

**Needham Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting of December 16, 2009**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by the Chair, Lisa Zappala, at approximately 7:00 pm in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at Town Hall.

Present from the	Lisa Zappala, Chair	Richard Creem
Finance Committee:	Richard Zimbone, Vice Chair	Richard Reilly
	Matthew Borrelli	Michael Taggart

There were no citizen requests to address the Finance Committee.

Fire Department Budget Request Hearing: Present were Chief Buckley, Fire Chief, and Ms. Bonnano, an employee of the Fire Department. There was a discussion of the amount of the FY 2009 Fire Department budget turned back at the end FY 2009. Chief Buckley stated that he cut the FY 2010 budget based on the turn-back. Less gear and supplies are needed since the Department is not expecting new hires. There was a discussion of the salaries for the Department and the various components of the salaries request. While there is no hiring freeze, Chief Buckley stated that he has not replaced a vacant position, which he is having the Department cover with overtime. There was a discussion of the required staffing for Advanced Life Service (ALS) and whether the Fire Department can obtain a waiver so that the ALS care can be provided with one paramedic and one EMT rather than two paramedics. Chief Buckley explained that replacing one paramedic with an EMT should not make a difference since one person has to drive the ambulance while only one person provides the ALS care. There was a discussion of fire inspection fees. There have been few major commercial projects in FY 2010.

Police Department Budget Request Hearing: Present were Chief Leary, Lieutenant Droney, and Lieutenant Kraemer. The Police Department budget request for FY 2011 is 2.4% more than the FY 2010 budget. The only increases to the budget are for contractual salary increases. There are no cost of living adjustments. There was a discussion of the salary increases due to overtime for court time and investigations. The FY 2011 budget is requesting fewer funds for supplies and equipment due to a decrease in the request for uniform expenses. There was a discussion that the FY 2011 budget request reflects ICMA dues and subscriptions, which the Police Department had absorbed in its budget in prior years without an appropriation. There has been a decrease in the number of calls for police services, but Chief Leary stated that the calls are more serious. There was a discussion of Needham's per capita police spending. Chief Leary stated that Needham spent less per capita than both the mean and the median of similar size communities in FY 2007 and FY 2008. There was a discussion of the capital request for the Police Department. The Police Department is requesting portable radios. There was a discussion of the different types of portable radios and the peripheral equipment already owned by the Police Department. There was a discussion of the operating capital request

for the replacement of police vehicles. Lieutenant Kraemer provided the Finance Committee with a sheet showing the replacement schedule for police vehicles. There was a discussion of the manufacturers of police cruisers. There was a discussion of police vehicle 533, which is a transportation vehicle. It is 12 years old. Chief Leary estimates that the Town saves \$10,000 to \$12,000 from owning a transportation vehicle versus reimbursing for mileage.

Approve Minutes of Prior Meetings: Mr. Zimbone moved that the minutes of December 9, 2009 be approved as submitted. Mr. Reilly seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote: 6-0.

Finance Committee Updates: Mr. Zimbone updated the Finance Committee on liaison meetings with the School Department. Written questions will be provided to the School Department regarding its budget. Ms. Zappala clarified the scheduling of the budget hearings for Park and Recreation and the Finance Department. Meetings of the Finance Committee in February will take place at Broadmeadow. Mr. Creem reported on the meetings of the Permanent Public Building Committee.

Mr. Zimbone moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 8:50 pm. Mr. Borrelli seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous vote: 6-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Miller
Acting Recording Secretary