

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10

APPROVED
TOWN OF PELHAM
BUDGET COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, September 25, 2014
APPROVED – September 29, 2014

11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28

CALL TO ORDER – at approximately 7:30pm

PRESENT: Mr. Daniel Guimond, Mr. David Cate, Mr. Bob Sherman, Mr. Dave Cronin,
Mr. Greg Smith (arrived after the meeting commenced), Ms. Daryle Hillsgrove,
Mr. Leo Rush, Ms. Amy Spencer, School Board Representative Megan Larson,
Selectmen Representative Doug Viger

ABSENT: Mr. Everett Gibbons (not excused)

Also present: Town Administrator Brian McCarthy, Finance Director Cindy Kelley, Police Chief Joseph Roark, Captain Steven Toom, Police
Office Manager Celia Lingley, Parks & Recreation Director Brian Johnson

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2015 BUDGET PRESENTATION

Finance Director Cindy Kelley came forward for budget presentation/review.

Police Department - \$2,547,709 requested – an increase of \$16,931 over 2014 budget.

Police Chief Joseph Roark and Office Manager Celia Lingley came forward to review the proposed budget. Chief Roark began by introducing
Captain Steven Toom who had recently joined Pelham.

Salaries – Mainly contractual obligations. Three officers had larger increased based on reaching a higher rank. There was a brief discussion
regarding the physical fitness incentive. There will be twenty one eligible and the proposed budget lists a cost for eighteen; however, after
reviewing actuals, the Chief felt the number could be reduced to fifteen. The Board will take the reduction into consideration when they vote.

Mr. Guimond asked if the department had a full compliment. Chief Roark answered no; they were currently down two positions. One officer left and another officer position is still in arbitration. Ms. Hillsgrove questioned if the positions could be filled with the allocated budget. Chief Roark anticipated being able to fill the positions as listed. Ms. Spencer questioned if there was a lieutenant currently in place. Chief Roark answered no; the assessment portion of the process has been completed. The candidates are three in-house sergeants who will complete a written examination during the first week of October. Additionally there will be a sergeant's test during the first week of October to fill that position. They were hoping to make the positons by mid-October.

Chief Roark explained they've left \$1 placeholder for the K-9 unit. They would like it to remain until they have the opportunity to revisit the program and determine whether or not its fiscally prudent by looking at the benefits versus cost. Mr. Guimond questioned if there was a K-9 unit available if Pelham needed the service. Chief Roark said they relied on mutual aid for K-9's. Typically they call a surrounding Town, if they aren't available they contact the State Police.

Supplies – Decrease to prisoner food. In going through the accreditation process, they don't like to keep prisoners over four hours because of the liability. They prefer to transport to Manchester or have them bailed out. The prisoners that have to stay are fed.

Mr. Guimond asked how the accreditation process was going. Chief Roark felt the process was going well. They are in the formal application stage; once accepted they will have 18 months to complete the process. He's been impressed so far and learned that there were things they needed to improve upon.

Chief Roark told the Board that the tasers were no longer eligible to be covered under extended warranty because they were all over five years old. The department has a total of 24 tasers and had begun a program to replace them six at a time, which will allow for the whole compliment of tasers to be replaced within a four years. Mr. Cate asked how long the shelf life was for tasers. Chief Roark said the current tasers were five years old and beginning to show their age. He explained the importance of the tasers and noted they have cameras that record when the unit is deployed.

Telephone - Annual increase through Verizon. They use Verizon for their cell phones and the mobile data units within the cruisers. Chief Roark said they had good luck with the units and was unsure how much of a savings could be expected if they bid the cost out. He also the program they used in the past was to pay officers a stipend to use their personal phone. He explained as smart phones came into popularity, defense attorneys started to ask for police officer's phones for any phone calls they may have made during an investigation. Police officers were having their phones taken as evidence. Pelham and other agencies adopted the practice of issuing a basic phone (with pooled minutes) to each of the officer for use while on duty.

Mr. Guimond asked the status of Pelham's phone coverage. Chief Roark believed cellular coverage was in the mid-90's. He noted Raymond Park as one of the difficult areas. There is a blue colored phone installed that people could use in the event of an emergency, which connects directly to

Police dispatch. The mobile radios in the Police cars Chief Roark would list at 100% coverage. The portable radios he considered in the high 90's. He noted Fire Chief Midgley was looking to locate on a tower in Dracut, MA, which would help with the low spots.

Gas & Oil – Chief Roark noted they base their budget on gallons, not price. The budget line will have the actual number at reconsideration once the Selectmen receive the State bid amount. He noted that the \$105 figure listed per tire was the average cost. The department purchases both regular and snow tires, which are similar in cost.

Rentals – Increase to tower rental due to fee increase by owner.

New Equipment – Mr. Guimond noted that the cruisers had been moved to Debt Service. He questioned why the Interceptor wasn't moved as well. Ms. Kelley said the Interceptor was pre-existing in the budget; when the lease is up it will be placed in Debt Service. The motorcycle has been paid off and expected to have another 5-6 years.

There was a brief discussion regarding three items (Watch Guard Cruiser Video, Patrol PC Cruiser MDTs, Motorola Radios) that were listed in the budget, but would be funded by using FEMA funds. Mr. Viger explained how the FEMA reimbursement money was handled. Mr. Guimond questioned how much FEMA money remained after the proposed expenses. Mr. McCarthy stated there was \$18,000 remaining. Mr. Viger said the Selectmen's attitude was that the departments that expend money out of their budgets during emergencies are reimbursed by using FEMA money when they need it.

Expenses – There was a discussion regarding the animal shelter building, which was listed within the Capital Improvement Plan ('CIP'). Chief Roark said to come up with the CIP figure, by using the square foot building cost for a police station, which was \$184.45. The proposed animal shelter was sized at approximately 2,250SF; therefore the proposed cost calculated out to be \$415,000. The number was a best guess 'placeholder' figure. He said they would also need to answer questions such as location and building size. He was still waiting to see what listing the shelter was assigned within the CIP. Chief Roark was thankful for the generosity and volunteerism of the people involved with the Animal Rescue Network of New England ('ARNNE'). Mr. Smith questioned how much use the shelter had. Chief Roark said there was very little vacancy from time to time. He said every time he drove by there were animals out in the run.

Mr. Smith questioned if the shelter, or its condition put the Town at risk. Chief Roark explained an animal is someone's property. When the department takes custody of someone's property, they have to ensure it's reasonable safe keeping. One example, he said the Town would be responsible if a dog squeezed through a fence and got hit by a car. The Town would be liable if an animal caused injury or sickness to a person or another animal. Mr. Sherman asked if owners could be charged room and board. Chief Roark said they were. He provided additional information regarding the shelter and what it was lacking.

Mr. Sherman questioned if the new roundabouts had lessened accidents in the center. Chief Roark answered yes. He said the impact of accidents had changed from being 90degree t-bone accidents and were now low speed rear end accidents or glancing side swipes. He felt the roundabouts were working great and endorsed them.

Mr. Cronin noted one of the backup page information appeared to be cut off. He questioned the percentage for the consoles/repeater contract. Chief Roark said there was a 5% increase from the vendor.

There was a brief discussion regarding the Universal Criminal Report ('UCR') that was recently released. Chief Roark explained the UCR is compiled of the statistics from every police department nationwide. Pelham is in the top ten safest towns in New Hampshire. He ended by informing the Board Officer Mannion handles all social media for the department. He said Pelham had ranked number one for having the most followers on Twitter in the Nation, based on the size of the agency.

Mr. Sherman asked if the communications equipment listed on the CIP (\$110,000) would be submitted as a warrant article. Chief Roark said the Selectmen opted to prioritize the item and moved it up to Debt Service for a three-year lease.

Parks & Recreation - \$190,355 requested – an increase of \$4,184 over 2014 budget.

Parks & Recreation Director Brian Johnson came forward to review the proposed budget.

Salaries – Contractual increase. Increase \$600 for office coverage to assist during the department's busy time periods based on an increase in programs and public interaction. Mr. Johnson said it is often difficult to concentrate on administration work with a flow of interruptions. At times he needs to put headsets on simply to write grant applications.

Ms. Hillsgrove questioned how much grant money the department received. Mr. Johnson said almost every grant was matching; recently they received a \$20,000 grant and matched it with money they raised independently. He said they would be submitting a grant within the week for \$5,000 to clear trails at Raymond Park; the matching funds would be generated from money they raised themselves. Ms. Hillsgrove felt the \$600 increase for office coverage was a small price to pay to allow Mr. Johnson the time to break away and bring grant money into the community.

Mr. Sherman asked if the State ended the prisoner program. Mr. Johnson said it disappeared for a couple years. The program has since been brought back at a cost of \$1,000 per week. That cost cannot be broken up into one or two days. Mr. Sherman questioned if he could use the assistance in the Spring. Mr. Johnson believed they could fund it on their own if they needed the help. He preferred to have the money in his budget for office coverage.

136 *Equipment Repairs* – Level funded. Mr. Guimond questioned if the vehicle would be in need of additional repairs since it was getting older. Mr. Johnson said the truck had approximately 95,000 miles. It rarely leaves the Town and is used to travel between the parks for deliveries. Mr. Cate asked what the lumber was used for. Mr. Johnson noted the skate park was getting; there were places where the wood was rotting out. There was a brief discussion regarding vandalism, which had not been excessive. Mr. Johnson told the Board that a generous anonymous donor had come forward and donated \$4,000 in camp scholarships, which left the department with additional money. He said the donor walked through the camp lodge and has offered to give it a face lift by painting the wall and floors and replacing the ping pong tables. There was another generous person who donated 50in plasma televisions. He said Pelham was a generous community.

137 *Expenses* – Increase of \$600 for tree cutting and pruning. Mr. Johnson explained there were trees at Lyons Park that had rotted through and needed to be removed. He was shocked when he got the bids for their removal because it used up his budget line. He said when limbs come down during storms they need to have them cleared; now that he knows the cost he realized the line may need additional funding.

138 Mr. Cate wanted to know if any revenue was received for tree harvesting. Mr. Johnson understood Forestry would receive the revenue, not his department. Mr. Sherman believed money generated from tree harvesting at Raymond Park was to remain with that park.

139 Ms. Spencer questioned if private companies were used for tree removal. Mr. Johnson contacts the Highway Department or the Selectmen's office for company names and prices. In his recent experience the cost hasn't been per tree, it was based on the time needed. A full day is \$3,200; a half day is \$1,600 and the company informs what they can do within that timeframe.

140 Mr. Sherman noticed there were lots for sale along Sherburne Road and questioned if there was any chance of Parks & Recreation purchasing them to gain additional access to Pelham Veteran's Memorial Park. Mr. Viger had confidence in the Conservation Commission Chair Paul Gagnon to keep watch of land to create connections. Mr. Johnson said he would contact Mr. Gagnon. He noted one the grants they were in the process of writing dealt with connectivity of land. Ms. Hillsgrove questioned if additional money was needed for tree cutting. Mr. Johnson believed the additional \$600 would be adequate.

141 ***Retirement - \$1,391,355 requested - an increase of \$46,207 over 2014 budget.***

142 Ms. Kelley told the Board that the rates were current.

143 Mr. Cronin asked for a breakdown of the number of people in each group. Ms. Kelley will e-mail the Board the information.

144 Ms. Spencer questioned what would cause a number to decrease, such as shown for the Fire Department. Ms. Kelley replied the Fire Department had no step increases for the coming year and were in an 'off' year for overtime education.

145 The Board concluded their budget review.

162
163
164
165

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: (Sherman/Cate) To adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: (10-0-0) The motion carried.

166
167
168
169
170
171

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Charity A. Landry
Recording Secretary