

Rome Fire District Budget Meeting for 2021 budget year, November 18, 2020

Present: Wade Wilson, Brian Ley, Jim Gross, Paul Goeglein, Scott Buth, Barry Boos, Gary Jackson, Ron Kutz, Matthew Foelker, Randy Thorman, Heidi Hargan

The Sullivan Town Board opened by stating that they are questioning the increase of \$5,000.00 in capital outlay budget line and the \$9,000.00 increase in the Maintenance of Equipment budget line.

Paul questioned why the Fire District is not being paid our budget until the end of the fiscal year so that we are trying to meet our current expenses on the previous year's budget pay out.

It was decided that this question can't be answered because we don't know when or how it started to be paid that way.

Paul explained that our main engine is 15 years old and is showing signs of its age. Engine 99 is 22 years old. Its fuel tank is corroding from underneath and needs to be watched.

Brian also explained that service on Rescue 05 hasn't been completely billed yet and has more repairs coming due to findings of DOT inspection.

Gary Jackson asked why the firefighters can't do some of their own service on the equipment.

Barry stated that service is now a liability unlike in the past. If something happens, they will pull a service record and lack of proper servicing or records could result in litigation.

Paul continued that \$14,000/year is required for general maintenance required by state. This is aside from any unforeseen issues.

Two new trainees can't pass their firefighter course until they have approved turnout gear purchased recently. The cost to outfit one firefighter is \$6,000.00. The State requires that this gear be no older than 10 years so we are on a constant rotation to keep our gear current. State dues haven't been paid to the Fire District for several years. That is money that doesn't come from the tax payers and is subject to audit by the state to show that it's being used for Firefighting equipment. When the district was receiving those dues that money was dedicated to turnout gear replacement.

Scott Buth asked when we could take the 3 sections back from Sullivan or consolidate with them.

Brian stated that our working relationship with Sullivan is good right now and he would advise against reopening that subject. He also feels that if we consolidated we would lose several firefighters from an already thin force.

Paul explained that we will need to pay \$750.00 each for four firefighters to go through jaws training. This is, again, a liability issue. We would need to show that all of our firefighters have been properly trained in the proper use of this equipment in the event of an issue in the field.

Ron Kutz said that if we're going to have a viable Fire Department we have to support it.

Paul asked the board if the budget is cut, can the Fire District come to them at the end of the year if we go over budget. We're already close to budget in many of our categories this year and we're only in October.

Wayne Boos said that with this board, you can come to us and ask for what you need. He explained that he's not comfortable with the continuing increase in the budgets.

Randy Thorman questioned where the new equipment line that used to be a part of the budget went.

Paul explained that it had been removed by a former board member.

Ron asked what has happened with the radios we approved last year.

Paul said that we are waiting for the finalization of the project to make that purchase.

Scott said that the Town of Sullivan has no place to find this percentage of increase in their budget.

Paul explained that all of our trucks have to be built to fit our station so we can't buy a less expensive demo truck.

Wayne asked if we could drop the Capital Outlay budget line at last year's amount of \$15,000 instead of increasing to \$20,000 then come to the board for anything is needed later.

Heidi found that she missed a glitch in the program that added the salary line into the budget twice. There was also an addition error in the insurance line. With these corrections the requested budget is actually \$109,000 rather than \$121,000 plus the \$40,000 for radios and pagers.

Scott said that the budget needs to be reduced to \$100,000.

Paul stated that we're over 60 calls already for 2020 so we're going to be over in our reimbursement budget line. We'll also be over for education due to the mounting state requirements.

Brian asked if we could start putting money into an equipment account once the truck payment is retired.

Scott explained that we can't do that. We can only levy against a loan.

It was decided that we would reduce the Maintenance of Equipment budget line by \$6,000 and the Capital Outlay budget line by \$3,000. The radios and pagers request will increase to \$50,000.

Scott wants to correct the budget payout over the next three years. He asked that Heidi send the budget bill for 2021 in August, for 2022 in May and for 2023 February. The Hebron board agreed to the change. Scott also requested a quarterly report to the board and an audit every 3 years.

Submitted by: Heidi Hargan