

Town of Lunenburg

Finance Committee:
Mark Erickson, Chairman
Brian Laffond, Vice-Chairman
Terri Burchfield, Secretary
Jason Smith
Steven Raboin
John Henshaw
Karin Menard



Mark Erickson
A/2014

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Lunenburg Finance Committee Minutes 3/13/2014

Location: Town Hall
Present: M. Erickson, T. Burchfield, B. Laffond, S. Raboin, K. Menard
Absent: J. Smith, J. Henshaw

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm. The meeting is televised and available through local cable and rebroadcast through lunenburgaccess at youtube.
2. Police Department Budget Presentation
Chief Marino presented the recommended 2015 department budget, and discussed continued concerns due to staffing levels. He also presented and discussed data regarding calls and assignments which he felt supported his sense that having 3 officers on duty per shift is necessary moving forward. While he recognizes money continues to be tight, he feels that the department will begin to be perceived as ineffective because the work load is exceeding the staffing available to address it. Additionally, he discussed community improvements which he felt would improve safety, demonstrate pride in ownership and deter vandalism while providing improved access to community property such as the Marshall Park parking lot project in the capital plan recommendation.
3. Fire Department Budget Presentation
Chief Sullivan reviewed the department budget highlighting the need to have the safety building staffed 24/7 to improve emergency response times for those shifts covered by call firefighters alone. He spoke about increasing rates charged for ambulance calls to better recover associated costs.
4. Capital Planning Committee
S. Raboin presented the Capital Planning Committee recommendations regarding the 23 capital requests and the thought behind the prioritizations as presented to the Town Manager. He also discussed 'high ticket' items as opposed to 'very high ticket' items which overwhelm the capital requests, as a \$550,000 fire truck request did this year. Through discussions with the Town Manager, the idea of financing the fire truck over 5 years was raised as an avenue to free up funds to address the rest of the requests. This could potentially become a way to address 'very high ticket' items in the future.
5. Debt Service
The Town Manager presented information on the debt service and retiring regular debt over the next several years. She also discussed what would happen if the fire truck was financed, and as a future guide, using the combined current debt service and capital budgets as a target for both debt and direct capital spending. As current debt is retired, the amount of excess capacity could be used to either fund borrowing for the 'very high ticket' items needed in the future, or used to fund current capital items or the pavement plan. This would create a means to fund capital needs without increasing the tax burden.
6. Budget Discussion
The Town Manager reported that, based on her recommended budget, there remains about \$116,000 unallocated which we will discuss against several items that were above target requests. She also discussed free cash, and plans to deposit \$74,729 to the stabilization fund to bring us to 5% of budget, and use the rest to offset the snow and ice deficit.
7. Meeting minutes
TB motioned to accept the minutes of 3/6 as written; KM seconded, unanimously approved.
8. Next meetings
Next Thursday we will hear from the School District and Monty Tech.
KM motioned to adjourn. SR seconded, meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Terri Burchfield.