

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
BUDGET MEETING
February 18, 2015
Meeting Room A**

<u>Present:</u>	Norman Needleman	Audience Members
	Stacia Libby	James Francis
	Bruce Glowac	Maria Lucarelli
	Kelly Sterner	

Norman Needleman called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Public Comment: None

BUDGET REVIEWS:

Expenditures

Based on the initial requests and adjustments that were made there is currently a 3.06% increase in spending projected at this time. The major drivers can be identified on the summary page. Most department requests include only small dollar changes with several departments showing decreases. The aggregate requests result in a 3% increase.

Kelly Sterner reported the original budget requests totaled \$7,552,925, which was an increase of \$350,765 over the current fiscal year. After the First Selectman's review, the budget was reduced by \$97,533 down to \$7,455,392.

Visiting Nurses (VNA) – Tab 44

Susan Maxwell presented. The VNA are requesting a level funding request of \$66,874. There was discussion on viability. Ms. Maxwell stated that the VNA's cover 13 Towns and they are expanding. The VNA is keeping a balanced budget and they are stable.

Ivoryton Library – Tab 50

Susan Nilsen, President of the Library Association, and the Elizabeth Alvord, the Director presented. They reported the library's non-profit status has been reinstated and is retroactive. Although their membership is up, they are still struggling with fundraising. They will be hosting their annual garden tour. The library owns a condo that will be going on the market this year after they upgrade the electrical and a gutter replacement.

Estuary Transit District - Tab 39

Joseph Comerford presented. Estuary Transit is requesting \$138,474 in contributions from member Towns. They are requesting \$17,358 from the Town of Essex for the annual dues for 2015-2016, a \$1,211 or a 7.5% increase. They have added a lot of service with an increase on the dial-a-ride service and approximately 106,000 regular trips this year.

Fire Department – Tab 33

Chief Paul Fazzino, Jr. presented the Fire Department Budget. The Fire Department has tried to keep the budget at zero. Some of the increases are in the medical supplies, training, protective gear which includes boots, turnout gear, etc. Major truck maintenance was the biggest increase due to the aged fleet. There was discussion on replacement of the lock system in the firehouse. The department needs additional low band fire pagers. The department would like to purchase an extractor, which is a washing machine for fire gear.

There was discussion on the \$10,000 that was budgeted for a part time administrative assistant. There was discussion, that due to the excessive and expensive truck maintenance expenses, these funds were used. Mr. Needleman suggested reducing the budget by \$10,000.

Chief Fazzino mentioned that he would be looking at a used fire truck that has a compressed air form system that was listed at \$475,000. If the apparatus is a good fit, then it would still need to go through the department first for approval, then a Town Meeting.

The Selectmen reported there would also be a capital sinking fund budget of \$145,000.

Fringe Benefits – Retirement - Hooker and Holcombe – Tab 11

Timothy A. Ryor from Hooker & Holcombe presented. There are three (3) plans, the Town Plan, the Police Plan, and the Merit Service Plan for Firefighters. There was discussion on the funding methods and using a current mortality table. There was discussion on funding the retirement plan with more funds now rather spreading it over 25 years, which would reduce the liability in 18 years. Norman Needleman tabled the decision of Retirement Funding until the next Budget Meeting.

ADJOURNMENT at 6:55 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Lucarelli