**Town of Wales**

**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, January 12, 2017 @ 7:00 PM

Town Hall, Selectmen’s office

Present: Kimberly Jorge, Roy Lainson, Valerie Bernier, Bill Darnley

**CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:06pm**

**MINUTES**

Motion to approve the minutes from 12/08/2016 made by Roy

Seconded by Roy

All in favor

The motion passed unanimously

**APPOINTMENTS**

*Board of Health @ 7:10*

Mr David Foote: The Board of Health discussed at their last meeting an interest in obtaining a 5% increase to the Board of Health stipend. Mr. Foote is here to formally request that it be incorporated into the budget. He was informed by the Finance Committee that stipends are out of our purview; he should bring this request to the Board of Selectmen, and should they approve the increase, it will be incorporated into the FY18 budget.

Between appointments, the new budget request forms were discussed. Incomplete budget requests will hereby be returned back to their respective departments for update before being considered toward the FY18 budget.

Roy suggested that he perform research into the question of whether the town of Wales has to conform to the state minimum wage increase, and if so, we will send a memo out to all departments to remind them to incorporate the wage increase for all hourly employees who are currently paid less than $11/hour.

Motion: Roy made a motion to send out a reminder on behalf of the Finance Committee regarding the need to adjust hourly wages as per the 2017 Massachusetts minimum wage increase after performing the necessary research to confirm that the state minimum wage hike applies to municipalities. This memo will also state that this increase was already incorporated into the FY17 budget, so reserve requests to cover this wage increase should not be necessary.

Seconded by: Kimberly

All in favor

The motion passed unanimously

*Fire Department @ 7:30*

Chief John Croke presented at 7:30pm. He stated that the fire department’s maintenance, parts, and “labor costs line item has increased on their FY18 budget request due to an aging fleet, with parts wearing and pump overalls. Next year, he anticipates overhauling the pumps on Engine #4, which will cost roughly $2,500. The communication equipment line item will need an increase as well.the fire department installed two new systems for dispatch. This is a state-of-the-art system with screens that help with staffing. This will increase communications by $1,000 per year. E-dispatch has started. The fees for this system experienced a $1,000 increase over last year as well. The requested amount is $2,500, which is a $1,000 total increase over last year for this line item.

There is a necessary expense of $17,589 to replace 10 sets of structural firefighting gear that will no longer be compliant as of 2017. They were acquired in 2006 and were only guaranteed by the supplier for ten years.There are 32 total sets. Only ten must be replaced this year, and three of these are to be covered by the existing new equipment line item. Two years from now, seven more will need to be replaced. Three years from now, ten more will need to be replaced. Each set is approximately $2,300.

It was mentioned to John Croke that his department’s budget request was not complete, and he stated that he expects to request level funding for all other line items but will work on completing the paperwork in the coming weeks.

Mr. Croke stated that everything is on point with the June 2017 due date for the bid process for the hose grant. One quote came in late, and so a six week extension was requested. They have decided on a vendor. If there is remaining money after the purchase is complete, it will not be returned to the Reserve but instead it will remain in the fire department’s 2017 budget.

Mr. Croke presented the Finance Committee with a list of items and explained how the new items needed from this list are purchased in a staggered fashion over several fiscal years to avoid any budgetary constraints.

The Finance Committee discussed the WFD proposal. The expenses proposed are considerable and will require significant planning. It is speculated that the e-dispatch system may decrease the amount of money necessary for the WFD member wage line item due to more precise staffing.

**OLD BUSINESS**

*Review status of Backhoe-Loader acquisition*

It is on schedule. Since our last recommendation, the Board of Selectmen voted not to trade in the old backhoe and will instead pay the additional $2,500 needed for the new backhoe purchase out of the Norcross account. An attempt will be made to sell he old backhoe for an amount greater than the $2,500 offered for it as a trade-in. The replacement is on schedule and the town is just waiting on an invoice.

**NEW BUSINESS**

*Review and discussion of submitted FY18 budget requests.*

Roy has not had the opportunity to compile the budget requests into a spreadsheet yet and we will review them more thoroughly after the Excel spreadsheet has been compiled. Paper copies of several budget requests were reviewed briefly and some were flagged for return to their respective departments due to incomplete status.

*Address any other business brought before us, as appropriate.*

Bill mentioned the CIPC. He had kept after every member for 7 months in an attempt to meet. They have finally started having meetings, but at the last meeting, two members fought about ownership of Lake George and this was the only topic that was discussed during this meeting before it adjourned. This was frustrating for the Finance Committee’s CIPC representative and he feels that this needs to be addressed more formally.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Bill made a motion to adjourn at 8:26pm

Seconded by Roy

All in favor

The motion passed unanimously

The meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.