



Town of Milton  
Budget Committee  
Special Meeting  
Wednesday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Fire Station  
Agenda

**CALL TO ORDER**

Meeting called to order at 6:00PM by Chairman Thomas McDougall

**ROLL CALL - PRESENT**

Mr. Thomas McDougall– Chairman, Mr. Bob Carrier, Mr. Humphrey Williams, Ms. Peg Hurd, Mr. Dennis Woods, MS. Tammy Smith, Mr. Justin Bellen Quorum was present.

**PUBLIC PRESENT**

Fire Chief Nick Marique: Power Point Presentation

The Outliers:

01-4220-110- Full Time Salary: Salary tracking 3% under budget (\$3,000), not yet in high OT season.

01-4220-120- Part Time salary: tracking 11% under budget (9,000) this will help offset 01-4220-961- if pace is maintained.

01-4220-130- Elected salary: 2% over budget (\$700).

\* Due to Default Budget

01-4220-96- Per-Diem: Tracking 60% over budget (\$15,000) used to pay night shift stipend, if I need the money, I can transfer from Revolving account to maintain budget if needed.

01-4220-420- Heating: 18% over budget (\$1,500) result of Default Budget.

01-4220-450- Telephone: Tracking 17% under budget (\$700) result of phone line being shutoff at Station 2.

01-4220-620- Supplies: Tracking 33% under budget (1,500) result of Default budget.

01-4220-640- Vehicle fuel: Tracking 16% over budget (\$450) result of Default budget. The last 2 years the fuel Prices have been going up.

01-4220-645- Diesel Fuel: Was tracking overbudget, created new tracking system to separate Ambulance fuel and

Charge to revolving account. When the prices bottom out, I stop charging the diesel fuel for the ambulance revolving account and charge it to the fire dept. because I had extra money in that diesel line, so I'd rather save the money in the ambulance lines and see what we need but now it's back up to where it was years ago, so I broke out the ambulance fuel and it's getting charged to the ambulance revenue line. I did that a few months ago it's going to track high for a little while.

### 2019 Overall Budget:

Overall budget tracking 1% over budget (2,500) The budget is manageable barring any unforeseen catastrophic events. If I buy just 4 sets of uniforms instead of 5, I make up the \$2,500. That 2,500 going over is based spending all the vehicle maint., Equipment maint. and equipment purchases. I have room to put it off this is the only way I have to make up for payroll, fuel and heat you have no choice to spend.

### 2020 Budget What to Expect:

A political promise was made not to increase the 2020 Budget.

Details are being ironed out but I would not expect the budget to be above the 2019 proposed budget of \$445,000.

Can we remain level funded for a 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year????...I think we're going to be alright this year but I don't know what will happen next year. Everything that I move through the revolving account that's how I'm keeping it level; things are going up I'm managing the budget with what I can and how long can I do that before it pops somewhere, I don't know.

Currently there's \$110,000 right now, so we have to buy a new ambulance it's going to cost \$225,000 in 2023.

We're basically spending what we're bringing in but we're not putting away the money that we should be putting away. The political atmosphere of the Town is taxes can go up, so we're maintaining for now. Bob: ask about the collection rate on ambulance calls. Nick: We have a collection agency but the monthly income has been higher this year than last year. We have brought in \$102,000 and we're not half way through the year. Tammy: ask if it's because you have more calls? Nick: It could be because the economy is better so people have more insurance.

Humphrey: have you raised the rates? Nick: We haven't raised the rates in 3 or 4 years. I called different depts and we're on the high side already. Peg: Medicare I don't know what you charge for an ambulance but does Medicare.

Nick: They don't pay much. They pay \$325 for a \$1,700 ambulance ride. A patient that gets transported has roughly a balance of \$107 is what I see most frequently.

Balloon-Effect-squeeze the budget but things are absorbed by EMS revenue.

### Biggest budget Issue Going into 2021 Is: .....

### Staffing!!!!:

It's getting harder to get people to respond to calls this is not a Milton problem it's a national problem.

I can give you several reasons whether it's generational, working out of Town now they don't care, it's 70% medical and they don't want to do medical so it's not fund and they lose interest there's more standards than there used to be.

Humphrey: is it salary? Nick: No. Were in better shape than most but we are feeling the effects of it. Peg: When talking about staffing is it FT or PT? Nick: I'm talking about volunteer, PT, per Diem staffing. Tammy: are you still doing the explorer program from High School? Nick: Yes, we did it 2 years ago we still have some of them one of our newest firefighters just passed fire I and shows up more than the other people. It's not salary, what it comes down to you have to want to be a firefighter. There was more discussion on generational from 18 to 50 who don't show up for work but want to make instant money and other issues.

### How Are We Currently Staffed?

2 Firefighter/EMT working 12 hr. Day shift 7 days each week. The 2 full time people they are supplement by part time people that are paid from the ambulance revenue. The Full-Time employees are paid from the Full-Time salary line. They work 24 hr. shifts they have 2 days off and 24 hr. shift and have 4 days off. We put them on night shift to help alleviate the reliance on people covering at home.

There are 14 night shifts we have to get people to volunteer their time to sign up for \$50.00.

By putting the Full-Time on 24hr.shift is a lot easier to back fill the dayshifts and having them nights and that covers 4 of the 14 with 10 people. The 12 hr. night shifts stay at home you cover the shift you get \$60.00 if you're at the station covering the shift you get \$120.00 which is about half the cost if they were paid hourly.

Peg: How about Paramedics what category do they fall under? Nick: They fall under the EMT category.

We have 7 per Diem Paramedics our goal is to eventually have a Paramedic ambulance 7 days a week.

2 FT FF/EMT's supplemented by Part-time/per diem staff.

2 Firefighter/EMTs on call from home or the 12-hr. station night shift.

2 FT FF/EMTs supplemented by EMT's who sign up for an hourly on call stipend.

Chief and Asst. Chief work as 3<sup>rd</sup> FF/EMT 2-3 days each week.

Supplemented by on call (Volunteer) Firefighters/EMTs.

### Is This Sustainable?

Scheduling Per Diem employees around FT work schedules is a nightmare.

How long will EMTs be interested in committing their nights for \$60.00.

How long will EMTs be interested in staying at the station for a stipend rate.

Current staffing model is a stepping stone.

It is not sustainable.

How long do we have before shifts go unfilled?

These stepping stones, these stipends, and the increase stipends to pay someone to be at the station and using the revolving fund to pay the day shift. We have not gone to the Town and say we are in trouble you need to raise more money to cover us. We have found ways to make it work.

The Chief presented a slide on how other area Fire Dept, are staffed.

### Looking Ahead:

To get away from the stipend shift and do strictly Per Diem around the clock would be an additional \$100,000 roughly. If I use \$20.00 an hr. for 12 hrs. multiply that out subtract the \$26,000, we already have that would be absorbed into that.

2 more FT Firefighters which would provide 1 person 24 hrs. a day around the clock. We have the \$117,000 Salary line the 31.89% NHRS retirement then you add the 2 health Insurance plans FICA and Medicare about \$12,000 when you add these cost up your looking at about \$200,000. To do all FT people around the clock you need to appropriate an additional \$600,000.

### CAPITAL PROJECTS:

#### SCBA Purchase -2019

Funding was approved to replace SCBA

AFG still pending

Once denied or approved we will move forward with replacement plan.

This is what I submitted to the planning Board. We talked about the air packs we have the money it was approved and the money was placed in the CRF. We also have an AFG grant pending we should hear back in a few weeks.

There was a platform that this grant was submitted on they use to turn the grants back out and manage them through that platform right when these were submitted, they decided that they were going to switch platforms and that is not up and running yet, so they have no way to manage these grants that are all scored and ready to be distributed.

What pushed this back was the Government shutdown they were peer reviewed at the beginning of the shutdown that went on for 6 weeks.

The peer reviews that happen in Washington where Fire Chiefs and different industry professionals and they read every grant and they score it and then they go back and refile and put it in the computer and they all get placed in order and they start at the top and start going through in order until they run out of money.

If we don't get denied from that will use the CRF money to purchase the grants if we don't get denied from that the money will be in the CRF.

The air packs are still good till next July. We took 2 and sent them out to make one work, so were down one the cost was \$700 and not going to spend that kind of money when he will replace in 3 months.

#### Purchase of Engine 2:

Purchased used in 2018

Purchased Price \$5,500

Currently operates from station 1 will operate from station 2 eventually.

Recommended replacement by 2025.

This year I'm asking for \$70,000 to put in the CRF same as last year

2020 Replacement of Truck 1(Ladder)-used \$25,000

2021 Replacement of Engine 4 (Tanker) CRF 2020 lease in 2021 \$40,000

2021 Replacement of Car 1 (Command Vehicle) \$5,000

If we get the air pack grant that money will then go to the next item on the list of capital projects which is to replace the ladder truck with a used ladder truck which is newer than the current ladder truck and we can do that for \$150,000.

The plan was to put \$40,000 replace engine 4 in the CRF in 2021 when the radios are paid off in 2020.

We will try to put on the ballot to lease which is the same vehicle we're trying to replace in 2018 it was pulled off in 2019 because we purchased engine 2 and that allowed us to push that out to 2021. If something happens to Engine 4 Engine 2 can replace it we will be no worse than we are now.

Originally, I was trying to replace 2 vehicles with one it was going to be a \$550,000 custom 6-person cab like the ones in the station except bigger axle and twice as much water, it will be a dual-purpose truck. The problem is it costs \$650,000 the way you want it but I have 3 pumpers now, we only need a standalone commercial cab base tanker and that would be like \$350,000 plus or minus inflation, so roughly it keeps the bottom line including the bond payment for the fire station at \$330,000 the payment last year was about \$350,000.

### Things to Consider Moving Forward:

CRF funding is not at the ARC recommended levels

We have a fleet sheet that we give to the Planning Board the list of vehicles the projected life, how much it costs, and the annual replacement costs which is listed as ARC it divides it and shows the amount of money you should be putting away based on its life expectancy \$125,000 a year is needed to maintain the fleet

We need to decide as a community do, we want to put away the \$125,000 or do we want to put away a little bit and lease the amount when it comes up and pay interest or pay cash. Cash would save us money but you have to front load it. I'm not putting what the standard is. I'm putting what I expect to get out of them.

Reestablish Contributions to Vehicle Maintenance CRF Should be considered:

We should put money in the vehicle Maintenance CRF. We stopped this 10 years ago we had a lot of money in there we had to use it. When we go on the tour, I will show you some of the things that need to be done and how much it will cost.

Nick went over the Ambulance Revolving Fund YTD expended Transaction detail as of June and also the YTD expenditure Transaction Detail as of June.

Adjourn: motion was made by Peg Hurd second by Humprey motion passed 7-0 at 8:00 PM

Written by Vice-Chair Bob Carrier