

**Town of Durham
Board of Selectmen
Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes
Fire Department
February 8th 2016**

Call to Order: Selectman Wakeman called the meeting to Order at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chairman Jeffrey Wakeman, Vice Chairman Sarah Hall, Selectman Mark Blake, Selectman Joshua Libby arrived at 6:15 p.m. Selectman Michael Stewart excused.

Quorum: Wakeman announced a Quorum had been met with four (4) members present.

Also Present: AA/TA Ruth Glaeser, Fire Chief/EMA Director William St. Michel, Secretary Jill Toher, Keith Russell, Fire Department.

Residents Present: None

Public Comments: None.

Fire Department Budget Discussion: Chief St. Michel supplied the Board with budget handouts including a proposed break down of proposed Warrant Articles for the Board's consideration. He also provided Capital Fund amortization charts with figures from 1995 including projections through 2024.

Personnel, Support and Benefits: Chairman Wakeman pointed out a calculating error in line #7, Chief's Salary, which also included recalculations to the Support and Benefit lines. The Fire Chief proposed a two (2%) percent raise in the Chief's salary line, \$57,498.01, which reflects a 53 week pay period. Chairman Wakeman suggested rounding up that figure to \$57,500.00 and the remainder of the Board concurred.

Line #8 – Labor: Chief St. Michel is recommending a two (2%) percent increase which includes a slight increase in projected hours based on last year's experience. His total projected increase is 4.14%. Last year the labor line was over-spent by \$1,201.00.

Lines #14 through #18 – Support and Benefits: Will be adjusted based on the changes to the Personnel line.

Operating Expenses: Chief St. Michel reviewed his projections for lines #23 through #34 and line #36, and the Board concurred with his proposals.

Line #35 – Dispatch – The Board, at it's regular meeting held on January 26th 2016, requested Chief St. Michel look into what it might cost for Durham to look into joining one of the following: Androscoggin County Sheriff's Department and LA-911 in order to determine

whether their costs are in line with Lisbon's new contract. He offered to approach Brunswick which dispatches for Freeport-Pownal.

Chief St. Michel's research is ongoing and it is anticipated he will report back at an upcoming meeting. The Fire Chief stated he has a meeting with Lisbon on Wednesday to discuss several issues regarding the new contract.

Also discussed at great length included semantics regarding statistics on delay when dispatching and whether it meets the standard, several incidents experienced with dispatching to the wrong address, etc.

The Fire Chief advocates Durham remain with Lisbon, as he feels it is in the best interests of the Town as Lisbon is closer to a larger portion of Durham. Due to the fact Durham participates with automatic mutual aid, Durham's fire insurance rating is lower, which results in lower fire insurance rates to homeowners.

The amount Chief St. Michel projected for the 2016 budget for dispatch is \$23,220.00, which reflects an increase of \$1,244.00, or 5.66% more than last year, per the proposed new contract with Lisbon.

The total operating budget was adjusted down to \$306,577.00.58 based on changes made to Personnel, Support and Benefit lines.

Proposed Articles – Fire Department Capital Fund – Chief St. Michel provided proposed Warrant Articles for the Fire Station Payment #14 of #14 and Quint Payment #3 of 6, both of which are fixed payments.

He also proposed an Article that \$45,000.00 be allocated to the Capital Improvement Account. After a lengthy discussion as to whether to recommend a lower amount, including review of the projected monies needed to replace aging apparatus, it was the consensus of the Board to support the Fire Chief's recommendation of \$45,000.00. Chairman Wakeman pointed out that the estimated cost for a new engine to replace aging Engine #22 is approximately \$474,000.00.

The Selectmen discussed at great length financing options for a loan that will need to be secured in 2017 to purchase a new engine. One of the proposals includes in-house financing with the manufacturer until delivery, when the Town would need to have a loan in place to payoff the manufacturer.

Vice Chairman Hall voiced her concerns regarding the Town's proposed debt ratio and whether it would meet State Statutes. A Treasurer's Statement would need to reflect that the total amount borrowed would not exceed the Town's debt limit. AA/TA Glaeser will look into this and report back. Chairman Wakeman requested AA/TA look into how to word a proposed Article should the Town decide to enter a debt agreement with the manufacturer.

The Fire Chief proposed an Article for repairs at the Fire Station including paving of the entire parking lot - \$53,000.00; Trim replacement and painting - \$10,500.00, which he recently verified; and, Floor repair – a quote for \$2,900.00, which he is in the process of re-verifying, The amount he requested for the installation of security cameras, \$3,391.00, per quote, was transferred by the Selectmen to Telecommunications.

Discussed at length was the need to pave the Fire Department lot. Chief St. Michel stated that the Fire Station was built in 2001/2002, and the lot has not been re-paved since. It is recommended that the lot should be re-paved every ten years. The only improvement to the parking lot since the Fire Station was built was crack sealing performed by the DPW last year in an effort to help preserve the many areas in poor condition.

Also discussed was the possibility of tying in paving the Fire Department lot with proposed Town paving projects, which may relate in a decrease in the actual projected costs.

Briefly discussed was whether there would be cost savings if the Town could secure rolling bonding to include projected borrowing for roads and the fire apparatus. AA/TA Glaeser will follow up and supply information to the Board.

Adjournment: Vice Chairman Hall Moves to Adjourn at 7:30 p.m. Selectman Libby Second. Motion Carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill S. Toher
Meetings Secretary