

• **March 9, 2007**

Present:

Finance Board: Michael Jackson, Barbara Brown, Jack Field, Rex Swain

Alternates: Liddy Adams

Selectmen: Richard Sears, Mark Lyon

Treasurer: Linda McGarr

Fire Co: Dick Murchison, Duncan Woodruff, Brian Ohmen

Emergency Mgmt. Robert Tomlinson, EM Coordinator

Guests: Arthur Mulligan, VP, The McKellan Group

Valerie Friedman

Seating: Alternate Liddy Adams was seated for this meeting.

Minutes: Minutes of the February 26, 2007 meeting were discussed. Rex did not feel the minutes described in detail the discussion held regarding purchasing procedures, nor did he did agree on the necessity of the purchase. The Selectmen's Office will clarify the procedure in further detail with the Parks and Recreation Commission. Minutes were accepted with these comments.

Fire Co. Budget Requests: Fire Chief Dick Murchison and Assistant Chiefs Duncan Woodruff and Brian Ohmen presented the WVFD's budget proposal for the 2007-08 General Fund, Capital Fund and long-range vehicle plan. (Proposals are included as attachments to these minutes.) These requests were in addition to the \$100,000 agreed upon for the 2nd payment for the next fire vehicle. Discussion on the following items was held:

Capital Budget: \$130,200.

#1. Command Vehicle: \$50,000. The command vehicle would be assigned to the duty officer daily for fire business only and would be available to fire personnel to attend training sessions, etc. Costs for insurance and vehicle fuel are covered by the Town. It was suggested reimbursement for mileage might be an option.

#2. Mounting Equipment and Installation on Rescue 2: \$8,000. Currently, equipment cannot be properly secured in this vehicle and is subject to damage. This would protect the equipment, as well as the vehicle.

#3. Tri-Pod Light: \$1,333. To provide more light required at fire scenes. Has it own generator.

#4. Update Extraction Equipment: \$7,900. Some current equipment is three generations old and is unable to be retrofitted. They also are unable to access newer buildings/vehicles due to current construction regulations. The company is also concerned about breakage of current equipment. Last year, \$22,500 in grants from the Firemen's Fund Insurance, which were sought by the WVFD helped to offset costs in this area..

#5. Life Safety Belts: \$2,120. Necessary when working on ladders and roofs and for tag lines to exit buildings in smoky situations.

#6. Pagers: \$19,450. Communications are very complex. Federal and State requirements are constantly changing technology. Must be narrow band compliant. Parts are no longer available for much of the current pager inventory.

#7. Portable Radios: 12 @ \$17,400. For safety and accountability. It is also critical to communicate with officers within and from other towns.

#8. Replace Tires on #8: \$2,000. Ten years old. Board suggested this be paid from General Fund as a maintenance item.

#9. Update Multi-Gas Meter: \$1,100. To monitor hazardous atmospheres, oxygen levels, etc.

The members reported the anticipated life of fire apparatus is twenty years. They also noted taxpayers dollars will not be required to replace Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus as they have obtained a \$150,000 Fire Act grant through FEMA.

General Fund Budget: \$130,200. The WVFD operating budget consists of maintaining two buildings, including fuel and electricity, all fire vehicles, and necessary equipment. It also includes physical exams and other required fitness training required by OSHA, an Awards Program for volunteer services if participation requirements are met, and water supply development, a program for securing hydrant water supply at as many locations in town as possible. A line item for training has also been included this year. This year's request exceeds last year's by \$29,700, mainly due to anticipated fuel and electricity rate increases, as well as meeting OSHA requirements and training.

The Board noted its appreciation to the firefighters for their efforts. They were commended on their long-range planning. They will provide the Board with their audit.

Health/Dental Insurance: Art Mulligan discussed possibilities for the Board to consider in a continuing effort to reduce insurance costs. Increasing the deductible for outpatient surgery over the past two years has resulted in lowering initial costs. The overall savings have been transferred to a Health Reimbursement Account to offset future costs. Prescription drug co-pays were also increased, which also helped in maintaining costs. Suggestions included:

- A further increase in prescription co-pays.
- An additional \$200 deductible prior to the co-pays, which could be paid by the Town or the employee.
- Placing a cap on the prescription drug rider.
- Investigating prescription consortiums.

With regard to dental insurance, Art reported studies show that some employees do not take advantage of dental coverage, thus costing the Town more than what is actually being spent. Options of self insuring, setting a different coverage limit, covering different aspects of dentistry, charging employees a reasonable fee, etc. will all be investigated. Art will report back to the Selectmen. He complimented both the Boards of Finance and Selectmen on their progressiveness in investigating areas to reduce costs.

Emergency Management: Robert Tomlinson updated the Board on the need to continually upgrade communication equipment for emergency services. Due to new technology and more frequencies

available, Homeland Security funds are now available through the State to reimburse the Town. The Board agreed that an ex-budget appropriation would be appropriate. Jack Field made a motion that an ex budget appropriation of \$19,357 be approved to purchase radios, subject to reimbursement through a Homeland Security grant. Liddy Adams seconded the motion. Motion unanimously passed. A review of the communication assets will continue in order to develop a long range plan.

Treasurer's Report: Linda McGarr reported funds have been transferred to a new Health Insurance 1st rate account. She will also invest some of these funds in a STIF account to obtain a higher interest rate and allow more fluidity as required. Treasurer's Report approved.

School Construction: Jack Field reported the Board of Education has most recently decided to evaluate three options: a single school in Roxbury, renovations to "new" of three single schools, and "build to suit." Since the latter would allow each town to build to its own needs and not that of the Region, he felt this could result in major issues of governance. He noted an Inter-municipal Municipal Agreement would be conditional on two major parts: A pre-commitment that State reimbursement would be available and that plans must fully satisfy the obligations and responsibility for education in our Region. The IMA has been drafted but has not been signed. Dick Sears reported that he and the First Selectmen of Bridgewater and Roxbury met with officials from the State Department of Education and Senators Roraback and DeLuca to discuss the possibility of reimbursement for "build to suit." They found that this is no longer available and that reimbursement would have to be sought through the normal channels, which require Board of Education approval. Jack noted there does not seem to be an advantage to participate in "build to suit" and suggested Washington would rather go through the Region and reimbursement from the State. The Board of Education most likely would require that all three towns agree. He suggested the matter remain in the hands of the Board of Education.

Selectman's Report: Dick reported the Cell Tower Committee, a sub-committee of the Conservation Commission, will attend the next Board of Selectmen's meeting. They will request the Town to become intervenors in this proposal, which could cost approximately \$10,000. Since there is no initial cost to seeking intervenor status, he will proceed. If it is to go further, funding would have to be approved by the Board of Finance.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Gollow, Secretary

Attachment:

Washington Volunteer Fire Department
109 Bee Brook Rd. Washington, Connecticut 06794

PROTECTING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 1926

Board of Finance

Washington, Connecticut March 9, 2007

All Concerned Parties,

The Washington Volunteer Fire Department strives to provide the best fire/rescue emergency response in

an effective and efficient manner. The ability to meet total effectiveness and efficiency is in training, membership and the most modern up-to-date equipment available in the fire service. Provided herein is the non-recurring capital budget for the Washington Volunteer Fire Department for fiscal year 2007-2008.

Listed herein are items requested for the Washington Volunteer Fire Department.

1 Command Vehicle.....+/- \$50,000 complete

The intent of the command vehicle is twofold. A command vehicle enables the senior fire officers to have a vehicle to keep resources in, such as hazardous materials references, pre-planning information, maps, and the like. The vehicle enables equipment to be stored, such as EMS first responder equipment, traffic control equipment, and personal protective gear. Another important reason for this vehicle is to transport members to and from training, fire department non-emergency activities, and the like. Training for the Washington Fire Department does not just take place at the fire station. Many members train at other fire stations throughout the state, as well as the state fire academy and the National Fire Academy in Maryland. Members should not have to pay out of their pocket to receive this training. Using a personal vehicle for this puts an unfair liability on the member. As an emergency service department, this vehicle is justified, as there are vehicles assigned to other departments for individuals to use. This price can be reduced by as much as \$12,000 by looking into a Ford Explorer coming off lease. A vehicle of this type is commonplace in the fire service today, as many surrounding fire departments have at least one, if not more.

2 Mounting equipment and installation for Rescue 2.....\$8,000

The new rescue is in need of mounting hardware to secure equipment placed inside. When the piece of fire apparatus was delivered, there were no financial provisions for mounting equipment within. Currently, equipment is subject to damage from not being secured. The cost of the mounting is justifiable because the cost of the equipment is extreme, and replacement should not happen resulting from unsecured equipment. The hydraulic rescue equipment alone is valued at +/- \$45,000.

Damage to the fire apparatus itself is another concern. The unsecured equipment is causing, or has potential to cause damage to the inside of the compartments, as well as the roll-up doors. The cost to replace 2 roll-up doors is comparable to the cost of this request.

3 Tri-pod Spotlight.....\$1,333

This spotlight will provide more portable scene lighting at an emergency. This light will twin the one currently installed on Rescue 2. This item was not added during apparatus construction due to financial limitations at that time. Increased lighting provides for better safety during emergency operations.

4 Updated Extraction Equipment.....\$7,900

The need to update the hydraulic extrication is critical to the effectiveness of vehicle rescue. Most equipment is past its useful lifespan, and repairing some equipment cannot be done. Updating the equipment to match current vehicle construction practices is essential. This amount requested is reduced from the original request of \$15,700 in part by \$7,800 due to securing a private grant in the amount of \$7,800. This grant is a second grant to purchase extrication equipment. The first grant was in the amount of \$14,000, which was used to initiate the hydraulic rescue tool upgrade.

5 Life Safety Belts...8 @ \$265.00 each.....\$2,120

Life safety belts are a critical piece of equipment needed for the welfare of firefighters working in locations that could result in a fall from above grade locations. Firefighters working on the aerial ladder and roofs are required to secure themselves from a fall. Besides the use of life safety belts from an above grade fall, the life safety belts are critical when a "tag line" is required during search and rescue procedures. A tag line greatly reduces the risk of firefighters getting lost in a building, which increases life safety.

6 Pagers.....45 @ \$430.00 ea.....\$19,450

We need to replace 45 pagers very quickly. Many of our older units have fallen into obsolescence where we can no longer get parts or support for the units (this would include primarily the Minitor II and Minitor III pagers). The Minitor II, III, and IV type pagers are also not fully compliant with the new narrow band systems (meaning that their functionality is limited (in the case of the Minitor III and IV's, and there is NO functionality with the Minitor II's). The current pager is the Minitor V which is fully narrow band compliant, has better overall performance as tested in the units that we have now that are Minitor V's. These new pagers will enable us to better alert our members, especially those in the more "fringe" coverage areas. The cost at today's prices is \$19,450 (\$430/unit).

7 Portable Radios.....12 @ \$1,450 ea.....\$17,400

The fire department is also looking to replace some radios that are very obsolete and fill some current gaps in our inventory of radios to enhance fireground safety and communications with mutual aid companies in the area. We are looking for a total of 12 new portable radios. The radios that are recommended for our needs are the Motorola XTS1500 series of radios. The radios will allow us to communicate within our system as well as with neighboring departments such as Woodbury that have digital radio systems. As more area departments upgrade their systems and migrate to new narrow band or digital technologies that are high band, we will be prepared. These radios will also be able to be used when we are required by the Federal Communications Commission to convert our existing system to a narrow band technology. These cost approximately \$1450 each at current prices (\$17,400 total).

8 Replace Tires on Engine 8.....\$2,000

The tires on Engine 8 are original, and about ten (10) years old. The tires tread life has past, and in need of replacement. Without proper tires, this is a safety issue when driving this vehicle.

9 Updated Multi-Gas Meter.....\$1,100

The new multi-gas meter will enhance hazardous atmosphere monitoring. With this updated monitor, ease of operation, efficiency, and reliability provide greater reliability, ensuring firefighters, and civilian's safety. This multi-gas meter will monitor atmospheres at the hazardous materials operational level, which is the Washington Fire Department's standard for hazardous materials response. This meter, at a minimum, will monitor carbon monoxide levels in structures, check for combustible gas (natural gas and propane, and monitor oxygen levels. This piece of equipment is critical in confirming whether there is a hazard in the atmosphere, or not.

Please note that due to securing a FIRE Act grant from FEMA, there will be no need to use taxpayer dollars for the replacement of Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus. This grant has been secured, and will be managed by the fire department. This is a savings of \$150,000.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dick Murchison, Fire Chief

Attachment:

Washington Fire Department
10 Year Capital Plan, 2008-2018

2008-2009

- Fire Hose Replacement**\$15,000
- Personal Protective Gear*\$6,000
- Engine 5 replacement (1/2) Replacement in 2010.....\$300,000
- Thermal Imaging Camera Replacement.....\$30,000

2009-2010

- Engine 5 Replacement (1/2) Replacement, Delivery June 2010.....\$300,000
- Fire Hose Replacement**\$15,000
- Personal Protective Gear*\$6,000

2010-2011

- Fire Hose Replacement**\$15,000
- Personal Protective Gear*\$6,000
- Hazardous Materials Equipment Replacement and Update.....\$30,000

2011-2012

- Fire Hose Replacement**\$15,000
- Personal Protective Gear*\$6,000

2012-2013

- Replacement of Engine 3.....\$400,000-\$550,000
- Personal Protective Gear*\$6,000

2013-2014

- Total Personal Protective Gear Replacement is due +/- \$80,000 plus balance from \$6,000 annual allotment put away to offset cost

2014-2015

- Possible ladder 1 Replacement.....\$650,000-\$800,000

2016-2016

- Hose Replacement..... \$75,000 plus balance put away annually to offset cost.

2016-2017

- Radio System Upgrade.....Cost unknown

2017-2018

- SCBA Replacement / ModificationUp To \$200,000

** Money put aside to offset total replacement cost for hose, but available if needed due to unforeseen circumstances

* Money put aside to offset total replacement cost for personal protective gear, but available if needed due to unforeseen circumstances.