

**MINUTES**  
**SELECT BOARD**  
**TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH**  
Tuesday, January 14, 2020 – 5:30 PM  
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

**Present:** Tyler Ward, Karen Hatcher, Bill Taylor

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

Budget Committee: Ronald Patten (Chair), Bob Hanson, Richard Clark, Ron McIntire, Mandy Sliver, Carl Mabbs-Zeno, Ed Henault, Donald Parkhurst, James Long

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Select Board Chair Tyler Ward called the Joint Select Board and Budget Committee Meeting to order at 5:30 PM. It was noted that Ms. Hatcher would be arriving a little late.

Budget Committee Chair Roland Patten introduced the Budget Committee.

Mr. Bartlett informed the Budget Committee that no changes had made to the Budget Committee Binder since the previous week, but as the process continues there will be a list of recommended reductions for the Operating Budget.

*Review and Approval of Joint Select Board and Budget Committee Meeting from January 7, 2020.*

*Motion:* Mr. Taylor made a motion to approve Joint Select Board and Budget Committee Meeting from January 7, 2020.

*Vote:* Chair Ward seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

*Police*

Chief Scott Guinard reviewed the divisions of the Police Department for FY2021, which included Administration, Dispatch/Clerical, Patrol, Detective, Prosecution, Juvenile Diversion, and Police K-9 (new for 2021).

Chief Guinard said he does 90% of the administrative work himself, including, but not limited to, personnel, budgeting, planning, policies and procedures, recruitment, and scheduling.

Regarding dispatch/clerical, there are 2 dispatchers (1 shift each). The dispatchers handle the phone lines, radios, walk-in requests, dispatching, and initiate county and state-wide broadcasts. On the clerical side of things, they maintain the filing system and the records of requests for service, are in charge of a number of submissions to the NHDOS, compile statistical data, maintain alarm information, handle transcriptions, and fulfill attorney and insurance company requests.

Patrol responds to Calls for Service (of which there were 8,536 in 2019), investigates reported crimes and traffic accidents, handles traffic enforcement and animal control, processes arrests, performs checks on vacant homes and businesses, testify as needed, and also handles a number of specific programs.

The Police Department has 1 detective who works 30 hours a week. The Detective processes crime scenes, conducts follow-up investigations on major cases, presents felony cases to the Hillsborough County Grand Jury, attends child abuse interviews, reviews and approves crime reports, issues follow-up investigation assignments, and conducts sex offender registrations.

The Police Department has 1 prosecutor who works 30 hours a week, and works the Sunday day-shift patrol shift. The Prosecutor reviews warrants and arrest reports, consults with attorneys, victims, officers and witnesses prior to court hearings, and represents the PD at the NH-DMV and at the 8<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court. In 2019, the Prosecutor handled 465 cases.

The Juvenile Diversion Program was revived last year. It's an option for first-time offenders that are 17 or younger, and is an opportunity for juveniles to take responsibility for their actions without acquiring a Juvenile Record. It's also an alternative to multiple court appearances, which is easier on both the offender and their parents, who otherwise would have to request time off from work and other obligations. The services of the diversion coordinator are funded by the offender's family at a rate of \$75.00 per case.

The Police K-9 Program is a new program for 2021. A police dog could assist in finding lost or runaway children, psychiatric patients who have escaped detention, and adults with medical issues, and could also assist with building searches and narcotics detection (The Chief stressed the dog would not be an attack dog). The dog, any vet expenses and dog food would be provided by volunteered donations through the life of the dog. The anticipated recurring expense is \$5000 annually. The dog and handler would be trained through the Boston Police Academy.

Chief Guinard said he “sees it as an opportunity to better serve the community in a variety of ways.” He then recounted an event that had happened in Peterborough in 2015. A 20 year-old man had a disagreement with his parents and left home, threatening to harm himself. The young man’s parents notified the police and provided an estimation of where they thought he might be. The Peterborough Police Department reached out to State Police, hoping there would be a dog available to help track the man. The State Police agreed to send a dog, but it would have to be transported from Tilton, NH. Over an hour later (the dog had not yet arrived), it was discovered via tracking of his cell phone that the man had gone in the opposite direction of where his parents had estimated, and when he was found he was deceased. Having a police dog in town may have prevented this loss of life.

Mr. Mabbs-Zeno asked how many of 8,536 service calls were for accidents. The Chief said he didn’t have those numbers on him, but those statistics will be included in the Town Report.

Mr. Mabbs-Zeno then asked if the Chief had concerns about parking on both sides of Grove Street. The Chief said the PD has seen an increase in the amount of calls to the area, mostly due to mirror clipping accidents. He said most concerning to him are the crosswalks; as the vehicles are parked up against the crosswalks, it can make it very difficult for drivers to see pedestrians.

Mr. Clark asked if calls were up or down from last year. The Chief said calls were comparable to last year, but over the last 10-20 years, it’s been slowly increasing.

Mr. Clark asked if, due to the increase, the prosecutor would eventually need to be a full-time position. Chief Guinard said yes, and that goes for the detective as well.

Chair Patten asked how many officers the PD had currently.

The Chief replied that they are finally fully staffed, with 12 full-time and 2 part-time officers, though there may be 2 retirements within the next year.

Mr. Clark asked about the revenues from the Town of Sharon, and if it’s profitable. The Chief said the revenue from Sharon covers the expenses.

Mr. Clark asked if it was possible to offer police services to other towns. The Chief said technically yes, but not with the current level of staffing.

Mr. Smith handed out an addition to the Police Department section of the Budget Binder.

Mr. Taylor asked if, regarding the police dog, they were considering a German Shepard. Chief Guinard said that it’s still up for debate.

Mr. Smith said proposed increase for police budget was 2% (\$32,513).

Administrative costs (payroll, retirement, overtime, etc.) were up about \$44,000 over last year’s budget.

Building and Grounds budget is up \$5,500 over last year, \$5,000 of that is needed to replace station windows, the sills of which are completed rotted away and no longer open.

Police Special Details is up \$7,300 over last year, but there are revenue offsets for that expenditure.

The Cruiser replacement that was originally planned for this year has been postponed.

Mr. Mabbs-Zeno asked about revenue gained from the Juvenile diversion coordinator, and Chief Guinard clarified that the revenue collected from parents goes directly to the diversion coordinator, who is a Hillsborough Police Department employee, to pay for the coordinator’s services.

### *Fire & Ambulance*

Chief Ed Walker presented the Fire & Rescue Budget.

Chief Walker reviewed the components of Peterborough Fire & Rescue:

Emergency Management, fire protection (provided to both Sharon and Peterborough), emergency ambulance that serves Peterborough, Sharon, Dublin, Hancock, and Frankestown, emergency and non-emergencies transfers out of MCH (critical access designation), Fire & Health prevention activities (inspections, code enforcement, school visits).

There are 63 members of the department: 29 firefighters, 49 EMS providers (14 paramedics, 14 advances EMTs, 19 EMTs, 2 EMRs). The reason for the difference between the sum of firefighters and EMS providers is that 18 members are both firefighters and EMS providers.

The Fire Department has a full-time Chief, 2 call Deputy Chiefs, 1 Call Captain (position is currently vacant), 5 Call Lieutenants, and 21 Call Firefighters. Except for the Fire Chief, all the officers and firefighters are paid on call. There is no regular staffing of firefighters and almost all our members have other jobs.

Ambulance has a full-time Deputy Chief, 1 Call Captain (also vacant), 4 Call Lieutenants, 5 full-time paramedics, 31 per diem/part-time providers.

Two ambulances are staffed round-the-clock with a third on call. The total fleet value is \$3.82 million, not including \$2 million for the equipment within the vehicles.

The Chief presented a chart of calls received in 2019. There were 399 fire incidents, 1,042 '911' Ambulance calls, and 878 transfers (which is up over last year). Paramedics provide critical care for patients that may require complicated care.

The Chief then reviewed the Emergency Management Budget, which is split between Administration (\$13,332) 100% of which goes toward the Fire Chiefs' salary and benefits, and Operations (\$5,850), which includes equipment and emergency management related training.

#### Fire Department Budget

Chief Walker provided a breakdown of what the money that goes towards salary (\$384,758) provides:

- 2,022 hours ambulance shift coverage
- 3,500 hours emergency response
- 1,500 firefighter training
- 2,080 hours of maintenance
- 1040 hours to fire prevention
- 2300 hours of administrative work

In Operations (\$71,750), \$26,000 is paid to Southwest Mutual Aid for our dispatch services, and in Administration (\$70,150), \$50,000 is paid to help support the 911 Ambulance Service. Staff Development (\$11,500) is non-salary costs associated with member training. Both Fire and Emergency Managements are "very technical operations," and the skills and equipment needed to do those jobs are rapidly changing.

Excluding CIP, the budget is up .22%. Included in that is a request to convert the part-time administrative assistant position to full-time. With the amount of administrative work and the crews being so busy, right now when the current administrative assistant isn't there, like on Fridays, there is a gap in PFR's ability to interact with the public.

"Our budget is a bottom-line budget." With the increased complexity of our fleet, there's a lot of work that we can't do, and that our DPW can't do, so much has been shifted to outside vendors for maintenance, so there has been reallocation of funds from salaries to vehicle and equipment maintenance.

Ms. Hatcher asked how many hours the administrative assistant works currently.

Chief Walker said she works 30 hours weekly, and the move to full-time would have her working 40 hours.

Ms. Hatcher asked what the cost of benefits for a full-time employee would be.

Ms. MacStay said it depends, but we would budget \$35,000 for a family plan. That would be split between Fire Department and Ambulance (which is paid out of user fees).

Ms. Hatcher asked for the total cost of salary and benefits for that position. Chief said it would be about \$70,000, split between Fire & Ambulance.

Mr. MacIntire asked about the Medical Services line. The Chief explained that all new employees go through a pre-hire physical, and firefighters and EMTs are sent annually for a physical. Medical services is money to provide those services, and Express MD/Occupational Health in Bedford is the current provider.

Mr. MacIntire asked if these expenditures were seasonal, or tended to occur towards the end of the year. Chief said they've been a little behind in getting people in for their annual physicals, but they've been doing a good job retaining the people they have (high turnover can increase the cost).

Mr. MacIntire said it appeared that though \$6,200 was budgeted in 2019, in the next six months only \$40.00 was spent. Chief Walker said they may be due to a coding issue. Mr. Smith said the balance in that fund as of today was \$2,859.00

Mr. Clark asked about payroll taxes. Ms. MacStay said it was broken out of various budgets including fire training, operations, and administration.

Mr. Clark said he didn't see any request for funds for workman's compensation. Mr. Smith said they would need to take a look at that.

Mr. Clark said as payroll goes up, so do payroll taxes.

Ms. Hatcher asked about cafeteria plan, which didn't appear to have an item for 2021.

Ms. MacStay said it should now be included within miscellaneous budget.

Mr. Taylor asked what the cafeteria plan is. Ms. MacStay explained that it's a benefit that is offered if a staff member waives all or some of the Town-offered health insurance benefits. It saves the Town a lot of money, and is a good incentive for employees to find insurance elsewhere.

Mr. Mabbs-Zeno noticed payment expected from Sharon is up 17%. Ms. MacStay explained that the reason for the increase was that Sharon did not see an increase last year, which had originally been planned, so they agreed to pay a higher rate this year. Rather than a gradual increase over two years, there was a single larger increase following a year that had no increase.

Ms. Hatcher asked if there was a place to see both the Fire & Ambulance numbers together, and what the net increase is in the whole department. Mr. Smith explained that as the Fire is a tax fund, and the ambulance is a revolving fund (or, 'break-even' fund), it would be difficult to combine the numbers.

There was a discussion about the most efficient ways to illustrate the overall picture of the PFR budget, including both funds.

#### Ambulance Service Budget

There are two ambulances staffed, and a third is staffed by on-call folks. Chief Walker noted that the higher salary (compared to the Fire Department) is due to more full-time personnel. Chief Walker provided a breakdown of what the money that goes towards salary (\$1,121,465) provides:

- 12480 hours of full-time ambulance staff/response
- 25272 part-time per diem ambulance coverage/response
- 1000 training
- 520 hours of maintenance
- 3,530 hours of administrative work

Administration and Operations cover the non-salary costs of the department including dispatch services (\$26,500), and the Peterborough contribution to the 911 Ambulance Service (\$50,000), which includes uniforms, protective clothing, and other supplies.

Staff Development (\$18,000) is the non-salary costs associated with member training.

Buildings & Grounds (\$39,065) and Vehicles & Equipment (\$61,500) are all costs related to those areas.

FY2021 Budget is down 0.17%.

Capital equipment has been placed into a realistic replacement plan. As service is funded by the users, growth has been stabilized, resulting in consistent, manageable staffing model. PFR is now a key EMS provider in the region. He noted, regarding taking on other communities, that it is a "delicate balance." Though we could make it work with a smaller community, like Temple or Greenfield, we don't have the capacity to serve an additional larger community at this time.

### PFR Capital

There are no new capital requests for ambulance. Until 2016, the only capital the ambulance allocated to other communities was the ambulances themselves, and didn't include the big ticket items/specialized equipment used within the ambulances. That has been corrected, so now other communities we serve are appropriately billed for those capital items as well.

Mr. Hanson asked if other towns pay an annual fee, plus fees for individual calls.

Chief Walker explained that the fee is based on combination of population and call volume. We perform an estimate on what our call volume will be, and then work with Emax Medical Billing (the Town's billers) to calculate an estimate of revenue from other towns. Communities are sent a bill for what is essentially the difference between what it costs us to run that service for them, and the revenue gained from those services. Dublin had a 37% increase in call volume, so we were able to adjust the bill based on the call volume.

We're on the second year of the FD portable radio capital reserve request (\$40,000 a year; \$120,000 over three years). The current radios are about 15 years old and really need to be replaced.

Last item in PFR Capital is the design money for fire station (\$250,000 request split evenly between fire department, which is funded by tax payer funds, and ambulance budget, which is funded by service users). Should the funds make it through Town Meeting this year, it'll be on a short timeline; the goal is to have final set of plans ready for presentation at the 2021 Town Meeting, so the numbers and all input will have to be collected and finalized by October/early November this year to present to the CIP Committee. "It is 20-years' worth of work getting to this point."

Utilizing photos presented via PowerPoint, the Chief presented a 'tour' of the current station.

The building was originally constructed in 1954 as the DPW garage. In 1971, the DPW outgrew it and moved out, and the fire department moved in in 1972. There have been several renovations and upgrades over the years, and the building is about 7,900 square feet total. In 2005, the Michael and Weller report estimated the space of the Fire Department should be 15,800 square feet. When the Town revisited the idea of a new fire station in 2017, Warren Street Architects recommended 18,900 square feet to include additional bunk space, shower space, and storage of ambulances and ambulance equipment.

Right now, nine Lieutenants share four desks. The kitchen hasn't been updated in decades. The bunk rooms are only semi-private, as the walls do not extend to the ceiling (so as to avoid any reconfiguration of sprinkler system, fire alarms, or HVAC system). Staff lockers are currently in the apparatus floor, so staff belongings are exposed to temperature and humidity changes, as well as the soot and exhaust brought in on the fire trucks. Medical supplies are stored in a small room just off of the apparatus room.

Regarding the apparatus space, Mr. Taylor pointed out that the narrow spaces would make it very difficult for firefighters to maneuver past each other and get into vehicles, especially while wearing their equipment.

Missing spaces in the current facility include:

- Decontamination showers
- Clean room for EMS supplies
- Firefighting equipment storage
- Dedicated room for breathing air compressor
- Clean ventilated room for turnout gear
- Adequate computer server space
- Locker rooms and gender specific bunk area
- Meeting space
- File storage area
- Training room
- Efficient HVAC system
- Completer backup power

- Adequate vehicle exhaust management (The Chief shared that the current top killer of firefighters is cancer due to carcinogens)

Ms. Hatcher asked if they had shower facilities at the Station.

Chief confirmed, “but we’re still short on bathrooms” and the building is not ADA-compliant.

Mr. Taylor asked if the facility would pass, if there was a group that checked up on NFPA (Nation Fire Protection Association) standards.

Chief Walker said those standards are voluntary and are ‘best practice’ but, if you look at recommended station design, the station is “way off” from that. “There are current standards we do not meet, without a doubt.”

Mr. Taylor said he has seen fire stations all over the country due to his past work in the fire industry, and the current state of our facility is a safety concern and “pretty ridiculous”.

Chief said sustainability should be considered and, addressing the square footage differences in the 2005 and 2017 reports, “we can clearly articulate where that difference came from”; the PFR went from a single ambulance to 4 ambulances, and added overnight staff.

“Our mission and needs have stabilized, but if we go forward, we will have something that is not only designed for what we’re currently doing but will be adequate for what we need in the future.”

Chair Patten asked what would happen to the old building, and said it’s part of the equation, and the Town should make sure it won’t sit vacant. “It has intrinsic value.”

There was a discussion about the different potential uses for the property.

Mr. Clark asked the Chief to be conscious about the square footage, and “pick what you need.” The Chief said the 18,000 square foot footprint may be actually high, as some storage could be provided by the existing cold storage building at the DPW complex.

Mr. Clark requested “please don’t put a 20-year roof on it.”

Ms. Hatcher said, if we have a state-of-the-art building, we could become much more attractive to other towns to contract with, and we should look ahead at the future business model and consider if we have opportunity for expansion.

Chief Walker said there has been talk about the potential of sharing a complex with police station. “When we look at the footprint, one of the considerations will be if we can fit a police station on that parcel.” That will be part of the discussion as well.

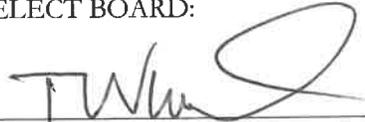
Mr. Parkhurst said the first fire department was in place for 50 years, the next one was in place for 50 years, so the next one should be set to be in place for 50 years.

Mr. Taylor asked if improved facilities provided substantial opportunity to attract more employees/volunteers. The Chief said it is a factor in attracting people, and, anecdotally, past candidates have been turned off by the poor state of the current facility.

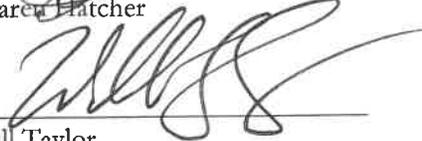
Mr. Hanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:06 PM. Mr. MacIntire seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Alison Kreutz, Department Assistant

PETERBOROUGH  
SELECT BOARD:

  
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Tyler Ward

  
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Karen Hatcher

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Bill Taylor

**ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST**

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