



Town of Topsfield Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

In Person Meeting
January 30th, 2022 6:30 PM

Topic: Finance Committee

Time: January 30th, 2023 6:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

COA Conference Room at Town Hall

- I. Call to Order 6:30 PM
- II. **Attendance:** Che Elwell, David Larson, Tim O'Malley, Jon Guido, Catherine Hodges, Karen Duval, Mike Hartman, Catherine Gabriel-Town Finance, Kevin Harutunian (arrived later)-Town Administrator, Police Chief Neil Hovey, Caption Dan Bell
- III. **Review open Meeting Minutes-**
- IV. **Mike Hartmann** reviewed the financial model which as of now appears that the roll up of the budgets are currently showing a \$2M over guidelines.
- V. **Jon Guido** reviewed the Essex County comparable Towns in regards to tax rates, expense budgets, cost of services etc. Home values with associated tax rates were also reviewed.
- VI. **David Larson** introduced **Topsfield Chief of Police Neil Hovey, who then introduced Caption Dan Bell.** David Larson summarized the fact that Police Chief Hovey was able to keep the year over year budgets flat. Salary increase of 3% proposed which would have a cost associated with it of approximately \$9000.

VII. **Chief Hovey-** Has been trying to lower operating budgets.

a. **Salaries are down 2%**

b. **Overall OPEX down 10%**

VIII. A detailed discussion occurred around the vehicle replacement analysis which Caption Bell presented. This included a review of the existing fleet including the concerns around the mileage and operating hours on the current vehicles. There are 12 vehicles in the Police Department Fleet, 6 of these were obtained by the Town for free as vehicles which came from the Environmental Police (2 Pickup Trucks) and the State Police. Six (6) vehicles are currently considered “front line” vehicles, which there are also six (6) of these vehicles. Caption Bell shared how a few of those front line vehicles have considerable wear and tear and should be considered for trade in. Each of the Front Line vehicles are driven and run approximately 20,000-25,000 miles per year. The one exception to this is the EV-Mustang, which is almost 3 years old, with less than 12,000 miles on it currently. There were considerable “start-up” requirements around this vehicle due to it being a new model introduced as a front line police vehicle.

IX. **Stephanie Sweeney- Recreation Direction-** Stephanie reviewed what accomplishments she has made since coming to Topsfield

a. **Town Ice Rink**

b. **Homegrown Market June-Sept.**

The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Discussion on agenda topics is at the discretion of the Chair. Discussion during meetings should always be courteous and respectful. You must be recognized by the Chair before any comments, questions or discussion may be offered or considered.