

Approved 03/08/2012

Exeter Fire District

(February 23, 2012)

Call to Order

Chairman Peter Lacouture called the February budget hearing of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:05pm. Present were commissioners Lacouture, Wilbur, Rooney, Aker and Nievera. Ms. Caito, district treasurer, and Ms. MacDonald were also present. There were thirteen members of the public in attendance.

Presentation of Budgets

Mr. Lacouture gave a brief overview of the budget process to date, followed by an explanation of the administrative budget for the coming fiscal year. He noted that the 3% budgeted salary increase for our collector was virtually our entire increase.

Chief Chamberlain (EVFD#1) presented his budget stating that he felt he was unable to hold his training costs at this level any longer. Mr. Lacouture requested that his board attempt to arrive at an increase no larger than 4.0%. The EVFD#1 current request includes an increase of 5.5%.

Dan Patterson asked of the seemingly high line item for "Bldg. Maintenance." Mr. Varone (Station #1) explained it was to replace the

front door on the fire station that is rotting out and must be addressed soon.

Chief Franklin (EVFC#2) presented his budget and stated that he felt his organization was “going backwards in their ability to serve the town.” The EVFC#2 current request includes an increase of 2.7%

Scott Kettelle (EEDC) presented the budget for the Dispatch Corporation and stated that only line he had any real control over was the salary line item. And that line represented a 2% general salary increase and a longevity increase for one dispatcher. He also explained how the fair labor standard laws affect the payroll for the dispatchers. Mr. Kettelle also suggested that meetings to discuss plans for a five and ten year periods be scheduled to establish a better line of communications between the commissioners and the organizations. The EEDC current request includes an increase of 6.8% and will require a 2/3 majority vote.

Jack Kliever (Exeter Rescue Corps) presented their budget request and explained their line item increases. Mr. Aker questioned the stipend line item stating that he felt \$25k was excessive for a first year chief. He felt it should be more in line with the existing stipends (\$15k - \$18k) for the current fire chiefs. He also felt, on the parity issue, that the salaries offered by surrounding towns, for like work, should not be overshadowed by our town’s ability to pay those salaries.

Mr. Nievera voiced his objection to the manner in which the parity issue was addressed, noting that the same result was reached with the dispatchers three years ago with much less acrimony. He also stated that he felt that the bargaining process should include a way by which any financial advances gained by the employees, as a result of bargaining, be conditional “upon the approval of the taxpayers at the annual financial meeting.” He stated that to bargain monetary changes into a contract, and then ask for monies to pay for them seems to be backward.

Mr. Rooney suggested that for \$25k, Mr. Colacone take regular shifts on the rescue vehicle in addition to his administrative duties. Mr. Rooney was also not impressed with the lack of communications with the board as well as the manner in which the parity issued was handled (in 1 step rather than 2 or 3). He also feels that a two or three year contract would be more advantageous.

Mr. Lacouture noted that this budget request, with a decrease of 1.2%, is an improvement over the original budget of 4.3%. The Rescue Corps request includes a decrease of 1.2%.

With no other comments or questions Mr. Aker moved (Mr. Wilbur second) closing the budget hearing at 8:15. The motion carried unanimously.

Call to Order

Chairman Peter Lacouture called the February meeting of the Exeter Fire District Board of Commissioners to order at 8:16pm, with no change in attendance.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Communications

Mr. Nievera reported that there were no communications of consequence to bring to the attention of the board. All operational mail had been given to the treasurer for her action.

Old Business

The report of the collector was read by Mr. Nievera. He also gave a brief description of the latest delinquent report and the composition of the tax sale list.

Mr. Lacouture announced that a stenographer has been hired for the annual meeting in April.

Mr. Nievera has posted the press release advertising for a moderator and a board member at several places around town, as well as the town hall and library.

New Business

Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Aker second) retaining KBW Realty Estate Inc. as our tax sale coordinator. The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Exeter Fire District Board of Commissioners will be held on Thursday, March 8 2012. The meeting will be held at the Exeter Public Library and will begin at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Aker moved (Mr. Nievera second) adjournment at 9:08pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Bill Nievera, Clerk
Exeter Fire District**