

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN & FINANCE COMMITTEE
JOINT MEETING – FEBRUARY 16, 2011**

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

Board of Selectmen Chairman Alex Vispoli called the Joint Meeting of the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committees to order at 7:00 P.M. in the Selectmen's Conference Room at the Town Offices. Present from the Board of Selectmen: Chairman Vispoli and Selectmen Mary Lyman, Brian Major, Ted Teichert and John Hess.

Present from the Finance Committee: Chair Joanne F. Marden and members Richard T. Howe, S. Jon Stumpf, Mary O'Donoghue, Mark Merritt, Margaret Kruse, Cynthia Milne, Paul Fortier, and Greg Rigby.

Also present were: Town Manager Reginald S. Stapczynski, Assistant Town Manager Steven S. Bucuzzo and Finance Director Anthony J. Torrissi. The meeting was duly posted and cablecast live.

II. Opening Ceremonies

Chairman Vispoli led the members in a Moment of Silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. FY-2012 Town Manager's Recommended Budget Presentations

Finance Committee Chair Joanne Marden commented on a conversation the Finance Committee had at their meeting on Tuesday night relative to the budget process. The Finance Committee recognizes they have to have a budget number by Town Meeting that fits available revenues, the importance of the budget being based on realistic projections, and it is a number that is sustainable, affordable and can deliver the services promised. The individual department reviews should reflect realistic numbers, good information on employee and staffing charts and try to make a connection between actual voting dollars and what can be delivered in services. The goal is to have a budget that is efficient with balanced revenues. The Finance Committee expects they will be able to have information from the Town Manager and Department Heads in what will have to happen to have a balanced budget.

Chairman Vispoli reported on the Massachusetts Municipal Association Executive Board Meeting he attended that day. He said indications are that Local Aid will be cut further than what is anticipated. Revenues in the State are up but over 1/3 of the State budget is related to health care. He said we have to work with available funds.

A. Police Department

Police Chief Brian Pattullo began his presentation of the Police Department's Budget for FY-2012 with a review of the Organization Chart and summary of personnel that fall under the Operations Division and Special Services Division. He said the Operations Division includes: Uniformed Patrol Force, Specialized Patrol Units, Tactical Officers, Emergency Services, Safety Program, School Resource Officer Program, Parking Control, Animal Control, Central Dispatch, and Court Diversion. The Special Services Division includes: Investigations, Crime Prevention and Public Education, Training, Records, Traffic Division, and Emergency Management. A review of the FY-2012 Budget Summary shows the following:

	<u>FY-2011</u>	<u>FY-2012</u>	<u>+/-</u>
Personal Services	\$6,616,361	\$6,579,603	-36,758
Expenses	\$996,494	\$1,005,944	9,450
Details/Fees	\$ - 70,000	\$ -70,000	
Parking Receipts	<u>\$-278,864</u>	<u>\$-287,264</u>	<u>-8,400</u>
Total	\$7,263,991	\$7,228,283	-35,708

The Department is authorized to have 54 sworn officers but is only funded for 52 sworn personnel, one School Resource Officer (funded by the Greater Lawrence Technical High School – we pay benefits) and 20 civilian employees. They are continually challenged to maintain an efficient Police Department while only staffing at minimum manning levels with coverage of vacant shifts accomplished by adjusting staffing and assignments when necessary. They have one officer on military activation, two vacant patrol officer positions and one officer on long-term disability. Due to an adjustment involving the PC support position and Records Clerk position there is a change in Personnel from 73 FTE's in FY-2011 to 71.5 for FY-12.

If the Police Department does not receive sufficient funding to maintain the current level of services for FY-12 they can expect to see a reduction in proactive traffic enforcement including Animal Control and Parking Control; elimination of a dedicated downtown police officer; elimination of the School Resource Officer; elimination of the New Horizons After School Program; reduction in Records Office hours; reduction in the Substance Abuse Unit and elimination of the Safety Officer Program.

The Unions gave back 1% of their wage increase last year and this year the Patrolmen, Dispatchers and Superior Officers have agreed to a 0% wage increase. As of January 1st, overtime is running within limits budgeted for this fiscal year.

Regional Initiatives the Department is involved in include:

- ~ NE Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council (SWAT)
- ~ NERAC – Homeland Security Regional Advisory Council
- ~ GBPC – Greater Boston Police Council (collaborative purchasing)
- ~ MEMA – Emergency Management
- ~ LEPC – Local Emergency Planning Commission
- ~ Massachusetts Police Accreditation Commission

B. Fire & Rescue

Fire Chief Michael Mansfield thanked the Board for the opportunity to present the Fire Rescue Budget for FY2012 located on pages 97-105 in the Town Manager's Recommended Budget. He began his presentation with a review of the organization chart showing four units each with one Deputy Chief, three Lieutenants and 13/12 Firefighters. There are three stations: Central Dispatch, Ballardvale Fire Station, and West Andover Fire Station. There are seven divisions within the Department: Administration, Fire Suppression Division, Emergency Medical Services, Fire Prevention Division, Training Division, Maintenance Division, and the Fire Investigation Unit.

A comparison of the FY-12 budget with FY-11 reveals the following:

	<u>FY-2011</u>	<u>FY-2012</u>	<u>+/-</u>
Personal Summary	\$6,237,721	\$6,431,007	\$ 193,286*
Expenses	\$ 359,800	\$ 359,800	no change
Sale of Service	<u>\$ - 955,000</u>	<u>\$1,000,000</u>	<u>\$ - 45,000</u>
Total	\$5,642,521	\$5,790,807	\$148,286*

*Finance Director Tony Torrisi explained that he incorrectly under-stated the Fire Department's Budget last year by \$193,286. The FY-2011 budget should have been \$180,000 higher. The "real" increase in this year's budget is only about \$20,000.

The status of capitalizing on private ambulance runs is an active discussion still being pursued; unfortunately, it is a timely process. Subrogation for motor vehicle accidents is currently being pursued and the Department continues to work on gaining access to insurance information for fires.

The \$193,286 in Personal Services is for overtime to cover eight vacancies. They have one firefighter on military deployment; three firefighters in the Fire Academy and one firefighter on an extended sick leave.

Chief Mansfield said they are running a little higher in overtime due to coverage of vacancies and attendance at the Fire Academy and EMT School. Mutual aid to Lawrence impacted the budget this year by about \$25,000. Snowstorms have also impacted the budget this Winter requiring the ladder truck to have an extra man on it for safety reasons and increased ambulance calls. The Board and Chief Mansfield talked about ambulance rates charged and actual dollars received from Medicare/Medicaid and private insurance, as well as benefits relative to using Paramedics vs. EMT's and the costs associated with that option.

The Chief said he was proud to announce the receipt of a Federal Grant in the amount of \$210,703 to replace their breathing apparatus equipment which is beyond its life expectancy. The Federal Grant will cover 90% of the equipment cost with the Town covering 10% of funds.

The staffing for FY-2012 will remain at the FY-11 level of 72 personnel which includes a \$120,000 vacancy factor. He said the Department needs to be fully staffed. They have worked with a reduction in funding every year for the last five years with expenses continually increasing and are doing the best they can with fewer dollars.

The Fire Department challenges include maintaining existing staffing at level service, professional development and initial training, increase in the level of EMS services to the community, replacement of the Ballardvale Substation, securing grants and funding for personnel and safety initiatives, development of new revenue streams, vehicle and equipment replacement, public education and community outreach, collective bargaining and accreditation for Fire and EMS personnel.

If sufficient funding for FY-12 is not received, the potential impact would be a reduction of services, ancillary support for other departments and lack of sufficient personnel on the aerial ladder truck. A reduction in shift personnel and support staff, fire station

brown-outs, reduction in EMT services and closing of Fire companies on all four shifts.

The Board asked about the possibility of broadening the mutual aid agreement with bordering communities to accommodate calls on outlining borders (North Reading, Tewksbury, North Andover, etc). The Chief explained that they do this on a limited basis already. It is difficult to do this without all communities having the same regional infrastructure in place for communication purposes. Chief Mansfield said the West Andover Fire Station needs significant work and requests for improvements have been submitted yearly through the CIP. The Finance Committee requested copies of the overtime chart be scanned and sent to them.

C. Capital Projects

Fire Rescue is requesting an upgrade to the current communications system. The current system operates on leased landlines that are unreliable and go down frequently resulting in an inability to communicate. Per the Federal Government, all fire stations have to be upgraded by January 1, 2013. It is advisable to upgrade the system now as it will be difficult finding a vendor next year with all other communities switching over. This upgrade would benefit the Police and Public Works Departments as well.

IV. Adjournment

On a motion by Brian Major with a second by Mary Lyman it was voted 5-0 to adjourn the Joint Meeting at 9:15 P.M.

FINANCE COMMITTEE ONLY

I. Transfer of Funds

A. Transfer of Funds request for the Snow & Ice Account

Finance Chair Joanne Marden recused herself from the meeting and vote. On a motion by Richard Howe and a second by Greg Rigby, it was voted 8-0 to approve the transfer of funds from Free Cash to cover the \$256,000 deficit in the Snow & Ice Account as authorized by State Law.

II. Adjournment

On a motion by Peggy Kruse with a second by Mark Merritt, it was voted 7-0 to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted,

Dee DeLorenzo, Recording Secretary