

Finance Committee/Selectmen Working Meeting
15 March 2011

Members present:

Chris Haynes (chair)
Joseph Armstrong-Champ (secretary)
Lillian Whitney
John Margosiak
Sue Caron

Guests in attendance:

Peter McMurray (selectman)
Mary Krapf
Tim Bowman
Kate Stacy
Ed Drew
Marilyn Cronin

Meeting called to order at 7:45pm

This was a budget working meeting with the FinCom and the Board of Selectmen.

The increase in the school budget over last year is approximately \$3,600. This is a level funded budget as opposed to a level service budget which was the other option. The level service budget would have been a \$350,000 increase for Ashby.

Peter gave a quick run down on the school budget. Among other things he noted that there will be lay-offs in order to keep a level funded budget.

Chris led a discussion on how we could balance the budget using the following information:

- the departments which have been hit the hardest in the past 4 – 5 years. The purpose of this was to determine which departments might need the most financial help this year.
- It was determined that in order to balance the budget we would need to keep the increase in spending to about \$80,000. The budget in front of the FinCom was about \$130,000 over funded so about \$50,000 needed to be cut.
- A pay increase of about 2% (\$16,000 total) for all town employees was desired by most members.

The following table describes where most of the increase comes from:

Police	62,000	
Fire	16,000	
Salary Increase	16,000	

Building maintenance	15,000	
Highway	10,000	
Library	5,000	
Animal Control	4,000	
Land Use Agent	2,000	

Initial decreases that can come out of the budget are as follows:

- \$16,000 from the Police Chiefs salary due to the fact that there will not be a full time chief next year.
- The Treasurer said that she didn't need \$4,000 in the Tax Title budget line.
- As a result of the town recently hiring the Police Chief as a full time employee we no longer need to pay Badge Quest the \$100/week finder's fee. This is a saving of \$5,200 per year.
- Level funding the Land Use Agent saves \$2,000
- Removing the Police Chief's request of \$3,000 for body armor
- The Police Chief's plan to hire more reserve officers is projected to save about \$4,000 in forced over-time for full time officers.
- Originally we had increased the Building Maintenance budget by \$15,000. We reduced this to \$10,000.
- The Fire Department has asked for a \$16,000 increase. This was reduced by \$2,800 by reducing their requested stipend.
- The Police Department has asked for an increase of \$62,000. This has been reduced by \$6,000 by reducing the number of reserve officer days by ½ day.
- The Animal Control Officer has asked that her salary be restored to its previous level which would mean an additional \$4,000. Restoring \$2,000 would save \$2,000 in the budget.
- A reduction of \$1,200 can be seen by reducing the salary percentage increase.

Peter noted that there were already line items for many departments to fund a 2% increase. Removing these items will reduce the budget but it isn't reflected in the current budget. It was decided that we would ask Nancy Haines, Town Accountant, to remove these items and come up with a new budget spread sheet for us to use at next week's meeting.

The warrant articles for the Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting were reviewed. There were questions on warrant articles 13 and 23. These will be reviewed at next week's meeting.

There is \$150,000 in the Free Cash Account.

Meeting Adjourned at 10:00 pm