

Town of Lakeville
Joint Meeting of Selectmen and Finance Committee
Tuesday, March 25, 2014
6:30 PM – Town Office Building

On March 25, 2014, the Board of Selectmen held a meeting at 6:30 PM at the Town Office Building. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Belliveau at 6:36 PM. Members present: Selectman Belliveau, Selectman Powderly and Selectman Burke. The Lakeville Finance Committee Meeting was called to order by Chairman Petruzzo at 6:37 PM. Members present: Michael Petruzzo, Ted Bunn, Donna Winters (enter 6:40 PM), Maureen Candito and George Vlahopoulos. Also present: Tracie Craig, Executive Assistant, and Christine Weston, Recording Secretary for Lakeville Committees. LakeCAM, and Matthew Ferreira from the Middleborough were recording the meeting.

Meet with Department Heads to review their FY15 Budgets

6:30 PM Police Chief – Frank Alvilhiera

Frank Alvilhiera was present for the discussion. Selectman Belliveau asked him about the Vacation Buyback account. The Chief responded that it was contractual in FY12 and has been negotiated out, so it is a zero line item. Selectman Belliveau asked about the Sick Time account and the decrease in Sergeants' Wages. The Chief responded that there is education and training for the new officers scheduled in September at the Police Academy. This is a one-time cost of \$3,000. The \$5,000 for overtime had to be funded, since this account has been underfunded, and some flexibility is needed in this account. There was overtime in March, and that does not include storm coverage. The overtime has been coming down, it is now about \$57,000, since it was very high back in 2008 (\$70,000). Shifts are not being filled in order to help bring costs down, however, there is a concern about the Friday and Saturday night shifts, since another Officer should be added. This month has been busy due to increased court time. There are also times when there are investigations, and they need to be followed up on.

The Chief stated that he was hoping for an additional Dispatcher. The Department used to have four (4) full time Dispatchers, however, it has only had three (3) for some time now. The State mandates are requiring Dispatchers to have more experience in the medical field, so they have to attend three (3) weeks of training. The part time Dispatchers are not as experienced as the full time Dispatchers, since they tend to miss a lot of what is taking place in the Department on a full time basis. Currently there is a grant through 911 which is about \$28,000-\$30,000 of which an additional Dispatcher could be brought in full time. It is difficult with part time Dispatchers to fill shifts, especially the midnight shifts and holidays. It is also more advantageous to have a more fully trained Dispatcher with all the standards being required of the position. There is also a training grant for 911 to train dispatchers. Four (4) or five (5) years ago Dispatchers would basically answer phones. Now there is quality assurance, and they are graded. Part time Dispatchers typically only last a few months. Reducing the part time Dispatchers would save money, however, there is the potential of increased health insurance costs for a full time Dispatcher. The part time wages can remain in the budget to cover the full time Dispatcher's vacation and other shifts.

Selectman Belliveau asked about the Gasoline Account. The Chief stated that during the past two (2) years the costs have been about \$60,000 a year, and the line item has only been budgeted at \$42,500. He would like to increase this line item by \$15,000 in order to be more accurate. The

patrols have gone up, since there has been an increase in calls over the past four (4) or five (5) years. The Clerk works 20 hours a week and receives benefits. It is hoped to increase this position so that on payroll days (Mondays) a longer shift could be worked in order to cover both payroll and the regular necessary duties. There is typically a lot to do on Mondays with what has taken place over the weekend with court, etc. The Clerk has also had to fill in when needed as a Dispatcher. Selectman Powderly asked where the Gun Permit income goes. The Chief responded that it goes into the General Fund. Selectman Powderly asked why there was not more budgeted for maintenance, since the Police are located in an old building. The Chief responded that there has been some work done, and there will be an article for other work on the Town Meeting Warrant. It is hoped to get new sinks and toilets at the Department and to do some roofing work, since there have been leaks. The Chief stated that prior to 2009 with the layoffs that took place there had been 17 Officers on the force, at this time there are 16. There had been four (4) Dispatchers, now there are three (3). Mr. Maltais is the SRO (School Resource Officer), and his shift has to be covered. The Reserve Officers are scheduled on a monthly basis and cover holidays and other necessary shifts. The hourly rate for part time Dispatchers is extremely low comparatively. When they begin working and see the higher rates in surrounding areas, they then tend to go elsewhere. For example, the Town of Mansfield pays \$7 an hour higher for this position.

6:50 PM Fire Chief – Daniel Hopkins

Daniel Hopkins was present for the discussion. Selectman Powderly asked about where the money from the Ambulance Fees goes. Ms. McRae responded that it goes into Estimated Receipts. Selectman Belliveau asked about the increases in the categories of Education and Training. The Chief responded that two (2) full time employees have received their degree, thus they get an increase as part of the contract. Selectman Powderly asked about the other increases. The Chief responded that that was due to the Call Emergency Call Back. At this time there are three (3) groups of eight (8) Call Firefighters. Each group works a week, and they attend the emergency calls. Someone is also needed to stay at the Station to answer the telephones and tend to the radios, since there are no Dispatchers on any shifts. Calls have also increased tremendously over the past few years, and it has become increasingly difficult to have someone remain back at the Station. Typically when a call is received, there is another call almost directly after. Out of the eight (8) Call Firefighters, there are a few who are EMT's, thus they can go on the second ambulance, if needed. The additional \$16,000 is to have one Call Firefighter on the weekend for a ten (10) hour day shift, both Saturday and Sunday.

The EMS supply line has increased since more runs are taking place. There were 666 runs last year with insurance and 66 non insurance, thus over 700 ambulance calls took place. This year the Department has already seen 360 calls, and it has not even been three (3) months, since the year started. Morton Hospital got sold to Stuart Medical so how the Hospital interacts with the ambulances and Towns has changed. Not as much in supplies is being shared from the hospital. Only linens are traded like for like. \$15,000 is needed in Capital Outlay for fire gear. The unfortunate aspect is that the Department has to follow NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) rules. That means that when someone attends the Fire Academy, any equipment that they bring has to be less than ten (10) years old, or they cannot attend the Academy. This includes any gear, boots, gloves, helmets, etc. Every ten (10) years gear will have to be replaced, and this needs to remain a constant. At this time seven (7) sets of gear are over the ten (10) year limit. The increase will have to take place immediately, since it is necessary to replace this gear. The \$15,000 will replace six (6) sets of gear. Selectman Belliveau explained that it has been a process to move items out of the Chief's Capital Budget and into his operating budget, where it actually belongs.

The Chief then stated that his wish list items included three (3) additional Firefighters. Since 2000, there have been two (2) Firefighters on a shift. It is needed to have them alternate to ten (10) hours on the day shift Monday through Friday in order to eliminate some overtime, but not all of it. That way there could be a reduction of \$30,000 to hire Firefighter Paramedics. At this time there are four (4) Call Firefighters going through school. Two (2) will become Paramedics. If one starts at 7AM, and the other starts at 9AM Monday through Friday, they could work 42 hours a week. Or what could be done is have two (2) groups that have three (3) paramedics, and two (2) groups that have two (2) paramedics. Selectman Powderly stated that he had concerns regarding the ambulance runs and wanted to know how many times that the second ambulance is not sent out, since there is no coverage for it. Also, how often does coverage have to come in from another town, which then is lost revenue to the Town. This would help justify the need for adding another one (1) or two (2) people. The Chief stated that there had been about 63 mutual aid calls and about 50 calls received. It has been basically a trade-off. When another ambulance is seen in town, it typically means that the Town has also sent one out. Selectman Powderly stated that it seems that mutual aid is a one (1) way street. The Town may go to other towns, but they do not come to this town for aid. The Chief stated that generally they may not come, since the Town is lower on the list for mutual aid, but is on the list. The City of Taunton does have to keep certain engines (such as #9) for the mall. Selectman Powderly noted that the ambulance runs are significant, and he could justify at least adding one (1) additional person in order to help reduce overtime. Should advertising be done in order to solicit and hire more part time and qualified people. The Chief explained at this time there are 24 people who have applied and have been put on the waiting list. There are some going to EMT school. If everything works out, there will be about 20 EMT's and as long as they are EMT's, they can drive the ambulance. Basic EMT's are restricted of what they can do, however, Paramedics are not. The Chief explained that the most difficult time is during the day, and he provided a graph of when the calls take place.

7:10 PM Park Commissioners – Daniel Hopkins

Daniel Hopkins was present for the discussion. Hall rentals are \$350.00 for a five (5) to six (6) hour time frame. There are also two (2) other rooms that are rented for \$175.00, and then there is the bar, which is rented for \$100.00. Estimates have been discussed to determine what the revenue could be. Then there are the gate fees for Clear Pond and the Season Passes. There are three (3) part time employees who work about 18 hours a week. There is no Director. Last year staff from Ted Williams Camp were working at the Pond. This year there will be a Clear Pond Park Supervisor. Hopefully, they will be able to do some activities and have people join in. The supplies and food service lines have been increased by \$4,500 in order to have enough when it is requested. Not a lot of inventory can be held, however, trips to stores for additional supplies just cannot be done at a whim. It is hoped to get a Park Supervisor who can accurately keep track and determine the appropriate amount of supplies. The Equipment line went up by \$3,000 to purchase new equipment such as a new lawn mower and golf cart. The present lawnmower is at the Highway Barn and needs a new head gasket. Selectman Powderly asked about the dead trees at the pond. Mr. Hopkins explained that they are coming down. Ms. Candito asked about the playground at the Ted Williams Camp, and if anything was going to be done with it. Mr. Hopkins stated that if money will be allotted for it, it can be repaired. It was supposed to be a memorial and those that began it were to continue its maintenance and upkeep, however, that has faded away. The Triathlon people have indicated that they would clean up the park, but what that means specifically, is not known.

Mr. Hopkins then spoke about the Reserve Fund Transfer Request. There had been a contract to do the heating work at the Camp the winter the heat went. The contractor had put in air conditioners and not heaters. The LDC (Lakeville Development Corporation) was contacted to see if they could help out with some money in the amount of \$4,000. It is not sure though if they have this money available. Selectman Belliveau stated that he did not think that the LDC had that money available, and they also need some funds in order to close their books. The transfer request will come from the Reserve Fund. The work at the Camp has been done, but not paid for.

Upon a motion made by Ms. Candito; seconded by Ms. Winters it was:

VOTED: To approve a transfer from the Reserve Fund to the Park Commission in the amount of \$4,000 to pay for the balance of the heating and air conditioning work done at the Commissary.
Unanimous in favor.

7:30 PM Building Commissioner – Nate Darling

Nate Darling was present for the discussion. He stated that he had an additional reduction. He has been tracking the electrical expenses and FY14 was \$22,000, it was initially thought that \$25,000 was needed, however, it can be a lower amount.

7:45 PM COA Director – Vicki Souza

Vicki Souza was present for the discussion. Ms. Souza stated that she was looking to add three (3) more hours for the part time Clerk, which would bring her up to six (6) hours. The full time Clerk has been approached to determine if she will increase to 40, however, she is not ready to do this yet. Selectman Powderly stated that he was inclined to utilize volunteers, and there are many Seniors at the Center that could volunteer. Ms. Souza stated that they do have volunteers. There is someone that comes in on Mondays to answer the phones from 9 AM to noon. Someone also comes in to help with the café, and that is very helpful. The Repair and Maintenance line has been increased by \$1,000, since there is a lot of traffic in the building. Supplies are purchased using the Gifts and Grants account. The café alone needs a lot of supplies. The dishwasher was just fixed. The floors need some major upkeep and presently need to be stripped and refinished. Selectman Powderly stated that he would like to lean more to volunteerism and donations.

8:00 PM Veterans Agent – Robert Mello

Robert Mello was present for the discussion. He stated that the benefits have increased, and during the past year, the average is \$5,000 a month. As some Veterans come in, others go out. There have been some pretty large payments for eyeglasses and dental work. \$26,000 has been budgeted, but that has now increased to \$34,160. There will be a 75% State reimbursement to these costs, which then goes into the General Fund. The reimbursement typically comes in the following year. Selectman Powderly asked if it could be tracked to make sure that the money is certainly being reimbursed. Ms. McRae stated that she will look into that for Selectman Powderly. It was explained that the seniors do remain on for benefits, since they receive fuel benefits and medical expenses part B Medicare, which covers doctor bills and prescriptions and also some money towards rent or a mortgage payment. The younger Veterans typically do not stay on, after they have completed school, etc. The program has always been out there, but it is now being utilized more than it previously had been. Approval has to be received in order to provide benefits for each and

every individual. When a Veteran passes, their spouse can continue to collect benefits. Chairman Petruzzo asked if something could be noted in the margins regarding the 75% reimbursement to make sure that it is looked into for returning back to the Town.

8:15 PM Board of Assessors – Paul Meleedy, Janet Black and Dana Lucas

Paul Meleedy, Janet Black and Dana Lucas were present for the discussion. The Assessors explained that they have completed 13,950 of the Personal Property tax evaluations. The figure came in from \$8,000 to \$8,950. The Assessors stated that they would like to bring back the Stipends as it was in 2009.. The salary figures are as per Ms. Garbitt's calculations, along with step increases. The Electricity expense has been fairly stable, however, the Heating Fuel line has increased, since the cost of heating fuel has increased. There are a couple of broken windows, and the handicapped access ramp needs to be repaired. The windows are all single pane, and a savings might be achieved in heating fuel if they were replaced with double pane. The cost of the map updates is \$5,000. It was \$3,000 last year, and there are more maps to do. It is hoped to get on a program where the maps could be done professionally, then updated on a yearly basis. That cost could be looked into. This is a re-evaluation year. The Warrant Article for Town meeting is approximately \$60,000.

There is the cost for the consultant for the real estate tax program which Ms. Kenney (Treasurer/Collector) asked to be put into the budget, since it is a shared cost that should be split between both departments. The Training and Education line is being proposed for an increase, since there is a need to keep certifications and ongoing changes current. It was budgeted at \$800 but is increasing \$500 to \$1,300. The total amount is \$3,300. The Vehicle Maintenance account was used this year, since some repairs were needed on the Town vehicle. Selectman Powderly asked about the need for tires on a vehicle that only had 14,000 miles. Mr. Meleedy responded that it was necessary to replace a tire this year, and it was felt that all the tires should be replaced to keep the wear even. Selectman Powderly asked about the workload, and if inspections were being kept up at a proper pace so that the work was being accomplished appropriately. Mr. Meleedy responded that there had been a comment on their audit which caused them to change their internal schedule. The Field Clerk is making visits and keeping up with visits at a good pace. The Selectmen have been reported to regarding the progress on the Field Clerk goals. Every nine (9) years visual inspections are done. The office is keeping up with the houses being built. Selectman Powderly stated that the windows should be repaired and the handicapped access ramp repaired. The Town Administrator should be notified about this and Mr. Darling contacted about these repairs being done. Selectman Belliveau stated that he would like to meet with the Assessors and this was tentatively scheduled for April 28th.

Mr. Olivieri mentioned that there has been discussion about what will happen with the Assessors building. Has there been any movement? Selectman Belliveau responded that there have been discussions about the Assessors moving back to the Town Office building and to sell the building that they are presently located in, but the issue is still space. A plan needs to be developed for how and when to have that happen. It has also been suggested to take a bay of the Fire Station for the Assessors and building an additional bay at the other end to the Fire Station.

8:30 PM Cemetery Commission – Kenneth Upham, Gary Mansfield, Joan Morton

Kenneth Upham was present for the discussion. Mr. Upham explained that he is staying within his budget and is close to spending his allocated funds. There are about ten (10) burials a year. The

General Fund received \$6,800 with that income. Last year there were three (3) cremations, and the Commission typically anticipates seven (7) burials. Many trees and branches have come down, and there are a lot of stumps. The Town has 31 cemeteries and the Highway Department does the mowing for the cemeteries. There is new fencing being erected for the Clark Cemetery and the DeMoranville Cemetery, which will be completed in May. All the cemeteries have brand new signs with the Town logo on them. A volunteer helped take one huge tree down. Selectman Powderly asked that a thank you letter be sent to the person who helped do that. The grave digger helped take down a tree at a cost of \$800. Selectman Powderly asked that he receive a thank you note as well. Mr. Upham stated that Mr. Mansfield will be ending his term with the Cemetery Commission in April.

New Business

Selectman Burke stated that he reviewed the tape of the last meeting that took place on Tuesday and the discussion relative to adding an additional person to the Treasurer's office for 20 hours a week. He stated that it really should be only 19 hours, since otherwise the additional cost of the health insurance would not make it cost effective. He stated that he was interested in budgeting for a Town Planner and that maybe also a discussion should be started regarding an assistant Town Administrator for Ms. Garbitt. Ms. Garbitt has all the historical institutional knowledge of the Town in her head, and all the information needs to be extracted and documented appropriately before she retires. Thus, if the town is going to budget for a Town Planner, would it be more appropriate to reorganize the Town Administrator's Department relative to that end? Ms. Candito stated that she felt that the Assistant Town Administrator position and the Town Planner position had many similarities.

Selectman Burke stated that there are best practices, and the best one should be implemented at the Town Office building. Maybe both positions could be filled depending on how the Job Description(s) is written. A Town Planner would help alleviate responsibilities from the Town Administrator. There is also a need to focus on how the Town Office Building functions administratively and to make sure that all aspects are thought of and considered. A strategy needs to be put into place for the Town Administrator. A discussion should take place on whether to have a multi task person or to split the position in two (2) parts. Selectman Powderly indicated that many towns hire grant writers and town Planners since they are nice things to have, but once the budget comes under scrutiny, those are the first positions that get cut. The premise of a grant writer bringing in enough grants to pay for their position does not seem to work out. The Town does have five (5) years to plan for this, and it would be preferable to have an experienced Town Administrator, not a young one. Many Town Administrators do take on the financial aspect of the town which is a lot in and of itself. Selectman Belliveau stated that right now Ms. Garbitt is also doing the Storm Water Management side. Selectman Powderly stated that it needs to be outlined what the Town needs and what the person in the position(s) would be doing in order to know what is needed and what to look for. There was minor further discussion.

Adjournment

Upon a motion made by Ms. Winters; seconded by Mr. Vlahopoulos, it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:45 PM.
Unanimous in favor.

At 8:46 PM, upon a motion made by Selectman Burke; seconded by Selectman Powderly it was:

VOTED: To enter into Executive Session and not return to Open Session pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21a (6) to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the Board, and the Chair so declared; and pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21a (3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, specifically the Firefighter's Union, Police Union, Library Union, Highway Department Union, Supervisory Union and Clerical Union, if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, and the Chair so declared; and pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21a (2) to conduct contract negotiations with non-union personnel, specifically the Town Administrator.

Polled Vote: Selectman Belliveau-Aye, Selectman Powderly-Aye, and Selectman Burke – Aye.