



## NORTHFIELD BUDGET COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of January 18, 2024

**Present:** Morris Boudreau, Amy O'Hara, Carl Bartlett, Ken Tripple, Scott Haskins, Karen Sheldon, Sel. Mark Hubbell

**Staff Present:** Town Administrator Stephanie Giovannucci

Chairman O'Hara called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

**Haskins/Tripple moved to approve the minutes of 1/18/24 meeting as corrected. Motion passes.**

**Community Action:** Mrs. Giovannucci informed the Board that they will not be in attendance tonight as they are sick. She explained to the Board that in 2023 the Budget was approved at \$7,000, but she believes that due to staffing only \$3500 was requested in the first half of the year.

Mr. Haskins stated that they service 37 towns and 150 households from Northfield.

Sheldon/Boudreau moved to table the discussion to give them an opportunity to speak at the next meeting. Motion Passed.

**Franklin VNA** representatives Cherry Murray and Kristen Albert is asking for a reconsideration of approving the annual commitment to \$5,000 as increases have gone up 22% in services in Northfield. They are fully staffed and not turning away any services. Services are not billed directly to the applicants; however, insurance is billed for regular services, but if not covered VNA writes it off. Unskilled care such as cleaning, running errands, homemaker services would be billed. They also have social worker assistance available whether insurance covers or not.

Board discussed the funding they have on hand, and where the town appropriations fall. Ms. Murray will check on that, but feels it falls under grants, she explained they have a new system and is getting used to the new format.

**Police Department** Lt. Jesse Colby stated that there are a couple line items that he feels we are going to go over if they are not raised. One being medical expenses, they have been stopping a lot of cars and have already done 3 DWI arrests in January. He added that in 2023 the budget was \$700, and he's like to bring it up to \$2800 this would cover the DWI's and the new hires for random testing and psychological exams for new hires. Mrs. Sheldon inquired about purchasing a breathalyzer machine. Lt. Colby stated that with blood draws the officers do not have to be certified as we are taking them to the hospital, with a breathalyzer all officers have to be certified and the machine has to be maintained.

Lt. Colby stated that additionally he'd like to see the Equipment Main/Repair line increased to \$1500, we have already had to spend \$900 towards the radars which would leave the department with only \$100 left for the year for other radar repairs and computer parts.

Board discussed where to deduct the additional funding from.

Sel. Durgin stated that the \$1800 is already in there as we have not filled the Chief's position.

Board discussed other departmental expenses and agreed to remove \$2,000 out of the gas line.

**Public Works** Interim Director Adam Dow stated that we are down three in staff, and have staggered out the hiring to save on the budget.

Board inquired about tool allowance, Mr. Dow stated this is for the mechanic as there are tools that the police cruisers require not that he does not have in a standard tool box, this is also to replace some tools as needed.

**Revenues:** TA Giovannucci presented the revenues, Board reviewed with no suggested changes.

**Other Business:**

Mrs. Giovannucci stated that at the election it was discussed to purchase a ballot machine. The first initial cost would be \$7500, and then \$500 each year to program the ballot cards. She added that the machine is not connected to the internet, it's a stand-alone machine and in the process of being approved by the State. Board agreed to add the funding under elections.

Next meeting will be February 1, 2024 at 5pm to review the whole budget and approve for the public hearing which will be held on February 15<sup>th</sup>.

There being no other business, meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm

Minutes approved 2/1/24