

TOWN OF ATKINSON
BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, November 5, 2019

Members Present

Bill Smith, Chair
Wendy Barker, Vice Chair
Ray Fournier
Peter Torosian
Bob Malo
Bob Worden

Others Present

Tim Crowley, Police Chief

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Agenda: Police Department presentation; Minutes

Police Department – Tim Crowley

Chief Crowley said that the only item that may change would be under Cleaning Services. The spreadsheet shows \$5 but there is a possibility that it could change to \$2860. He is still waiting to hear, from Dave Weymouth, whether this item will be the Police Department's responsibility or the General Government Buildings' responsibility.

Chief Crowley said the biggest part of the budget is salary and wages. Last year he proposed hiring a full time officer which he did. To offset that increase, the part time officer wages were cut in half since part time is not needed as much. In salary and wages, 3% was included in the Chief's and supervisor's pay because they are not covered by the CBA. The Patrolmen's Union negotiated a new contract which will be voted on in March 2020 and the proposed increases were not included.

Chair Smith asked if Chief Crowley was at liberty to disclose the increase.

Chief Crowley said that while it has been approved by the Selectmen, it still has to be voted on by the Patrolmen's Union.

Chair Smith asked if there is an increase that may be different.

Chief Crowley said it's a 3% increase for the patrolman. The Chief's salary and the supervisor's salary piggybacks off that. It won't be in the warrant article to cover the contract.

Member Torosian asked to clarify that the Selectmen have approved the 3% increase but the Police Union has not.

Chief Crowley said everyone has agreed to it but a warrant article has to be voted on in March.

Member Torosian asked if it was included on the spreadsheet.

Chief Crowley said it is not.

Chief Crowley stated that Dispatch is a step increase. Contractually they get a step increase to a point.

Member Torosian asked if it is a fixed amount each year.

Chief Crowley said there are five steps. Once they get to the fifth step, there are no more increases.

Member Torosian asked when the Dispatch contract is up.

Chief Crowley said it's all included in the Patrolmen's CBA. The Dispatcher's pay is dictated by the collective bargaining unit. The current dispatcher was hired at Step 2; in 2020 she'll be at Step 3; 2021 will be Step 4; and 2022 will be Step 5, assuming that she stays.

Chair Smith asked if the part time officer's pay is likely subject to a 3% increase also.

Chief Crowley said yes.

Chair Smith said that would be two lines that would likely go up 3%.

Chief Crowley said the rates of pay are different. There are two tables and the part time table is different from the full time but the increases will be the same.

Chair Smith asked if the Selectmen approved the proposed amounts. He also asked if the Selectmen approved the 3% as a separate transaction.

Chief Crowley said when the patrolmen submitted their bargaining contract, the Selectmen approved it.

Member Torosian asked if that contract is going out on a separate warrant.

Vice Chair Barker asked if that meant a total of 6%.

Chief Crowley said no it is just 3%.

Police Department (Cont'd)

Chair Smith clarified that the 3% would not be in this budget but there would be a separate 3% in a warrant article.

Chief Crowley said there's a 3% contractual increase for Legal Services.

Chief Crowley stated that the Town Administrator, Dave Cressman, suggested that \$3000 be added to the gas budget as a buffer, not knowing the rise and fall of gas prices.

Through various discussions, raising the gas budget didn't seem necessary, considering recent fuel increases still showed the Police Department under budget.

Chief Crowley said the New Equipment line went up \$300 for a new portable radio for one of the officers. The cost for the radio is \$3600. The request was for \$2600 because they have a donation of \$1000 from the Civic Club.

Chair Smith asked if the Selectmen approved the Cleaning Services line for \$5 or \$2860.

Chief Crowley said the Selectmen approved \$5.

Vice Chair Barker asked what other warrant articles are there.

Chief Crowley said he will be proposing a warrant article for an emergency call box with camera at Woodlock Park. The cost would be under \$10,000.

Member Torosian asked if cell service is affective in that area.

Vice Chair Barker said it is spotty.

Chief Crowley said calls from the emergency call box would go straight to the Atkinson Police Department, not Concord when dialing 911.

Vice Chair Barker asked how the community policing was going.

Chief Crowley said his officers are spending time at the parks and the schools. They recently made a presentation at the Community Center regarding scams and frauds.

Vice Chair Barker asked if they have contact with the high school and/or middle school.

Chief Crowley said they haven't been spending as much time as he would like at the schools. But they have done a few well-meaning checks.

Member Torosian asked if they are still doing the DARE program.

Chief Crowley said it is now called LEAD (Law Enforcement Against Drugs) and it has gained popularity and feels that it is helping.

Animal Control – Tim Crowley

Chief Crowley said there are no new changes. They have a part time animal control officer who is shared with two towns.

Member Malo stated that the Technology Department is implementing a Time and Attendance program. They will be emailing a video to each department asking them to review the video and return an email back stating whether they are in favor or it or not.

Member Torosian made a motion to approve the October 29, 2019, minutes; Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members are in favor. Vote: 6/0/0

Vice Chair Barker wanted to know if Dave Cressman would be giving the exact amount of the contract for waste management. He alluded to the fact that it was cushioned and she would like to know what the contract amount was.

Chair Smith said he would write it down and hopefully remember to remind him.

Member Malo reminded everyone that next year is a leap year which may complicate things.

Member Torosian suggested leaving the budget the way it is and put the extra money towards any leap year changes.

Chair Smith said there's always a safety margin but it may be something to discuss later.

Member Torosian said he attended the Selectmen's meeting to discuss the Resolution the Budget Committee made regarding the money to offset the tax rate but the subject was not resolved.

Chair Smith asked if the Selectmen discussed the Budget Committee recording clerk's hourly rate.

Member Torosian said he was not there for the entire meeting.

Member Malo updated the committee on the Library. A new candidate was hired to replace Michelle Collins. The health insurance is working out the same as the previous employee. Interviews for a new Director will begin this week. They are expecting to hire a candidate by Thanksgiving.

Member Torosian made a motion to adjourn and Vice Chair Barker seconded the motion. All members were in favor. Vote: 6/0/0

The Atkinson Budget Committee adjourned at 8:22 p.m.