



# Town of Middlefield Finance Committee

## 12/10/24 Meeting

### **In attendance:**

Adair Laurel-Cafarella      Gita Jozsef      Ken Murray  
Karri Trask      Stephen Harris, Secretary

### **Also attending:**

Ron Radwich      Jenny Dion      Donald Trask  
Tamarin Laurel-Paine      Diane Thome      Doreen Black

### **Quorum, call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

### **Review minutes from previous meeting:**

Minutes from previous meeting on 12/03/24 were approved as written.

### **Meet with departments:**

Met with Fire Dept Chief Ron Radwich. Upcoming switch to free state dispatch service is slated to save town \$10,286 in FY26 budget, while ambulance service is slated to go from \$2,000 to \$3,000. When it comes to the 5-year capital plan:

- Rather than replace the fire station roof for an estimated \$175,000 in FY27, he would prefer to repair the existing metal roof in FY26, such as by replacing existing nails with larger ones, for perhaps no more than \$10K.
- Rather than build a \$1M fire station addition in FY28 as per the capital plan, a less costly structure could accommodate both police and fire vehicles.
- The efficacy of proposed 800 MHz radios for fire, police, and highway vehicles was questioned in light of switch to state police dispatch and inoperability at River Road and other locations.

Met with Police Chief Jenny Dion. There were no anticipated changes for FY26 budget. When it comes to the capital plan:

- Proposed 2-bay garage with office and storage for \$410,000 is not feasible – shared facility with Fire Dept should be explored, as well as other options for increased office and storage space.
- As existing police cruiser is in bad shape a new cruiser will be needed in FY27, though it should cost less than the planned \$85,000.

Jenny will assemble documentation on the number of tickets issued and the growing number of emergency responses, etc.

**Accounting Issues:**

Beverly Cooper has yet to provide closing FY24 balances to enter into the new accountant's software, also making it impossible to ascertain various current account balances.

Free cash should be avoided wherever possible, as it can be an unaccountable black hole.

5% -10% of annual budget should be set aside in stabilization accounts for specific anticipated purposes.

**Any other business:**

Concern was again expressed that the town is in danger of losing \$80K in ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds which it has yet to contract for, despite the year-end deadline. The Highway Department has a potential expense that can be contracted for on short notice, to avoid this occurrence.

**Next meeting:**

The next meeting will be at the Town Hall on January 7<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm.

**Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:29 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

