

Conway Finance Committee
Minutes
January 11th, 2016 7:30 PM
Town Office

Members Present: Jim Bosman, Bob Stone, Sheila Harrington, Zach Howard (Guests present: Roy Cohen, Jodey Bensen, Chris Herrmann)

Next Meeting Date

Jan 25 7:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Approved minutes of 12/7/15 as amended.

Vacancies

Roy Cohen has resigned. Christina Conklin still to submit her resignation in writing.

Ambulance Budget

Met with Jodey and Chris and reviewed ambulance budget and stabilization account. Jodey wants to make sure we are accumulating enough money in Ambulance Stabilization, because a new ambulance will cost between \$200-\$300K. Jim noted that from FY12 to FY15, the Ambulance revenues were generally up and expenses flat. However over this same period, operating expenses were 15-25% under budget each years and the excess does not go back into the "receipts reserved" account, but rather goes to free cash just like any other department. Jim noted that in order to preserve more dollars in the receipts account for eventual transfer to ambulance stabilization, the thing to do would be to tighten up the ambulance budget. In this way, for the annual ambulance operating budget, the town will continue to raise and appropriate \$15K per year, but less will be need to be appropriated or transferred from the "receipts reserved" account (so more will be available to transfer from receipts to the ambulance stabilization account).

Roy noted that another possible solution would be to have the town raise and appropriate the \$15K directly into Ambulance Stabilization rather than putting it towards ambulance department operating expense. FY16 ambulance dept expenses through December were \$16K. Jodey and Chris reviewed the FY17 budget and brought the total down to approximately \$36,400 (not including wage adjustments) which seems to be adequate based on FY16 burn rate. Jim explained that if total ambulance dept expenses exceed the total budget, Fin Com will cover the shortfall from the reserve account.

Jodey shared the draft of the new Ambulance Director job description and it seemed to describe a position that is way more that what we need for our one-town ambulance company.

Fin Com recommended purchase of the \$15K Lucas chest compression device assuming no grant monies are available.

Jim will speak to the select board about Tom H. writing grant requests because this was one of the key reasons that Fin Com supported the creation of the full-time town administrator position in the first place.

Review of Tom's Memo

Roy noted that for years the Fin Com has been working to tighten up departmental budgets to help get free cash down to a more reasonable level and that we are finally seeing the fruits of that effort with the relatively low amount of certified free cash this budget cycle.

Jim said he doesn't feel we are in danger of needing to do a prop 2 ½ override and that now the voters will be given the chance to say whether or not they want their taxes to go up for us to make all of the

transfers to stabilization and other appropriations that we have historically made from free cash. Sheila noted that there is a \$5K spending article to be on the February special town meeting warrant and questioned what this is for. It looks like this was a result of the ongoing efforts to clean up the special revenue accounts but we don't know for sure and we are not sure why Fin Com was not asked to make a recommendation on this spending article for the STM warrant.

Apparently Tom is recommending debt exclusion for borrowing for portion of the new fire truck. Debt exclusion means the funds you raise and appropriate to pay off the debt don't count in the calculation of the proposition 2 ½ levy limit. Historically our grammar school borrowing has been debt excluded, and there was a proposal to have the highway garage borrowing be debt excluded.

IT Dept Budget

Roy noted that there is a new IT department budget requested for FY17 and that the dollars requested there are for maintenance and for routine replacement of infrastructure equipment and computers across town departments, whereas historically some departments had budgeted for their own computer replacements.

Adjourned at 9:15 pm