

**CITY OF BERLIN**  
New Hampshire

**Minutes of Council Work Session of 3/25/2020**  
**Via Zoom**  
**6:30 pm**

Members:

Mayor Grenier  
Councilor Remillard  
Councilor Otis  
Councilor Theberge  
Councilor Higbee  
Councilor Eastman

City Staff:

James Wheeler, City Manager  
Patricia Chase, Finance Director/Tax Collector  
Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director  
Peter Morency, Police Chief  
Dan Buteau, Assistant Police Chief  
Lisa Arguin, Police Department Administrative Assistant  
Jenn Cloutier, Dispatch Supervisor  
James Watkins, Fire Chief

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. by reading the following: Pursuant to Executive order 2020-04, in which Gov. Sununu has declared a State of Emergency due to COVID-19, and In accordance with Emergency Order #12, the requirement under RSA 91-A:2, III(b) that a quorum of a public body be physically present is waived. I, as Chair, determine that an emergency exists and in order for the Council to conduct its regular business the requirement of a physical presence of a quorum would put members of the Council, City staff and public at risk.

Fire Department

Chief Watkins presented the Fire Department's FY21 operating budget. The FY21 operating budget is \$2,389,049.46 which is \$154,518.05 higher than the current budget. The increases are mostly attributed to contractual adjustments.

Chief Watkins explained that the current training budget will be underspent this year due to the cancellation of classes and would like to use that funding to purchase cancer reduction equipment.

Chief Watkins then reviewed his capital improvement requests with discussion following. The capital requests include the replacement of 40 windows, roof repairs, pagers replacements, radio replacements and floor improvements. It was decided that estimates for all the building

improvements would be obtained. Once the estimates are available further discussion will take place regarding the potential application of a loan to fund all the improvements.

### Police Department

Chief Morency summarized the Police Department budget and noted that there is a 1.9% increase over the current budget. The FY21 operational budget request is \$3,348,490.00 which is a \$63,188.00 increase from FY20. There was discussion around the high turnover in personnel and the cost of hiring and training a new officer.

Chief Morency reviewed the Police Department's capital requests. He explained that the firearms requested in the FY21 budget would be purchased in the FY20 operating budget. There was discussion about the ballistic vests in the FY20 budget and the potential to receive funding from grants. There is a request for portable radios in the amount of \$11,600.

Chief Morency discussed the K9 program and that his department's forfeiture funds could be used for the purchase of a canine and the training necessary. It would cost the City approximately \$5,000 a year thereafter.

Chief Morency noted that the new furnace and windows recently installed has made a noticeable difference. There was discussion regarding third floor renovations. Mayor Grenier asked if \$20,000 would cover the necessary improvements and the Chief thought it would be.

There is also a need for cruiser lap tops which are now five years old. The department would like three new ones at a cost of \$5,000 each which includes mounting, installation and software. There are currently five marked cars, two detective cars and one travel car in the department's fleet. Mayor Grenier asked for a mileage report.

### Special Public Safety

The Special Public Safety budget is up 1.5%. Special Public Safety includes services for Milan and AVRDD. There was discussion around the revenue collected and the offsetting of expenses.

Motion to Adjourn by Councilor Remillard and seconded by Councilor Higbee.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by Patricia A. Chase