

# **WEARE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 11-29-17**

1. The Weare Finance Committee met for a work session on Wednesday 29 Nov 7pm at the town offices. Members in attendance were Lori Davis, Matt Whitlock, Keith Erf, Bill Anderson, Gregg McDowell, Ellen Dokton, Neal Kurk, John Vanloendersloot, and Travis Corcoran.
2. Business. Purpose of the work session was to have preliminary discussions on CIP proposals and review police, fire ,and highway budget requests to generate questions for department heads prior to meeting with them one on one.
  - a. CIP. Discussion was preliminary; once final figures are known for warrant articles an overall review will be made to determine what the taxpayers can afford.
    1. Plow Truck. No issues; consensus favorable. We have a number of trucks over or approaching the 10,000 hour threshold
    2. Backhoe. No issues; consensus favorable. The ability to purchase the existing rental with 80% of last year's rent applied to the purchase plus have a warranty applied from time of purchase make this a cost effective buy.
    3. Cruisers (2). Three were purchased last year; these two would allow retirement of remaining Crown Victorias. Committee concern is for wording in the warrant article to ensure cruisers cannot be purchased out of the operating budget if the warrant article is defeated.
    4. Library. Consensus not favorable. 25K would be the first of 4 projected installments to determine the future role for a Weare Library/Community Center. Library currently has access to other funding sources to conduct a needs assessment. Schools and the old town hall have space available as well for community support.
    5. Road Reconstruction. No issues; consensus favorable. Recurring funding levels are not adequate to keep up with demand. One time supplemental received from the state last year is being carried over to help this year, but we cannot afford to fall behind by reducing annual funding.
    6. Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve. No issues, consensus favorable. Building this reserve will put the town in position to take advantage of state funding for red bridge projects, of which the town has three.
    7. Bolton Field Pavillions. Consensus not favorable. Town has higher priority needs.
    8. Highway Garage Fire Suppression. Committee has many concerns. Cost overruns resulted in this system being removed from original project. Not sure whatever gain we get is worth the investment. There is already a firewall between the truck storage area and the work bay/office spaces. What type of system is also a concern. A water or foam system would not nearly be as effective as dry chemical in combatting a fuel or electrical fire.

9. Old Town Hall Tower. Committee has concerns. Before making an investment in the building, we should have information on what else needs to be done with an estimated total rehab cost. Where should such rehab start? Is it wise to put \$\$ into a tower if the foundation/support structure is in more critical need of repair? Committee also felt the Town Historical Society should be involved in the process.

b. Operating Budget Requests. Committee reviewed department requests for 2018 operating budgets. These budgets are preliminary and will undergo further review by the Board of Selectmen. Members were asked to provide the Committee Chair with specific questions for department heads so they can be answered when we meet one on one. Following comments summarize the review:

1. Public Works. Highway has a 6% increase; transfer station 3%. Majority of increase is due to contractual obligations and health insurance costs. Consensus is favorable.

2. Fire. 15% increase over last year's approved budget. Vast majority of the increase is to pay for EMT coverage which is now paid out of operating funds as previously approved by voters. Consensus is favorable.

3. Police. 17% increase. Committee has many concerns. Numerous line items appear to reflect costs associated with 3 new officer positions, which have yet to be placed before the voters; all such costs should be included in a separate warrant article. In many cases the reasons listed in line items do not match actual cost (e.g. actual is far greater than 5% added reason?)

3. Administrative. Next two meetings are scheduled for Wed 6 Dec with Highway/Fire and Wed 13 Dec with Police. Both are 7pm at the town offices.

4. Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 955pm.

Bill Anderson

Secretary