

Town of Montville Finance Committee

Regular Meeting Minutes for

April 29, 2014

5:00 p.m. Room 203

Laura Tanner called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. She also led the Pledge of Allegiance. Present were Joe Jaskiewicz, Tom McNally and Finance Director Terry Hart.

Remarks from the public:

Wills Pike, Pheasant Run, had several questions on line items in the budget. 10360-52084 United Com and Family services, he asked why the Mayor reduced this from \$86,909 to \$1,000. Hart explained that they always request that amount but the Town keeps the funding at \$1,000. 10420-52025 Pension, he asked why the Mayor increased this budget. Hart explained that in the past this line has been underfunded. The amount the Mayor requested is a more accurate figure. 10440-52054 Hardware, he asked what is purchased out of this line item. Hart gave him a list of items purchased from this line. 10580-53052 Elections Office Equipment, he asked why this increased by \$4,800. Hart explained that the Registrars need to purchase new memory cards. 10720-51057 Social Services Clerk, he felt this position should be increased from 30 to 40 hours. He discussed the Police budget. He asked why the cellphones increased. Hart stated that older phones are being replaced with smart phones that require a data plan. He feels that the Public Safety Building should not have bottled water or trash pickup. He asked about the increase in the cellphone for the Animal Control Officer. Hart explained that it was due to the data plan. 10910-52008 Street Light repairs. He questioned why the town is repairing the street lights. It was explained that most of the streetlights are owned by the town. He feels the Mayor's Salary is too low at \$61,000 and feels it should be brought up to \$85,000 or \$95,000. He feels that the Mayor should not be paid out at the end of his term for sick and vacation time.

Kevin Fritch, Morgan Street, commented on the money the Board of Education transfers in their budget. He stated that there is a new State Statute defining the line items in the school budget. He questioned why the Mayor has cut BOE capital. He feels it should be funded if there is a need. He feels the Finance Committee should meet with the BOE to discuss their budget.

Alterations to the agenda: Jaskiewicz moved, second by McNally, to add item e. discussion of capital plan and item f. part time Firefighter and Dispatcher wages to the agenda. Motion passed.

Jaskiewicz moved, second by McNally, to approve the minutes of the 3/25/14 meeting. Motion passed.

Agenda Items as follows:

The committee discussed the hardware line in the IT budget. Hart gave an explanation of the items purchased out of this line. Jaskiewicz and Tanner stated that it was a good explanation.

After further discussion, Tanner moved, second by Jaskiewicz to cut \$15,000 from this line item (10440-52054); passed unanimously.

The committee asked Park and Recreation Director, Peter Bushway, about the money budgeted for transportation. There was question as to whether it is used to fund transportation to summer camp. Bushway explained that this line is only for the transportation for trips.

The committee discussed funding for a 24th police officer. Hart handed out a breakdown of the cost to fund this position. It would be an impact of \$73,571 included salary and benefits. McNally moved, second by Tanner, to add \$73,571 to police salaries (10820-51040). Hart explained that this amount is not all for salaries and benefit lines will also have to be increased. McNally rescinded his motion and Tanner her second. McNally moved to recommend the Town Council fund for a 24th police officer. McNally and Tanner in favor. Jaskiewicz opposed. Motion passed.

The committee discussed the Mayor's Salary. Hart gave the committee information regarding the salary in surrounding towns. The committee agreed that the current salary of \$60,928 was too low. Hart stated that there has not been an increase since 2005. Jaskiewicz moved, second by Tanner, to fund the Mayor's Salary at \$80,000. Passed unanimously.

The committee reviewed the capital plan. Hart requested the committee add funding for dispatch equipment that will be offset by a grant. Tanner moved, McNally second, to add \$250,000 to the capital plan for dispatch equipment. Passed unanimously.

Hart explained that sidewalk project and the high school security system that are in the current budget are going to be funded through grants. There is a total of \$140,000 allocated for these projects. She recommended these funds be used to purchase the police cars and other capital items in the 2013-14 fiscal year. McNally moved, second by Tanner, to recommend the Town Council use these funds for capital projects in the current year. Passed unanimously.

The Fire Marshal requested the part time dispatchers and firefighters receive an increase. Tanner moved, second by McNally, to recommend the town council increase the salaries of the part time dispatchers and firefighters 4% each year for the next three years. Passed unanimously.

The committee reviewed the departments' budgets. There was a question as to whether there is a need for a floating secretary. The Mayor has budgeted for one even though he recommended the Park & Rec Secretary be increased to 40 hours. There was a lengthy discussion about both these positions as well as the P&R program developer. Jaskiewicz moved, second by McNally, to fund the floating secretary and the P&R Secretary at the 2013-14 level. Passed unanimously.

McNally suggested the Economic Development Commission's budget be increased. He suggested the following: 10650-51016 (Secretary Salary) \$800 and 10650-53024 (Reference Materials) \$500. Jaskiewicz moved, second by McNally, to make these changes to the EDC budget. Passed unanimously.

The Youth Director requested wage increases for the part time youth workers. The Animal Control Officer requested increases for Assistants' Salaries. The Town Council will have to approve these increases.

The committee questioned why the Mayor increased the dispatch overtime from \$71,270 to \$85,000. Hart explained that last year \$82,139 was expended and next year there will be a wage increase. Tanner moved, second by McNally, to fund the dispatch overtime (10870-51100) at \$71,270. Passed unanimously.

Remarks from the public: Will Pike asked for clarification on the floating secretary position. He also asked what amount was funded for the pension. Kevin Fritch feels that there should be the same scrutiny over the BOE budget as there is with the town's, especially since the BOE gets 2/3 of the tax dollars. He stated that the BOE transferred out \$175,000 from their electric budget last year.

McNally moved, second by Jaskiewicz, to adjourn at 6:57 pm. Passed unanimously.

Theresa Hart, Finance Director