

MINUTES
BUDGET COMMITTEE
TOWN OF ALEXANDRIA
NOVEMBER 12, 2024

PRESENT: Doug Benton, Don Paiva, Fred Platts, Mike Provost, Danielle Reed, Cindy Williams and George Tuthill
Selectmen's Rep.

AUDIENCE: Deb Glidden, Stephanie McComas, Rich Nialetz, Nancy and Larry Sharp, Paul Sirard, Max and
Russ Suckling

Don Paiva called the meeting to order at 6:05.

A motion was made by Doug, 2nd by Danielle to accept the minutes of October 22 as written, so voted.

George Clayman, Fire Chief presented his budgets. He explained that the training line item is up to provide attendance of classes. Other than that the budget is about the same. Danielle asked about vehicle maintenance that is over budget for 2024 and if that needs to be increased for 2025. George explained that the overage was due to unanticipated repairs to the boat and it should be fine. Mike asked how many members there are – George explained there are 27 members on the roster. George explained that the dues/subscription line is high because of the required emergency reporting. It is mostly all automated and there is a need for a new platform which increases the cost.

Don asked how long George anticipated being in the current building. George feels it is adequate for awhile. George was asked about the sizeable increase for the ambulance service and when we might look into our own. George explained that our call volume is 180 and feels it would not be feasible until our call volume is up to 1600-1700 a year. Providing an ambulance is extremely expensive – and very difficult to staff.

George shared the ambulance service is looking into providing a prevention program through a mobile integrated health care service. They are looking into grants.

George is proposing a warrant article for a generator for the fire dept. building. He is leaving it up to the voters to decide whether to provide funding. Cindy asked if there are grants available. George will look into grants prior to town meeting. Cindy asked if we are in compliance with our Hazard and Mitigation Plan to allow us to apply for grants. George indicated we are. There are two more meetings until the revised plan will be done. Doug asked why the need for a generator. George explained that the current one is on the rescue truck and when utilizing to maintain the building in a power outage, it puts the rescue truck out of commission. He has tried to operate out of town hall, but it is difficult being away from the fire station where all the action is taking place. Danielle asked if the Association can assist with cost. George indicated they can, but he wants to leave it up to the voters.

The Emergency Management and Forest Fire budgets were presented with no questions.

Dave Suckling, Police Chief presented the police dept. budget. Dave shared that he has been with the department for 14 years and based on a current wage salary survey his position should be paid 94,000. He is requesting \$80,000. He explained that he only does investigations now. He is requesting a raise for Becky to \$20/hr and explained she is worth every penny. The uniform line is up to provide the chief with a new safety vest. He is looking to replace the radar in the pickup. Dispatch and prosecutor lines are up and Dave explained how that funding is determined. Mike asked about the dispatch services. Danielle asked about the ammo line

item. Dave explained that the ammo used for the police academy is very expensive causing the line item for 2024 to be high. He has changed ammo going forward from 40 cal to 9mil. Doug asked if the health insurance line item included coverage for two officers and Dave advised yes.

Dave reported 100 arrests a year, and this past year had a sex offender who moved to down and didn't register convicted. Mike asked if Becky can report activity. Dave feels it doesn't show activity. Dave reported that our being a Recovery Friendly Community has been very successful.

Don asked the members of the committee if they felt we need to meet with any of the other departments. It doesn't appear there are any unusual requests. It was agreed that it isn't necessary. Don will email all the other departments.

Danielle reported that the request for supervisors of the checklist will be more than originally requested due to the requirement by the state for cost to maintain the computers. Cindy explained that she can share that when we review the budgets.

Deb Glidden and Rich Nialetz appeared to discuss the library. There will be costs for computers, smoke detectors, wiring, brick work, painting. The town has not yet accepted the library. We are still waiting on the court to approve. Deb and Rich will work with Jennifer to put together a budget. Fred asked about handicap accessibility and rest room facilities. There remains a lot of work and research to be completed.

Don made a motion, 2nd by Doug to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m., so voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Williams