

BILLERICA FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES

March 10, 2020

A meeting of the Billerica Finance Committee was held on Thursday March 10, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in Room 210 in the Town Hall.

Present: David Gagliardi, Chairman, Doug Meagher, Vice Chairman, Mary McBride, Secretary, Donald Damon, Member, Patrick Logue, Member, Rino Moriconi, Member, Douglas Fogerty, Member, Philip Newfell, Member, Anthony Ventresca, Member, John Kleschinsky, 1st Associate, John Mulloy, Member, and Joyce MacMillan, Recording Clerk

Excused: Cheri Gargalianos, Member and Vacant: 2nd Associate Seat

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman David Gagliardi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and stated the meeting is being audio recorded by Tony Ventresca and Joyce MacMillan.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

N/A

DEPARTMENTAL BUDGETS:

John Curran, Town Manger with Clancy Main, Management Analyst, Fire Chief Bob Cole, Police Chief Dan Rosa, Fire Deputy Chief Tom Ferraro, Fire Captain Dan LeBlanc, EMS Supervisor Joe Devlin

Fire Department – Chief Bob Cole

Chief Cole gave the committee a hand out regarding fire department time off and over time. He stated that not much has changed since last year. They did hire three (3) new members to replace a retiree from last year and two from this year. He went over the budget line items for the committee.

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns; he went around the table to each member. There were some questions regarding protocol for this Covid-19 virus, overtime, contract obligations, what is considered department business, employees per shift, grants received (safe grant and senior safe grant), donations received, policy or contracts, 111F fire dept. injury, and more.

Doug Meagher, seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to recommend the fire department budget in the amount of \$8,892,630.

It was voted:

10 – In favor

1 – Opposed (Ventresca)

Ambulance – Chief Dan Rosa and Joe Devlin

Chief Rosa gave the committee a hand out regarding the EMS service statistics fiscal 2019, current status and ambulance service overtime for Billerica. The big change in this budget is for Administrative services. When the Ambulatory service was expanded, the admin area was not. There were some step increases. They went over overtime, mutual aid in and out, shift requirements, vehicles and more.

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns; he went around the table to each member. There were some questions regarding the admin duties,

per diem's hourly, mutual aid (used to be a lot higher, has gone down since adding the 2nd truck), opioid crisis (calls are about the same but deaths are down), community service with COA and schools, reimbursements for services, New England Medical Billing, revenue, contracts, vehicles, no increase as of yet for the Covid-19 but it will happen and the EMS and all the first responders are doing all they can to protect themselves and the public.

Doug Meagher, seconded by Mary McBride made a motion to recommend the Ambulance Service budget in the amount of \$1,720,076.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Police Department – Chief Dan Rosa

Tony Ventresca recused himself from this portion of the meeting/vote. Tony works with the VFW and the license falls under the police dept.

Chief Rosa gave a handout to the committee outlining the police department overtime for 2019. Chief Rosa outlined what is within the budget, he named a few line items such as this year there are 17 step increases, 911 dispatcher, 2 resource officers funded by a grant, vehicles, supplies and expenses, overtime, training, etc. Manpower shortages have continued to be an issue, retirements, academy trainees, and building maintenance.

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns; he went around the table to each member. There were some comments and questions recognizing the high rate of suicide issue, code red costs, investigative services, fleet maintenance, military service, impact to PD with the legalization of marijuana, impact with new hands free law, and hiring issues.

Doug Meagher, seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to recommend the Police Budget in the amount of \$8,596,283.

It was voted:

10 – In favor
0 – Opposed
1 – Recused (Ventresca)

Emergency Management – Chief Dan Rosa and Town Manager John Curran

Handout for Emergency Management was included with the police/EMS and Animal Control handout.

Town Manager, John Curran explained the budget is pretty much the same with an increase for cost of living (COLA)

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns; he went around the table to each member. There were some comments and questions about liability insurance, sheltering plan, shelter situation vs warming center, and out of town mutual aid. This is a great service to the town.

Doug Meagher, seconded by Rino Moriconi made a motion to recommend the Emergency Management Budget in the amount of \$26,631.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Animal Control – Chief Dan Rosa

Handout for Emergency Management was included with the police/EMS and Emergency Management.

Chief Rosa stated there are 2 ½ employees, one of them funded by the town of Tewksbury. They are very active in the two towns; it's been very successful in both towns. They deal with wild animals, animal abuse cases, lost pets, etc.

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns; he went around the table to each member. The committee asked about the conditions of the pound/kennels, any foreseen issues with budget, how many calls a year, utilities (propane), how long are animals left there (depends on why they're there), and quarantine is 10 days after a bite.

Doug Meagher, seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to recommend the Animal Control Budget in the amount of \$127,657.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

REVIEW OF MARCH 5, 2020 MINUTES:

Doug Meagher, seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to accept the minutes of March 5, 2020 as amended.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Next Finance Committee Meeting Tuesday March 17, 2020 and Thursday March 19, 2020

ADJOURNMENT:

Doug Meagher, seconded by Doug Fogerty made motion to adjourn.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Chairman David Gagliardi adjourned the meeting at 9:32 pm.

Joyce MacMillan, Recording Clerk