

Town of Charlton

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 6:30 PM

Selectmen's Room, Charlton Town Hall

Present: Frank Morrill, Dana Murphy, Dennis Tully, Dan Prouty, Peter Cooper Sr., Joan Walker, Kristin Kustigian, Robin Craver, Rick Swensen, Doug Stepien, Chief Pervier, Lt. Lewandowski, Officer Gaylord

1. Meeting commenced at 6:30 PM.
2. Approval of minutes from October 2, 2013 meeting:
 - i. Motion by Peter Cooper Sr., 2nd by Dan Prouty/passes unanimously.
3. Canine Program Request by Chief Pervier:
 - i. The Charlton Police Dept. has secured a \$25K Stanton Grant contingent upon acceptance and approval of a canine program by the Town of Charlton.
 - ii. Weekly maintenance costs for this canine program are estimated at \$105 (1hr/day at \$15/hr). Three year costs are estimated at \$116K (per Robin Craver's analysis).
 - iii. Finance Committee will entertain the original MOU dated 9/27/13 which was approved by the BoS. (The revised MOU handed out by Chief Pervier on 10/23/13 had not yet been approved.)
 - iv. This grant will expire in early November 2013.
 - v. Peter Cooper Sr. requested clarification on the police departments need for a canine unit at this time. Specifically, what is the average number of times per year the Charlton Police request the use of a canine unit from the state police or another town's police department? An estimate of 15-18 times per year was given.
 - vi. Chief Pervier explained the main use for a canine unit would be searches for people and drugs. Major benefits of the program might be increasing the efficiency of search missions (ex. reducing the time it takes to recover a missing person or a person being pursued), and enhanced tracking of drugs/ explosives.
 - vii. The canine unit might also result in increased retention of recovered goods/seized assets for our town. We would like to know what the average annual total seized assets are for canine programs in nearby towns.
 - viii. There is significant interest among the Charlton police in this program. Three officers have requested to be canine handlers.
 - ix. Charlton had canine unit (Dexter) years ago. The program was terminated early in Chief Pervier's tenure.

- x. Chief specified that liability insurance premiums will not increase with the addition of the canine unit.
- xi. Pet health insurance has been included in the veterinarian budget line item.
- xii. Motion to support the canine program, moved Dennis Tully, 2nd Dana Murphy.
 - 1. Discussion: Many members expressed that Charlton is struggling with expenses and cannot afford to increase service levels at this time.
 - 2. Motion fails: 5 in opposition, 2 in favor.
- 4. Update on overdue Police Detail Payments from Lt. Lewandowski
 - i. Lt. Lewandowski passed out a spreadsheet listing the top 13 debtors. It showed that approximately \$33K of the \$273K has been recovered in the past couple months. Lt. expressed that this process is time consuming.
 - ii. Finance Committee members expressed concern over the amount of time this recovery effort is taking away from employees real job functions. At what point will this effort be relinquished to a third party collections service?
 - iii. Joan Walker explained that this debt reduces the amount of free cash certified by the DOR.
- 5. Next meeting:
 - i. November 6, 2013 at 6:30 PM.
- 6. Motion to Adjourn at 8:10 PM
 - i. Motion Peter Cooper Sr., 2nd Dan Prouty/ passes unanimously.