

Town of Ayer Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday March 6, 2019



FINCOM Members Present: Patrick Diamond, Chairman; Mark Smith, Vice Chairman,
Terry Harvell, Clerk

Additional Guests Present: Mr. Robert Pontbriand, Town Manager
Chief William Murray, Chief of Police
Mr. Mark Wetzel, PE, DPW Superintendent
Ms. Lisa Gabree, Town Accountant
Mr. Tim Silva, Library Director

RECEIVED

NOV 21 2019

TOWN OF AYER

Scopland

Called to Order: 6:00 pm

By published agenda:

❖ **Discussions concerning FY2020 budget with Police Department, Chief Murray:**

HIGHLIGHTS

P.Diamond: opened with narrative to have open dialog, what is important (what is not), any items not in the budget because of budget constraints, etc.

L.Gabee: budget has to be balanced.

Chief Murray:

1. 94% of budget is for personnel salaries
2. Increases in 'maintenance agreement' line
 - a. Computers support
 - b. Dues and subscription line --- joined NE Law Enforcement Council (optional)
 - i. Cannot effectively run a police department with limited personnel hence join organizations to be able to pool resources to farm out to the local communities --- SWAT, Search and Rescue, etc.
 - ii. 10% of department staff has to belong to a 'team'.
(think, mutual aid to others, which is not charged for)

P.Diamond: how to quantify value of services as used in mutual aid, could the state pay for it?

Something to look into.....

Chief: joining organizations is like 'insurance', you don't know if or when you will use it, but is there when you need it.

P.Diamond: Maintenance Agreement line almost 50% higher, what created?

Chief: Computers.....SW, HW, radio equipment, and finger print machines, copy machines, EMD

M.Smith: contracting for 'specialty' services....agree with Chief on 'farming out' support services

M.Smith : Q: ability to hire police officers? What is the solution? Town's ability to pay going salary?

Chief: Town compensates well, not an issue. Perception is municipal police is not a desirable profession. There is other law-enforcement entities competing for the same resources.

M.Smith: Is OT budgeted, because PD is down one (1) police officer?

Chief: No, that is the OT budget. Two (2) person requirement dictates the ability to cover work, but individuals allowed to have appropriate time off, therefore, OT to maintain minimum staffing.

M.Smith: is OT budgeted enough?

Town of Ayer Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday March 6, 2019



Chief: don't really know, but increased OT this year by 2%.

P.Diamond: Are you getting what you need to do what you know what you need to do?

Chief: Yes

❖ Discussions concerning FY2020 budget with DPW Department head Superintendent Wetzel:

HIGHLIGHTS

P.Diamond and Wetzel general conversation on PFAS

M.Wetzel: DPW budget different than others – seven (7) general funds and three (3) enterprise funds

1. developing budget by looking at; current year, last 3 full years (average), this year budget to date, projections.

a. look for anomalies....pump failures, mechanical issues, etc.

c. issues this budget:

i. street lights (not enough history) L.Gabree – looks at past history (can change schedule Z twice a year)(schedule Z given to National Grid to which meters to apply credits to)

ii. DPW operations center – utilities (no history)

iii. Breaking ground on Highway Storage Garage – (operating budget, no history)

iv. PFAS water treatment upgrade – building addition, cost associated with this

v. Capital Improvements – infrastructure -- no specific projects identified

P.Diamond: appreciate the use of inhouse expertise – Q: could DPW (at some time later) provide the projection of inside costs vs outside costs (i.e. Engineering, etc. for projects)

a. general conversation to recommend to Town Manager to hire Town Project Manager to manage “projects” across DPW and Town in general

M.Smith: storm water management went up because (inaudible)

M.Wetzel: what we discovered was it was it costs a lot more to do these drainage project than we thought – Willard St project ate up most of the budget expensive to do these projects than we thought

a. seasonal budget fluctuations, using projections

b. new storm water permit, mandatory tracking information/data, etc. (no major capital, yet)

P.Diamond: Q: are there unanticipated expenses that come from the State or higher? That you have to execute and cant budget for?

M.Wetzel: for the most part we know what is coming, this PFAS thing popped up, the water quality testing is expensive. Will work with the US Army for payment plan. The ‘media’ has to be changed out on a schedule.

P.Diamond: will that be a general fund expense once we know the schedule?

L.Gabee: (inaudible)

Town of Ayer Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes: Wednesday March 6, 2019



M.Wetzel: OSHA requirements adds new expenses will be unknown....training, documentation, resources, etc.

M.Smith: new changes in law requires additional cost and time, are those captured?

P.Diamond: Thanked M.Wetzel for efforts well done.

General discussions.

❖ Other Business

P.Diamond: no minutes to review. Move next meeting to future date.

L.Gabee: introduced Tim Silva, new Library Director

T.Silva: introduced himself to committee.

Terry Harvell made a motion to adjourn at approx. 7:32 PM.

- Motion Passed 3-0.
- In Favor-- Diamond, Smith, Harvell
- Opposed – None
- Abstaining – None

Member	Signature	Date
Patrick Diamond, Chairman		<u>11/20/2019</u>
Mark Smith, Vice Chairman		<u>20 Nov 2019</u>
Terry Harvell, Clerk		<u>20, Nov 2019</u>
Matthew Selby, Member		