

**EAST HADDAM  
BOARD OF FINANCE  
Special Meeting Minutes  
March 21, 2006**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bob Bennett, Matt Budzik (arr. 6:18), Mark Fortier, George Giesey - Chairman, David Meade.

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Tony Shetensky.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Brad Parker, Mary Jane Plude, Pete Govert (arr. 6:35), Matt Cashman, Ed Smith, Don Angersola, Steve Beller.

**1. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Giesey called the meeting to order at 6:14 PM.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**2. FIRE DEPARTMENT GRANT REQUEST:**

Mr. Bennett gave a brief explanation on the grant request for a new truck. The new truck would replace a 1978 truck. The request is for \$840,000, which would be for a totally equipped truck and training. The town would have to meet a 10% match. In response to a question from the previous meeting, he stated that this new truck would fit in our current firehouse. If the grant is not received, the truck is in our long-range plan. He stated that operations/safety or vehicles are the options for the grant cycle this year. It appears that small towns will receive funding for trucks this round.

Mr. Fortier asked if it would require additional funding from the town over the 5% if we don't get the entire grant. Mr. Parker suggested tapping into the Capital Reserve for Non-Recurring Fund if need be.

Mr. Bennett stated that another option would be to transfer items from the old truck onto the new one. We could also sell or donate the old truck.

Mr. Giesey asked the value of the old truck. Mr. Cashman stated \$2,000 if we are lucky. Mr. Smith noted that some communities have sent old trucks to Louisiana.

Mr. Fortier asked if there are any other ongoing expenses to the town for this truck other than insurance and routine maintenance. Mr. Angersola stated that there is a yearly \$500 cost for ladder testing and other testing every three years at a cost of \$1,500. He also said that 1 out of 5 departments could expect to receive funding for a truck.

Mr. Fortier said that he heard that homeland security funding was being shifted to ports. Mr. Angersola stated that they are making trucks a priority for small towns, and that we meet all of the criteria.

Mr. Bennett suggested giving them consensus to move forward with the grant.

Mr. Smith stated that he had been dead set against a ladder truck for East Haddam until they came across a ladder/pumper combination. He said that this vehicle would not sit idle, it would be the first vehicle out.

Mr. Giesey asked how long it would be before we knew if the grant was awarded to us. Mr. Beeler stated that it could take up to one year before we knew.

Mr. Gieseey asked if we would have to buy this piece of equipment if the grant came in at a much lower amount. Mr. Angersola said that we would if we wanted to be considered for future grants.

**Motion made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Meade, to allow the Fire Department to pursue grant funding for a new ladder/pumper apparatus in the amount of \$800,000. Unanimous aye.**

### **3. GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET REVIEWS:**

#### **A. #741 FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

Mr. Smith stated that the department can live with the reduction in the uniform line as presented by the BOS. In response to an inquiry from Mr. Bennett, Mr. Smith replied that the department would be up to full force soon. Mr. Smith stated that the pension line should have been increasing at least 2% each year since its inception in 1991, but the program had been funded by deaths and the increase was not needed at the time. That has given a false sense of security since now the cash values of the policies had to be tapped into in order to meet the plan's obligations.

Mr. Budzik asked if the plan complies with ERISA? The committee was unsure about this. Mr. Fortier stated that the town needs to know more about this plan since it is under our control now. It was suggested that the investment agent be asked to report to the board at a later date regarding the pension plan.

The other lines in the fire department budget were reviewed.

Mr. Bennett suggested that members of the Board stop in to see the new trucks.

Mr. Smith stated that the cut in the fire pond CIP allows the department to only complete one new pond. Mr. Gieseey asked how many prospective ponds there were. Mr. Angersola responded that there are 15-20, and the problem is prioritizing them.

Mr. Cashman reported that if we fix truck 1-15 we could get another 15-20 years out of it.

Mr. Gieseey asked how many estimates they had for the roof repair. Mr. Smith stated there were two and came in about the same. They looked into a new roof and having it sprayed. It will need to go out to bid.

Mr. Parker stated that he had some experience with the sprayed roof and it is a good product.

Mr. Smith stated that the request for pagers and radios would replace old one. He supplied the board with detail regarding the equipment budget.

#### **B. #742 FIRE MARSHAL**

Mr. Smith stated that they had put in \$25,000 for a new vehicle to replace the blazer. The blazer is very rusty underneath. He would like to request a 4-wheel drive pickup at a cost of \$18-20,000.

Mr. Bennett asked how many miles per year are put on this vehicle. Mr. Smith did not have that information with him.

Mr. Parker said that the Selectmen agree that the vehicle is in bad shape, but the funding was cut through their process.

Mr. Fortier asked why we couldn't pay the part time fire marshal mileage for his own vehicle use. Mr. Parker stated he needs the larger vehicle in order to carry all of the equipment. Mr. Smith spoke with the fire marshal and he would prefer not to use his own vehicle. He added that use of the town's vehicle was part of the decision for him to take the job.

Mr. Bennett asked if there was any other town vehicle that the fire marshal could use. He also suggested shopping around for a used vehicle.

The operating lines of this budget were reviewed. Mr. Parker noted that the current fire marshal is doing much more than was done before.

Mr. Bennett suggested that the fire marshal be the person to check fire alarms at each of our buildings.

**Motion by Mr. Fortier to adjourn at 7:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Meade, and carried by unanimous vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

David Meade  
Secretary