

LANESBOROUGH FINANCE COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2012

Members Present: Brian Johnson, Bill Stevens, Al Terranova, Mike Murphy, Greg Wolf

Guests: Charlie Durfee, Jeff Duchaine, Fire Department

Mark Bashara, Lanesborough Police Chief

Meeting Called to Order at 6:35 PM

Meeting with Fire Department:

Department expenses have been requested in an amount \$2,900 greater than last year for the following reasons:

1. Water department has installed a meter, and now water costs are doubled over last year, i.e. Office Supplies budget up \$1,000 from last year.
2. Significant cost for Health and Infection control due to need for new member hepatitis shots, and therefore it is budgeted at \$1,000 more than last year.
3. Equipment, Gear replacement has been increased \$1,000

Charlie has requested that the \$2,000 requested for Matching Grant in the amount of \$2,000 be omitted, as the grant for a new truck did not get approval.

Al Terranova asked if it were possible to combine the Police Department and Fire Department at the Fire Station. Charlie and Jeff stated that their offices are much too small as it is, and they have no real estate available to expand, as any land not being used now is basically swamp and cannot be used.

Greg Wolf inquired about "Office Expenses" which seem quite high compared to other departments. Charlie explained that the line item in his budget is for almost anything relating to the up-keep of the buildings, heat, water, etc, and not just 'office' supplies.

Al Terranova suggested that perhaps they could consider hiring an expert to do the grant writing, if it would help the effort in obtaining grants.

Meeting with Police Department:

Chief Bashara presented his budget. He has requested an increase of his previously recommended salary account from \$358,129 to \$360,000 due to a 'step' increase that will be paid next year.

Greg Wolf stated that the Police Department seems to be very successful in operating within his budget constraints from year to year.

A few items in the expense line items were questioned, and explained by Chief Bashara.

Al Terranova asked for input relative to possibility of towns 'sharing' police duties, or using the State Police in sharing duties. Per Mark town sharing has been investigated within the county and the summary was that it was not a practical approach. The use of State Police is possible, but with their area coverage, an officer could be in Peru when needed in Lanesborough and the response time would be prohibitive. Lanesborough does presently work jointly with the other towns as needs and the situation dictate.

Mike Murphy stated that the Police have great programs in Lanesborough School, but doesn't feel that the school does justice in acknowledging those efforts.

Bill Stevens asked about future of Baker Hill Road District and contribution to the Police Department. Mark stated that the Bond would be paid in 2014 and it looks like the BHRD will continue to operate essentially as it does now.

FY-2013 Budget

Bill Stevens handed out the first draft, rough cut, un-approved budget appropriations and summary. With the assumptions as outlined, the projected budget is about \$46,000 over the levy limit. It is expected that state aid and state charges, health insurance and vocational education will significantly impact the budget numbers as they are developed.

The Committee was reminded of the January meeting at Town Hall to discuss the 10 year forecast as developed by Bob Barton and Bill Stevens. There may be some discussion relative to the FY-2013 budget at that time, so the members should be aware of the present situation.

There was considerable discussion relative to the cost of Vocational Education, and reiterated by Al Terranova that significant savings would be realized by sending vocational education students to Pittsfield rather than McAnn.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be February 6, 2012 at 7:00 PM in the Town Library.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM