

Town of Merrimac
Finance Committee Meeting
FEBRUARY 8, 2018

- I. Call to Order
 - 1. Roll Call
- II. Approve Minutes

Motion to approve minutes from. Marcia, first. Mike, second. Paula abstain. 4-0-1.

- III. Police, Animal Control, Parking Clerk

POLICE

Present was Police Chief Eric Shears.

Handout is narrative that explains the increases to the budget, both on the salary and expense line.

First page, general letter- our goals. Want to thank the Finance Committee and Town on their support to hire a full time patrolman this year, Second page, work chart to get an idea to see the branches and the responsibilities of each person in the Department. Page three, financial goals. All three contracts were negotiated this year and agreed upon, the salary line increases reflect that. Expense line increase shows the line item changes. Capital Planning/Special Article Requests a new cruiser to retire Crown Victoria. Page four, officer training and education we would like to increase by \$2,000 to \$12,000. What you don't see there are grant funds that cover other training's, dispatch training grant is about \$20,000. That also sponsors training's that other vendors put on, like active shooter training, where the training is free but you must pay for the officers or backfill the position. The last few training's we were able to have that pay and backfill covered.

Paula- Do you offer the training to other employees in Town offices? The training for Pentucket is specifically for Police and Fire. The Town does have instructors that teach the civilian training which we are working on scheduling with other Town Departments.

Equipment maintenance would like to increase by \$2,000. In FY15 the town voted a Special article to purchase tasers and everything that goes with it. Instead of purchasing and replacing them you pay a fee each year and at the end of five years you trade everything in

Marcia- Do tasers deteriorate over time? They are an electronic device, they have parts and batteries that need to be replaced, and technology changes over time. Ten tasers are needed because they are issued to each fulltime officer.

Ann- Our membership and related associations, do they have better buying power than us? Greater Boston Police Counsel does some grant writing for the State but everything else is very comparable.

Page six, computer maintenance, there is an in-house computer dispatch and their maintenance agreement is increasing. Boston Area Police Emergency Radio Network is a mutual aid radio network and there is a \$900 increase of remote line maintenance., Verizon is no longer supporting the copper lines, they have become obsolete and they are changing out to fiber. The Commonwealth is pushing to join a different network. The network does not go to New Hampshire but Rockingham County and surrounding town's have access if an incident is coming in. Page seven, NEMLEC is increasing membership dues by \$675.00. NEMLEC is a great resource to have in Town.

Paula- The most recent report Police has gone over on legal expenses- what is being requested may not even be enough, with current spending an additional thousand would still be needed. As of December 2017 for equipment for repairs is that for vehicles? Spent at 95%. Had to replace some holsters for \$1000, the taser plan is included in that as well, a microphone was replaced, and radios were reprogrammed.

James- Are the Dodge Chargers phasing out? Only one left on the fleet is the Chief's and it has had minimal maintenance. Plan was to replace every other year but may need to replace yearly.

Fuel line item has been under spent- do not think it can be cut based on having an additional full time officer now.

Ann- Salary questions: Mark Sayers is in for a \$2,800 increase? He is the EDM Manager, with his contract he got a \$1 last year and a \$1 this year. Stephen Beaulieu's longevity says negative which must be a mistake? No, he is a new hire that replaced person on the spreadsheet that had longevity so it is backing that additional cost out. Stephen Beaulieu and Gina Bertinelli are the new hires. Stephen Ringuette retired, Richard Holcrof moved up to Sergeant and a new hire was used to fill the position. Stephen Beaulieu had experience from the sheriffs department and took a pay cut to come here, and Gina was brand new, which is why their salaries differ.

ANIMAL CONTROL

No adjustments made on the budget.

PARKING CLERK

No adjustments made on the budget.

END 7:39PM

IV. Planning Board

Present was Sandra Venner, Planning Board Chairperson..

Aren't asking for any increases. Notations at the bottom are where we stand for this fiscal year but that is all.

Does the assessors office update the zoning maps? No, the planning board does that. If there are any changes to the map with new developments they are updated with MVPC.

Any changes such as legal fees that would come up this year? We use legal/zoning consultants at times for interpretations, and eventually may look at the zoning to make changes. In the past for a preliminary review we have used an attorney that is knowledgeable about zoning and worked with multiple community's.

Marcia- Are there any 40B in the works? Coastal Metals, once it is demolished, will be a friendly 40B.

END 7:49

V. Board of Health & Nurse

Present was Karen Gray, Board of Health Chairperson, Matt Kirk, Board of Health Member, Deb Ketchen, Health Agent, and Alyssa Makes, Administrative Assistant.

Conference & Seminars

Add \$300 for Mass Health Officers Association or Yankee Conference on Environmental Health. In the past the HMCC (Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition) has paid for all conferences, this past year they only approved one. When they do pay for them they chose the track you participate in, which is typically emergency preparedness based. Deb is not able to do the food and septic/well based classes. We would like to have enough

money to pay for at least the non-approved conference. These conferences typically run \$400-\$600 depending on location, travel and hotel costs.

Salary Changes

We would like to bring Deb up to the mid-range per the salary study over the next two years. That comes out to \$1.78 increase this year and next year. We appreciate all the work Deb does for us, and with her years of experience and her vast knowledge of the job inside and out she is an asset we would be heartfelt to lose here at the Town.

END 7:59 PM

VI. Library

Present was Kelly Unsworth, Library Director, Susan Coburn and Jeff Hoyt, Library Trustees.

Ann- 40 hours designated for Saturday's are per year? Yes, 10 Saturday's per year. The hours all add up to the exact same amount, a straight 2.5% increase across the board. The hours on the sheet were reallocated to reflect what people are actually working.

James- Is grounds keeping paid to the DPW? No, we have a separate person on an as-needed bases mostly for seasonal cleanups.

Library is asking for a slight increase of \$180 for Custodial, used for areas that were not being cleaned previously. Network Membership is a set fee, the increase is non-negotiable. Materials have an increase of \$300, this always has to be 19% of your entire budget. Some of the Friends of the Library money and Grant money from the state can be used for this. Repair and maintenance- increase an additional \$500. As the building ages different issues pop up.

Ann- Any more issues this winter regarding the ice log jam (dam)? Don't have particular issues with ice dams, the roof is still an issue which will be discussed with Capital Planning.

Paula- Confused on repair and maintenance line item, is that a combination with HVAC Uptack? Yes, both in same item. Have spent about 80%. Same with office supplies was spent 80% in the first six months.

James- Repair increases are just things that are coming up? They are unexpected but also predictable, just typical things that age and need basic maintenance.

Ann- Will the HVAC cost dissipate? No, twice a year you have yearly maintenance. Also expenses, like recently a thermostat going, are unpredictable.

END 8:19 PM

MISC. BOARDS

Carol will invite Playground to come in that day.

MEETING CLOSED 8:26 PM

Marcia first, Mike second.