

BOARD OF TOWN COMMISSIONERS

BUDGET WORK SESSION

May 7, 2019 - 4:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Commissioner Susan U. Burdette, Chair
Commissioner Amy G. Chmielewski
Commissioner Brendan P. Hopkins - via telephone
Commissioner Patrick T. Richards - via telephone
L. Jesse Bane, Town Administrator
Michael L. Krantz, Director of Administration
Lisa M. Moody, Director of Finance
Charles Moore, Chief of Police

ABSENT: Commissioner Philip L. Einhorn

OTHERS: Joan Suitt, Recording Secretary

ABSENT: Aegis Representative

Commissioner Hopkins notified there is not enough time for the tax increase he proposed and is taking it off the table.

BUDGET PRESENTATION:

Police Department

The Chief of Police reviewed the following:

Salaries- Non-Sworn - requesting part-time Traffic Technician position. In 2018, when a full time Traffic Technician left the Department it was decided to absorb the duties but it has become apparent that this position is needed part-time.

Commissioner Hopkins realizes the Town cannot create a full time Lieutenant position but suggested if the Town has mid-year funds it might be the time to look at promoting the Administrative Sergeant to Administrative Lieutenant because of being short on command staff. Commissioner Hopkins does not want to be in a position of not providing the Chief with command staff needed and reminded both Aberdeen and Havre de Grace have more.

Gasoline - increased due to the rise of cost. The Town is part of a fuel consortium buying in bulk and locked in at \$2.20 per gallon.

Fire Arms Supplies - increased about \$2,300 because of a concern with lead contamination at the Aberdeen range. The Town has looked into frangible ammunition where the lead is replaced with cooper and the projectiles

disintegrate when hitting something hard, thus having and no impact to the environment.

Uniforms - The current uniform vendor went out of business. The Finance Department has been helpful in finding a new vendor at a lower cost but cost for cleaning/tailoring has increased.

Body cameras have been added to the request and the Chief of Police distributed information. Cost is \$30,443 and Axon is the vendor being used in Maryland and nationwide. Axon is very reputable and the software is included. The Chief of Police reviewed the installment cost for five years.

The Chief of Police notified of the success of using body cameras in the use of force complaints. The Chief also noted with body cameras you see the event at the perspective of the officers and see the truth.

Chair Burdette inquired about storage of the video. The Chief of Police informed when the officer downloads the camera the video it automatically goes in the cloud.

Commissioner Hopkins stated this is an investment/protection for the Town, officers and the public.

The Chief of Police and Patti Sterling, Grant Coordinator, are applying for a substantial grant. The Chief mentioned with Patti's help the Police Department has received \$32,549 for FY19. Also, a traffic grant for \$8,000 was received.

Traffic Enforcement - increased \$2,000 due to the request of a radar unit.

Patrol Vehicle Accessories - The cost is for accessory packages in three new patrol interceptors and motorcycle unit.

The Director of Finance further reviewed leasing options on vehicles and advised more analysis is needed. The Director of Finance informed the budget will stand for now.

Police Vehicles - request for 3 Ford Interceptors and new Harley Davidson motorcycle.

The current motorcycle is a 2006 Harley Davidson with 20,000 miles and it is getting to the end of its life. This motorcycle will remain for training. The Town's motor personnel are involved with the Maryland State Police and other agencies where training is intense and difficult.

Commissioner Chmielewski inquired if police are compensated for events that are not the Town's. The Chief explained the plan devised this fiscal year is to receive money back.

The Director of Administration advised the Fee Schedule needs change.

Commissioner Chmielewski asked if the Explorers receive anything for helping at events. The Chief of Police advised they have received donations.

Commissioner Hopkins reminded when using the Explorers there has to be supervision.

Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company

Mr. Tony Coliano, Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company (BAVFC), distributed information on appropriations given by the Town of Bel Air. Mr. Coliano stated the Town has given BAVFC 1.6% increase since 2011. Mr. Coliano advised the fire/EMS calls increased by 34% at 2,000 calls per year in Town limits. Mr. Coliano informed Havre de Grace and Aberdeen Fire Companies receive much more support from their Town.

Mr. Coliano advised his business is expensive but BAVFC has no debt in fire equipment. The last estimate for a Rescue Truck was 1.6 million and uniforms for the fire fighters is approximately \$8,5000 for one person.

Mr. Coliano stated the BAVFC operating budget is 1.4 million and that does not include salaries for EMS, office workers, insurance, telephones and gas and electric. Mr. Coliano advised the fund drive support is down and asked BAVFC be brought up to meet the cost of inflation.

Chair Burdette asked who helps support the other Fire Departments such as Fallston and Joppa. Mr. Coliano mentioned several other companies and informed together they do not have the number of calls like Bel Air but do a lot of fundraisers. Mr. Coliano stated because of the amount of calls and training; he cannot ask BAVFC to participate in fundraisers.

Chair Burdette informed the Town of Bel Air is a 3 mile radius with 10,000 residents and BAVFC also serves greater Bel Air which is a 5 mile radius with 120,000 residents. Chair Burdette wanted to know what the County does for them.

Mr. Coliano talked about the amount of people coming into Town throughout the day and the need to prepare for the worst.

Commissioner Chmielewski asked for the number of calls received outside of Town and if the County gives as much to Bel Air as it gives to Havre de

Grace and Aberdeen. Mr. Coliano stated the calls are 9,700 and Harford County gives more because of being larger.

Chair Burdette mentioned the Town's population is less than Havre de Grace and Aberdeen.

Chair Burdette would be glad to go to the County Executive to explain why 10,000 residents should not have to pay for all the people that come to the Town from all over Harford County.

Mr. Coliano stated last year the County gave a 2% increase to all the fire companies and again this year. Harford County also funds specific projects.

Commissioner Hopkins inquired if the the BAVFC financials are provided. The Director of Finance stated BAVFC submits it every year but they have not been shared with the Commissioners. Commissioner Hopkins inquired if the equipment replacement fund and real estate holding is included. The Director of Finance stated that has to be included in the report.

Commissioner Hopkins asked for verification on funding sources; money received from the Town, the fund drive, billing for EMS and the additional money from the EMS Foundation. Mr. Coliano agreed with the funding mentioned by Commissioner Hopkins and explained all fire companies get an employee to come into their station and pay 65% and the Foundation pays 35% of the salary. Workman's Comp, health insurance and uniforms are not included.

Commissioner Hopkins asked why BAVFC is not open to the County adding an additional crew to the station. Mr. Coliano informed it was to be a surge ambulance which meant when our ambulances were out, they would come in and surge our territory. Mr. Coliano stated from experience, when putting a County employee at a volunteer station it is a kiss of death and it pushes volunteers out.

Commissioner Hopkins stated the Town has to provide services for 120,000 or more people and the County has not increased anything for us.

The Town Administrator advised the Town would like to know the volume of your workload and cost of workload within the Town of Bel Air vs. the County to get a percentage. The Town Administrator informed having that figure will help us prepare for the Town's budgeting.

The Director of Administration offered to put a BAVFC donation page on the Town's website to direct people to the fire company. Mr. Coliano advised to contact Judy at the BAVFC office. Mr. Coliano informed a marketing committee has been put together by the Association.

Mr. Coliano notified recruitment and retention of volunteers is a problem and suggested giving BAVFC Town residents more than the \$25.00 tax break.

Commissioner Hopkins inquired about Joppa Fire Company deciding to take units off mutual aide. Mr. Coliano does not think that is right. Joppa Fire Company feels they have one crew and does not want to send it to Baltimore County to take away from the Joppa area. Mr. Coliano further explained in some Baltimore County Fire Companies if there is not a crew assigned in the station they are not alerted.

Red Light Camera Program

The Director of Finance advised Howard County re-bid the contract with American Traffic Solutions (ATS) as the provider. The Director of Finance informed:

- Charge of \$2,450 per month, per camera for 12 months, total \$117,600.
- Back office processing expenditure per citation \$11, total \$66,000.
- Howard County facility cost \$717 per month for 4 cameras. Total cost \$8,604.
- Phone line - cost \$416.

The Director of Finance informed the total on the expense side is \$192,620. The revenue is approximately \$450,000.

The Director of Finance stated this completes the entire General Fund.

Discussion by Commissioners on Budget Issues

The Director of Finance advised May 14th is the last Budget Session and reviewed the Commissioners budget issues.

1. Town Fees and Fines such as Food Truck License, not mowing lawn, unkempt property and/or storage, including vehicles.
2. Revenue from vehicles and equipment sold on Gov Deals \$47,094.
3. Office Street/Courtland Street project - discussion next Budget Session.
4. Exterior paint for DPW/PLN - discussion next Budget Session.
5. The general fund budget has increased \$2,212,505 from FY11 to FY20.
6. Director of Administration to bring information next Budget Session.
7. Discussion regarding the Christmas Parade was tabled for a later date.

8. Boys & Girls Club - discussion next Budget Session.
9. LASOS - discussion next Budget Session.
10. Additional discussion on funding Public Relations position.
Recommendation of funding reviewed by Director of Finance.
11. Added Elderly/Needy funding - discussion next Budget Session.
12. Added Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company - discussion next Budget Session.
13. Revisit discussion on Harford County Historical Society and Harford County Education Foundation.
14. Added Bond Newsletter - discussion next Budget Session.

Chair Burdette reminded about the Community Garden on Saturday, May 11th at Saint Matthews Church.

The Director of Finance notified newsflash on the Town's home page has information on the new financial software and the benefits of using it. Flyers will also be distributed.

ADJOURNMENT:

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Approved: May 23, 2019

Signature on file
Susan U. Burdette, Chair
Board of Town Commissioners

Signature on file
Michael L. Krantz, Town Clerk