extra staff to cover transfers, so it's a "balancing act."

Mr. Ward asked for clarification about the \$107,000 in Machinery, Vehicles, and Equipment expenditures. The Chief replied that it includes payment for one of the ambulances, 2 ventilators and an auto-pulse machine. He said the revolving fund balance for Ambulance is at about \$450,000, so they would rather use funds from there than bond those purchases.

Mr. Clark asked for clarification about the increase in mileage. Chief Walker explained that previously staff were not paid for mileage, and the Department has corrected that and is now paying staff for mileage they should have been getting all along.

#### *Ambulance Revolving Fund*

Mr. Clark asked about the 16.7% increase in Ambulance revenue. Ms. MacStay explained that it's a revolving fund, so expenses always have to balance with the revenues. The ambulance service regularly brings in more, but the amount shown is what has to be used in order to make the fund balance, according to accounting rules. Sewer, Water, and Recreation use the same structure.

Mr. Clark said, "We want to make sure costs are in line." Chief Walker replied that the department relies on the fund balance to be robust - "We are cognizant that just because we have the money, doesn't mean we have to spend the money."

Mr. Ward asked, regarding revolving fund balances, where the extra funds go. Ms. MacStay replied that the Ambulance fund has its own fund balance and, after all expenses are paid, remaining funds stay in the fund balance.

Chair Miller asked when the vote to was made to switch it from Special Revenue to Revolving fund, and Ms. MacStay replied the vote was made last year.

Ms. Hatcher asked if there might be any opportunities for Ambulance to service other towns. Chief Walker replied that Bennington has looked at it. He said that Peterborough has the only community-run ambulance that reasonably charges the involved communities for the service their getting. When communities see the formula (based 50% on population and 50% on call volume) applied, there can be some "sticker shock." He stressed that Greenfield's decision to stop using Peterborough's service was purely financial and had nothing to do with quality of service.

Ms. Hatcher asked if there an agreement to reimburse in the case of Peterborough's service covering for another town. Chief Walker replied that currently there's not an agreement in place, but "those are discussions we're starting to have." He said it can be complicated because the fiscal year for most of the surrounding towns started at the beginning of January, and Peterborough's FY doesn't start until July.

#### **Other Business**

The next Select Board meeting, which will be a joint meeting with the Budget Committee, is scheduled for Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. Budgets for Public Works, IT, GIS, and PEG will be reviewed.

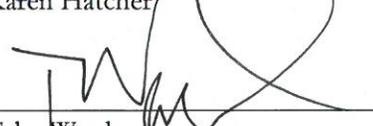
Karen Hatcher made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. All in favor. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Alison Kreutz, Administrative Assistant

PETERBOROUGH  
SELECT BOARD:

  
Barbara Miller, Chair

  
Karen Hatcher

  
Tyler Ward

**ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST**

- 1.