

Town of Wales

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 14 March 2018 @ 7:00 PM

Wales Town Hall

In attendance: Keith Davis, Kimberly Jorge, Nicholas Jorge, Roy Lainson

Called to order at 7:06_{PM}

Meeting with Board of Selectmen Ed Boyce and James Whalen

Ed states that there was an accident at the garage. He says that one of the highway workers was mixing salt and sand with the backhoe when he reversed into an icy patch and slid into a trailer that was attached to an employee vehicle that was parked in the lot. The deductible and potential for a premium increase mean that we do not want to file a claim. A quote for the cost of the repair to the trailer is \$1,369.90. Verbal estimate was \$750 but this was based on expecting a local individual to perform the labor and that is no longer a viable option. There is no significant damage to the backhoe.

Motion by Roy to approve the request for \$1,369.90 to be transferred from the reserve account

Seconded by Keith

All in favor

Motion approved unanimously

Ed Boyce: the budget under select board has been kept level for a number of years. They will likely be requesting a 5 percent "correction" increase to the BOS budget "across the board" when they submit their FY19 budget. Also, the IT expense for fiber optics is \$300-400 per month for Tantasqua plus they are providing IT services which the BOS would like to explore paying more for. The ISP is Charter. IT will likely be increasing by \$4,000. The phone system is \$15,000.

Prior Meeting Minutes

Motion by Nick to approve the 2/23 meeting minutes with discussed amendment

Seconded by Keith

All in favor

Passed unanimously

John Croke from the Fire Department

The chief's requested salary increase is meant to bring his salary closer to the salaries of other fire chiefs in the area. The Brimfield chief salary is \$20,000 and Holland is \$15,000 per year. He also wants to be on par with the Wales police chief salary. The new assistant chief line item is the result of a previous restructuring of the rank and file of the top four officers leaving one officer to be unjustly undercompensated. The officers are frequently out of town at continuing education meetings. He is looking for this new salary line item to serve as a stipend for admin time for an employee who is currently attending these meetings without pay while other officers are attending with pay. The employee likely puts in hundreds of hours at these meetings annually. New equipment: FY18 was year three of this line item being level funded at \$11,520 and he is requesting a \$4,000 increase for FY19. There have been no reserve requests yet out of this line item but there have been approximately 300 runs per year which is a significant increase over previous years, leading to increased expenses.

Articles

There may be an article at the ATM to request a replacement new SUV for the FD. This vehicle has been crucial to decreasing response times but the 2003 SUV has a frame that is falling apart. The cost is \$45,000 for a brand new one.

Budget Requests

Fire department:

Chief salary increase to \$9,000 tentatively if the budget allows for the increase

Assistant chief safety officer stipend approved

Equipment increase to \$2,000 rather than \$4,000

Accountant: BOS intends for the assistant accountant position to remain through FY19.

Treasurer: tax title going from \$12,000 to \$15,000. There are many new taxpayers. We are awaiting more information.

Tax collector: clerk is being paid minimum wage and would like to be increased to \$15/hour. Other clerks in the town are paid more.

Police department: wants a clerk to "assist with paperwork duties" at \$2,500. This may not be in the budget for this year. The uniform increase is for a new officer that was hired this year

Highway department: the seasonal employee transition to full time is not in the budget for this year. We can look into contracting it out for next year. The vehicle repair parts increase was \$8,000. The average snow and ice deficit has been (\$23,000).

Senior center: full time status for senior center director is not in the budget for this year. \$1,623.17 increase. Other towns are making significantly more money, such as \$17.10/hour in Brimfield. An increase to \$15,000 for 19 hours of work per week will likely be possible. Expenses line item: there is a new elevator expense plus exhaust system cleaning. There is a new \$20 fee for water usage regulatory expenses.

Motion by Roy to adjourn at 8:51pm

Seconded by Keith

All were in favor

The meeting adjourned at 8:51pm

Reserve:

Beginning \$8,097.10

End of meeting: \$6,727.10