

**Needham Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting of November 2, 2015**

The meeting of the Finance Committee was called to order by the Chair, Louise Miller, at approximately 6:15 pm in the Great Plain Room at the Town Hall.

Present from the Finance Committee:

Louise Miller, Chair; Richard Zimbone, Vice Chair

Members: Barry Coffman, John Connelly, Tom Jacob, Kenneth Lavery, Richard Lunetta, Richard Reilly, Carol A. Smith-Fachetti

Others present:

Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager

David Davison, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director

Citizen Requests to Address Finance Committee

There were no requests.

Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Article 1: Approve Collective Bargaining Agreement – Needham Police Union

Ms. Fitzpatrick provided a summary handout that would be distributed at Town Meeting. She stated that the Town expected that this article would be withdrawn, but one week ago the Union called her with the intention to accept the Town's last offer. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that she recommended that the Board of Selectmen accept the offer, and that they voted in favor. The agreement achieves several the objectives sought by the Town including meeting the sustainability target of keeping contract increases to less than 4% of the wages. The entire contract, with all costs accounted, represents an increase of 3.8%. She stated that the contract has a one-year agreement followed by a three-year agreement. She stated that the contract also changes the pay rates for detail work, so that there will be only two rates: one for Town details, and a higher rate for private details. She stated that the contract also expands the requirements for promotion to the rank of Sergeant, changing from only civil service examination results, to also allowing for an additional assessment such as is required for Lieutenant and Chief. She stated that for the overnight shift, the Sergeant is the highest rank on duty, making this particularly important. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted that the salary increases in the contract keep the wages in line with peer communities. She stated that the total increase in the Police budget is \$100,422 in FY16. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the increase assumes conservatively that everyone eligible for vacation buyback will request the money rather than time off. She stated that the union proposed the buyback provision. She stated that the vacation policy change was proposed by the union. She stated that there is a ceiling on vacation accrual, so employees cannot carry over their vacation not used over the course of the year.

Mr. Connelly asked what the Police detail rate would be for a detailed hired by a private contractor working on a Town project. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that they would pay the private rate, since the Town rate is only for details ordered directly by a Town department. Mr. Connelly stated that this issue should be addressed going forward since the Town is ultimately

paying for these details. He asked why the union changed its mind at the last minute when negotiations started in the spring. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that she did not know why, but assumed they were interested in the offer. If the article does not pass at Town Meeting, the parties will need to start negotiations again.

Ms. Miller asked what was meant on the handout which states that the clothing allowance and defibrillation differential would move to base. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that these items would be moved to base pay. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the defibrillator differential is already in the base pay, and is being increased, but the clothing allowance is being added and would be in base pay for benefit calculations. Ms. Smith-Fachetti asked why the Town has a 20 mile residency requirement. Ms. Fitzpatrick stated that the requirement is to allow for faster responses for people on call. It is being increased because it is increasingly difficult for employees to afford housing within a 15 mile radius. She stated that the increased cost is for mileage paid for being called in.

MOVED: By Mr. Reilly that the Finance Committee recommend adoption of Special Town Meeting Warrant Article 1: Approve Collective Bargaining Agreement – Needham Police Union. Mr. Coffman seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion was approved by a vote of 9-0.

Approval of Minutes of Prior Meetings

MOVED: By Mr. Reilly that the minutes of October 21, 2015 be approved circulated, subject to technical corrections. Mr. Zimbone seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 9-0.

Recess

MOVED: By Mr. Reilly that the Finance Committee meeting be suspended, to be reconvened as necessary during Town Meeting. Mr. Zimbone seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 9-0 at approximately 6:35 p.m.

Adjourn

MOVED: By Mr. Reilly that the Finance Committee meeting be adjourned, there being no further business. Mr. Zimbone seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 8-0 at approximately 11:55 p.m. (Mr. Lavery was no longer in attendance.)

Documents: Town of Needham Special Town Meeting Warrant for November 2, 2015; handout: Article 1 – Nov. 2, 2015 Special Town Meeting – Needham Police Union Contract Settlement.

Respectfully submitted,
Louise Mizgerd
Staff Analyst
Approved 12/09/2015