

**SHARON SELECTBOARD
BUDGET MEETING
MINUTES
Monday, December 12, 2016**

Board Members Present: Mary Gavin, Luke Pettengill, Kevin Blakeman

Staff Attending: Deb Jones, Finance Manager; Selectmen's Assistant, Margy Becker.

Visitors: Martha Fisk (SR Senior Citizens Center; Linda Ingold (Safeline), Tom Lober and Jessie Blodgett (Sharon Firemen's Association), Cathy Hazlett and Herb Hohl (Health Connections of the Upper Valley), Laura Perez (Stagecoach Transportation Services).

The Chair convened the meeting at 6:00pm.

1. **Minutes:**

Mary Gavin made the motion to approve the minutes of December 5, 2016. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

2. **Warrants:**

Review and approval of check and payroll warrants was postponed until the next regular meeting.

3. **FY18 Budget Meetings:**

Martha Fisk explained the need for South Royalton Senior Citizens Center to ask for the first increased appropriation from the Town in many years. The Senior Citizens Center has traditionally asked Sharon voters for \$1,500/year in support. This year's request will be for \$2,500. All three towns are being asked to contribute an additional \$1,000. The cost of food is driving up the cost of meals. The organization relies heavily on volunteers.

Motion by Mary Gavin to approve South Royalton Senior Citizen's increased request of \$2,500. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.

Tom Lober and Jessie Blodgett presented the proposed Fire Department budget for FY18. The overall budget request of \$47,600 is down slightly over last year's request of \$48,550. The Fire Department is also requesting level-funding of its Equipment Reserve Fund in the amount of \$30,000. The reserve fund is for the purpose of vehicle and turn out gear purchases.

Dispatch fees charged by the Town of Hartford continue to increase. But the Department is very happy of the service provided and dispatchers' knowledge of local roads. The Department has been successful in its fundraising this past year, bringing in a net of \$12 -

\$13,000. It was agreed that Tom Lober and Deb Jones would complete a capital plan for equipment replacement.

Motion by Luke Pettengill to approve the Fire Department's request of \$47,600 for FY18 and the \$30,000 set-aside into the equipment reserve. Mary Gavin seconded. The motion carried.

Tom Lober and Jessie Blodgett explained the need to purchase new "jaws of life" for Interstate response. The current technology in use by the Department cannot cut the new generation of metal composites used on vehicle door and window supports. The cost of a new set of 'jaws' with the sufficient hydraulics is \$22,000. The vendor offers a lifetime warranty on hoses, pumps, hydraulics, and parts. Selectmen agreed to further discuss the request.

Linda Ingold presented a \$200 increase in Safeline's budget request. Sharon voters have provided \$500 in annual support in the past. Safeline provides victims of domestic violence a variety of services. The organization relies heavily on grants and community support. The goal for the next year is to create programs for the school district which address the impact of domestic violence on children. Selectmen encouraged Ms. Ingold to contact Sharon's Community Nurse.

Motion by Mary Gavin, seconded by Luke Pettengill, to approve Safeline's increased appropriation of \$700 for FY18. The motion carried.

Laura Perez of Stagecoach Transportation Services in Randolph provided her annual report to the Selectboard. Stagecoach relies heavily on state and federal funding for mass transit in addition to community support. Stagecoach runs the 89er bus from Randolph to the VA Hospital in White River Junction and other locations. Current fixed bus routes allow connections with buses in Barre/Montpelier to Burlington. Stagecoach also provides a well-used 'dial-a-ride' service. Ms. Perez reported the target 'fair share' contribution for Sharon would be \$3,500. The Town currently provides \$2,000 in annual support. Selectmen informed Ms. Perez to expect the Town's contribution to increase incrementally over several years. Selectmen noted Stagecoach's request for FY18 of \$2,000 has already been placed in the budget.

4. **Finance Manager Reports:**

Selectmen agreed on a schedule to review the FY16 audit report and fuel bids. Selectmen also clarified their intent to budget a tentative 1% wage increase for full-time employees and the Town Clerk in the FY18 budget.

5. **Adjournment: Motion by Mary Gavin to adjourn at 7:45pm. Luke Pettengill seconded. The motion carried.**

Submitted by,
Margo Becker, Selectboard Assistant