

## Budget Advisory Committee Meeting

### Town of Temple, NH

5:30 PM, 11 March 2020, Town Hall Annex

**BAC Attendees:** Gary Scholl (Chair BAC), Gail Cromwell (BAC), Christine Robidoux (BAC), Mike Darnell (BAC), John Kieley (BAC), Steve Concordia (BAC), Ken Caisse (BAC/SB), Tim Fiske (BAC)

Meeting called to order at 5:31 PM

Scholl brought everyone up to date on the Ambulance staffing changes in Wilton and bill received from Wilton for Ambulance service for 2020.

Discussion of whether BAC should make a recommendation to the Select Board.

Kieley raised important points to consider:

- The 16.33% is an arbitrary calculation, not based on population or call volume.
- The Wilton Ambulance has run up deficits for the past two years, we don't know how much.
- Capital expenses came out of the revolving fund for 2020 but not much remains for future years.
- Wilton has reportedly lost several staff members and demoted the Ambulance Chief, who is also a paramedic. We don't know what level of service Wilton will be able to provide while they are short staffed.
- Wilton has been unwilling to negotiate with Temple or provide accurate data.

For these reasons, Kieley is concerned that continuing with Wilton's Ambulance service is not financially or operationally sustainable and would be detrimental to the Town of Temple. There is no longer a good faith relationship between Temple and Wilton.

Scholl reminded the BAC that the purpose of the meeting was to advise the Select Board of an appropriate dollar amount that will need to be added to the budget at town meeting to cover either contingency. The annual cost from Wilton is: ~\$57.8k; the annual cost from Peterborough is: ~\$53.3k. However the Wilton bill does not include capital expenditures, while the Peterborough figure does.

A recommendation of \$55,200 was made to cover 5 months with Wilton and 7 months with Peterborough. This would add approximately \$15,000 to the current budget, to be voted on at town meeting. The motion to amend the budget must come from the floor, which Scholl has agreed to do.

Caisse shared that the Wilton Administrator would be meeting with the Temple Select Board that evening, and expressed frustration that the Ambulance Advisory Committee, made up of Select Board members and Administrators from the towns in the Wilton Ambulance Co-op were not notified of the staffing changes. He feels that they are no longer in a partnership.

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A question was raised regarding how the budget shortfall was covered. How much was taken out of the revolving fund to cover the overages the last two years. What is the balance of the revolving fund? Two years ago there was a budget surplus, 3-4 years ago surpluses were re-distributed back to the member towns, two years ago it starting going into the revolving fund. Wilton had planned to purchase a new vehicle with the revolving fund this year.

Recommendation to change line item description in the Temple Budget to "Ambulance Services" instead of "Wilton Co-Op Ambulance".

A motion was made by Kieley to present to the Select Board from the BAC:

Taking into consideration that Temple Town Meeting will be held on Saturday and that the Wilton SB continues to avoid negotiations to provide contractually fair and equitable cost of Ambulance Service, (currently proposed at \$57,798 which exceeds the contract's computational amount by \$17,598) the BAC recommends that the Temple SB raise the "Ambulance Service Line Item" from \$40,200 to \$55,200

For the following reasons the BAC believes that continuation of the IMA for Ambulance Service with the town of Wilton is detrimental to the citizens of Temple:

- 1) The contractual allocation of the incurred cost of service has been replaced by an arbitrary allocation which resulted in an overpayment of around \$9,000 in 2019 and an allocation which would result in an overpayment in excess of \$17,000 for 2020.
- 2) The lack of administrative oversight by the Town of Wilton has resulted in departmental expenditures that exceeded budgeted amounts in 2018 by a reported \$150,000 and exceeded the budgeted amounts in 2019 by a reported \$75,000.
- 3) Reduction of the Ambulance Revolving Fund for capital expenditures of around \$100,000 in 2020 is surely unsustainable and will result in further increased costs to Temple in the near future.

The members of the BAC, therefore, unanimously recommend that the Temple Select Board terminate the IMA for the Wilton Ambulance Service as quickly as possible, within the process specified within that agreement, and contract service continuation with the town of Peterborough for the remaining portion of 2020 and further as appropriate.

Second by Cromwell. Unanimous approval. Scholl will write up and send to Select Board.

Other Business:

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Kieley suggests amending lines related to **Welfare** and **Emergency Preparedness** due to the deteriorating situation around the coronavirus. He is in contact with the state in his role as Emergency Manager for the town of Temple. He will continue to monitor and discuss with Select Board to present at town meeting.

Motion to adjourn at 6:20. Unanimous approval.