

Minutes Holden Finance Committee, February 21, 2024, Senior Center
Public Safety Budget (Police, Animal Control, Dispatch Budgets)

Members Present: Paul Challenger, Chris Lucchesi, Dave White, Al Berg, Jane Titcomb, Donna Wallace, Sarah Concannon, Marilynn Foley

Members Absent: Stephanie Adams

Also Present: Peter, Lukes, Town Manager, Timothy Sherblom, Police Chief, Lt. Christopher Noyes Deputy Police Chief, Lt. Gregg Sculthorpe, Accreditation Department, Joycelyn LaPlante Director of Communications, Alexa Owen, Deputy Director of Communications

The meeting was called to order at 6:30: P.M.

Tim presented the Police Budget and answered questions from the Committee. Staffing has been a challenge as there is not much of a pool of candidates available. The Town must choose candidates from the state civil service list. Any new hire's training takes about a year before the candidate is ready for duty. The Accreditation Department oversees that the standards of best practice policies are implemented and followed for the safety of the Department and its officers. Maintaining these certifications helps defend the police from frivolous lawsuits, and gives the officers confidence that they are properly trained. Union contract renegotiations will begin this year.

Tim presented the Animal Control Budget. There are few changes from the previous year.

Tim presented the Wachusett Regional Emergency Communications Center (WRECC) Budget and answered questions. WRECC will reorganize as a separate town department as of July 1, 2024 under the direction of Director of Communications Jocelyn LaPlante, instead of the Police Chief. The Department is investigating expansion to facilitate the servicing of additional towns. The state provides generous funding for regional dispatch centers, and providing the service helps lower the net cost to the Town of Holden. This will probably require a move out of the Public Safety Building to a different location.

Th meeting adjourned at 8:40 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilynn Foley, Clerk