

Approved 04/17/2014

Exeter Fire District

(March 6, 2014)

(Second Budget Hearing)

Call to Order

Chairman Scott Kettelle called the March 6, 2014 budget hearing of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:08pm. Present were commissioners Scott Kettelle, Kevin Rooney, Patricia Whitford, Andrew Slater, Charles Franklin and Bill Nievera. Ms. MacDonald, district treasurer, and Peter Ruggiero, fire district attorney were also present. There were 16 members of the public in attendance.

Presentation of Budgets

Mr. Kettelle stated that this special budget hearing was a result of the failure of the local newspaper to run our press release on two separate occasions causing a very low turnout at the first hearing.

Mr. Nievera gave a brief overview of the administrative budget request. He noted that the 3% budgeted salary increase for our collector and the addition of a new line item for legal fees had constituted virtually the entire increase for this request. There is also a \$53.00 increase for telephone & internet service.

The EFD administration's current request (\$27,466) includes an increase of 12.3% over last year and will require a 2/3 majority vote at the annual meeting.

Dave Chamberlain (Chief, EVFD#1) presented his amended budget stating that several unresolved issues have been and are being deferred from year to year. The replacement of the “Jaws of Life”, the refurbishment of tanker 6, to push out the purchase of a new tanker for 6 to 10 years and the replacement of older equipment is not being addressed. Additionally, he is not putting aside funds needed to purchase new vehicles at the needed schedule.

The EVFD#1 current request (\$192,100) includes an increase of 5.5% (reduced from 20.9%) over last year.

Chief Franklin (Chief, EVFC #2) was on hand to present their budget request. The largest increase in their budget request is in the area of energy. He is also going to need a new roof on his station #2 in the very near future.

The EVFC#2 current request (\$157,100) includes an increase of 2.9% over last year.

Mr. Kettelle presented the budget request for the newly planned Exeter Fire District EMS Service. He reviewed the timeline that brought us to this point. It was explained that staffing would go from 6 full time paid personnel to 4, plus a number of per-diem employees to fill out each shift to supply 24/7 coverage. There will also be a part time chief working 20 hours/week to oversee the operation. Also stated was that volunteerism would be encouraged and fostered. Volunteers could, (and will) in the future, replace some of the

per-diem employees. The membership will be asked to approve this EMS restructuring during this meeting.

The Exeter Fire District, EMS services is a new line item and is requesting \$485,814 in support from the fire district.

Mr. Kettelle (President, EEDC) presented the budget for the Dispatch Corporation stating that their main increase was in needing to hold a deductible in the event the center was hit again by lightning strikes. These strikes cause multiple thousands of dollars of damage. The deductible for the center was raised to \$20,000. The other increases reflected an increase in health care for the 4 dispatchers. This is the third consecutive year that there have been no salary increases for the dispatchers. There is also a budgeted increase for a bookkeeper (to act as a treasurer) to handle monthly invoices and payroll matters.

The EEDC current request (\$366,716) includes an increase of 5.4% over last year.

Tom McMillan asked for clarification of the fuel line items, noting that station #1 was so much higher than station #2. It was explained that station #1 purchases fuel for themselves and sells diesel fuel to the rescue operation. Mr. McMillan also inquired as to the insurance and how it was purchased.

Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Rooney second) adopting the submitted budget requests of \$1,231,196 and submitting them to the annual

meeting for member approval. The motion carried unanimously.

With no other comments or questions Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Franklin second) closing the budget hearing at 8:07pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

Mr. Ruggiero read and explained the resolution for the assumption of responsibility of the rescue operation. How to deal with the representation on the board of commissioners was also discussed. Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Slater second) allowing the Rescue Corps representative remain on the board until the end of his/her term at which time that seat would be transferred to one of the fire companies. That motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Rooney moved (Ms. Whitford second) adopting the resolution adding the question relative to the assumption of rescue services by the fire district. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Nievera stated that he had notified Mr. Cerullo that he had been selected as moderator. Mr. Cerullo has requested to be contacted, at some point, as to any changes to his responsibilities during that meeting.

Ms. Whitford notified the board that the local BOC no longer wishes to advertise our meeting as they have in the past. Mr. Rooney moved (Mr. Franklin second) the placement of a block ad in the Standard times advertising our annual meeting. Mr. Nievera will draft and

contact the Standard Times with the necessary verbiage to run in the Times.

Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Exeter Fire District will be the Annual Meeting to be held on Wednesday, April 9, 2014. The meeting will be held in the Joseph Walsh Performing Arts Center (auditorium) of the Exeter-West Greenwich Regional Jr/Sr High School and will begin at 7:00pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Rooney second) adjournment at 8:35 pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Next Meeting

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Nievera, Clerk

Exeter Fire District