**Town of Wales**

**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, February 23, 2017 @ 7:00 PM

Town Hall, Selectmen’s office

In attendance: Bill Darnley, Roy Lainson, Kimberly Jorge, Valerie Bernier

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:08pm

**MINUTES**

Roy provided suggested edits to the 2/15/17 minutes and

Motion to approve the minutes with the suggested revisions by Bill

Seconded by Val

All in favor

The motion passed unanimously

**APPOINTMENTS**

WPD Chief Hastings @ 7:10PM

The in-service training is going to include 40 hours of in-service which will be required for 6 officers. This will allow them to work nights and weekends. The budget did not include this $2,000 for training but this will in fact be necessary to add to the budget request. He will resubmit a new budget request with this included. The office expenses went down $100. The technology expense increased for a cruiser computer that will be able to communicate with the dispatch. We were only licensed for one laptop computer and therefore the increase is necessary so that multiple computers can being use at a time, the state should reimburse $2,225 for the first 12 months of this service beginning on the date that it goes live. This still needs to be paid up front. The following fiscal year we will be a 50% reimbursement of this fee and the third year, there will be no state reimbursement. If Wales did not participate in this service, it would be difficult to coordinate with neighboring towns. The increase in the wages line item was intended for a wage increase, not a man hour increase. There is concern that the current hourly wage is becoming closer to minimum wage. There have also been a couple large cases lately that may cause a need for increased hours for the 2017 fiscal year. The air card expense was requested because there is now a third vehicle. Having wireless internet access in this third vehicle is necessary. The uniform allowance is currently paid out of pocket. The officers may either be reimbursed for submitted receipts or up front as a part of their wages, though he would prefer to set it up as an account with a uniform shop as he feels this will provide more control over the uniforms. The Finance Committee wants to ensure that the uniform funding is not included directly into each officer’s wage.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Roy spoke with Bill Anair from the cemetery commission and circulated an email with notes from this meeting. The is a desire to expand two roads so that more plots can be sold. The additional $1,000 on the cemetery caretaker line item does not seem to apply to directly to is line item, as $5,600 is what the caretaker would typically be paid not including some additional small payments related to odd jobs, although this may be renegotiated at the end of the current fiscal year. This $1,000 request is more related to the road building project. It is unclear who would be responsible for spreading out the gravel for the roads. This may be why there was the caretaker increase but more information is necessary. Val proposed $7,500 total for salary and $2,000 total for expenses. The following fiscal year, the expense line would return back to $1,000 but the caretaker line item would remain $7,500. Although there is a perpetual care trust, it would not be ideal to wipe out this account to cover this one-time road project. Bill will be contacted to clarify.

Highway department: the licenses line item’s $500 increase was not explained in the budget request. Additionally $500 was requested for a new fax-copier. The suggestion was made that a smaller increase should be allotted for the office supplies line item and any additional money necessary for this purchase can be sourced elsewhere within the department’s budget. The line item could potentially be increased to $1,000. The line item would then be decreased by $250 the following year, as his is a one-time expense.

Town clerk: elections and registrations is going down because this is not a presidential election year. There is a request for an increase because there are three vital records books and they need to be restored at $1,500 per book. Only two would be restored this coming fiscal year. This would total a $3,000 increase to the town clerk expenses line item. These must be kept in a fireproof safe and must be rebound periodically. There is also an additional $1,000 stipend for becoming certified under the town clerk certification stipend line item. The treasurer and tax collector certification line items are also stipends and should also be renamed to reflect this. The vital record expense may potentially be put off for a year should the budget not allow for this expense.

Fire department: in order for the fire fighters to attend training, they must be in gear that is less than ten years old. There is some question as to whether all 32 firefighters would be present at a training at once. In regard to air tanks, there needs to be one pack per seat belt present in a vehicle plus one. FEMA grants may be pursued to cover the uniform expense.

$34,000 principle is due by 15 February for the tanker. An article may be necessary to pay off the tanker in full. $102,000 is the principle needed to pay it off. The article may need to incorporate one year of interest because the loan was taken out. The treasurer will be consulted about this.

The library, senior center, and board of health are still expected to provide more detail about their budget requests. Many other budgets have not yet been submitted. An additional follow-up letter may be necessary reminding departments that they will be level funded if more information is not provided. If the information is not provided by 3/23 meeting, level funding will be implemented. We will be meeting with the board of Selectmen in early April and will need the budget finalized by this point.

A newspaper article highlighting a block grant opportunity for social services providing needed services to Wales residents was brought up by Bill. There was a question as to whether this could apply to the senior center van driver. However, this specific block grant appears to not be accepting new applications at this time. A letter may be drafted over the summer guiding departments on grant-seeking techniques.

**MOTION TO ADJOURN**

Motion to adjourn by Roy at 8:43pm

Seconded by Bill

All in favor

The motion passed unanimously

Norcross balance as of Jan 3rd: 18,039.88

Transfer station as of January: $8,500

Reserve as of January 3rd: $26,700

Certified free cash: $190,884