

TOWN OF NEW SALEM**BOARD OR COMMITTEE:** Finance Committee**DATE:** Tuesday March 5, 2024 **TIME:** 6:30 pm**LOCATION:** Video conferenced on Zoom

Members Attending – Gabriele Voelker, Dara Laplante, Claire McGinnis

Others Attending – Sue Cloutier, Joe Cuneo, Betzy Pelz, Tim White, John Bonafini, Kathy Neal

Called to Order at 6:30pm

1. Fire Department budget review and capital requests – level funded budget with two capital requests for station alarm system, and chimney repair. Also aware of new OSHA regulations for 2026. Unclear if it will become standards. Claire forwarded Joe's email to other FC members and Sue.
2. Council on Aging budget request isn't quite organized yet. They are getting \$7k from state (a \$1k increase over current year). Want to swap foot care providers. Sunday Lefabre is making their meals, they pay her salary out of grant. Lots of questions about process and getting set up for next budget cycle. Use the website to find a finance clerk for the department.
3. Police Department Budget request to add 16 hours to coverage in another part time position and make both \$24/hour, un-benefitted. Will advertise for already certified to avoid cost of training. He currently has one part time vacant. Gabe reminded John to review request for new positions with the Select Board. Finance Committee was generally ok with the increase, but don't have numbers from the schools to see how tight the year is yet.
4. Select Board and Town Coordinator - No salary changes in this request. Research on copier expense to replace the aging one in the office is needed. Claire will make an appointment with Kathy to consolidate all the electricity accounts to be paid out of the line 192 Town Bldg repairs & Maint. Building Inspector is retiring later this year so that will be a search. We have good wiring and plumbing inspectors so FRCOG program doesn't make sense. Buildings – getting an estimate together for the Annex at 24 South Main which sounds pretty significant. Police Station is still on the list and Stowell Building has smaller needs. Kathy's computer is getting old and she asks about how to replace – answer is Technology Fund or her budget.
5. Accountant budget – Kathy suggesting ARPA funds perhaps for the year one. Rescind the \$11,200 from last year and fully re-support the \$23,408? Or just pay the Cash Management portions of installation, support and subscription costs out of the 2024 Article until it is fully spent? Gabe will update the number needed in FY25 if we follow the 2nd method over several years.
6. COLA discussion – should we have another 4-6% increase year? Need to review the local departments using FRCOG Wage Survey to see if we are off in our departments. PT police position is only staff vacancy just now.
7. Topics not anticipated 48 hours prior to meeting -
 - a. how is the Ambulance Assessment figured and why our increase? Based on New Salem's number of transports, Chief Jim Young sends a report with the notice. Other revenue to the service in Orange is reimbursement from the medical insurance of the person transported.
 - b. Highway – Tim still working on evaluating vehicles and getting estimates to bring vehicles into working order. 2 serious truck repairs with expensive quotes, \$11,000 which might be unspent in salary line. Thinking about trading the excavator for a backhoe. Tim will go to the SB with a plan once organized.
 - c. Claire will email Kaitlin about school transportation reimbursement filing with state DOR.

Adjourned at 8:26 pm by voice vote, Gabe yes, Claire yes, Dara yes.

Documents Referenced

FY25 V2, 3 5 mtg.xls spreadsheet

Fire Department Capital Request