

CHARLEMONT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – CHARLEMONT TOWN HALL

(Joint Meeting with Charlemont Board of Selectmen)

February 11, 2017

Members Present: Finance Committee - Lynn Hathaway, Rich Filoramo, Amy Wales, Ron Smith;
SelectBoard - Toby Gould, Beth Bandy

1. The meeting was called to order at 9:05 am.
2. Jared Bellows appeared for discussion of the Police Dept. Budget. He said they have “1 ½ police vehicles” operating. They have already spent \$6,000 of this year’s maintenance budget. He wants to replace the SUV. Also wants to level fund operating budget. They handled 80% of the calls (636) and the State Police responded to the other 20%. There are more drinking related incidents, misdemeanors and felonies and breaking and entering, due to the increased traffic, tourists and recreation activities. Revenue from citations comes to the Town. It was mentioned that a “Pre-Town Meeting” would be a great time for Emergency Services to make their pitch about what they provide for Charlemont compared with what the other towns offer.
3. Gordon Hathaway appeared for the discussion of the Highway Budget. He said that equipment fatigue is the biggest problem. He is asking for a 6% increase in his operating budget. The \$20,000 highway special projects account has \$14,000 remaining. Should be a special article for next year. They could rent a tractor/mower for \$10,000/month. Could probably get most priority roads done in that time period. Need cost analysis to see which makes better sense - buying or renting. We should consider allocating a chunk of Stabilization for surplus purchases. What might be helpful is for the Town Meeting to be made aware of the surplus equipment Gordon has seen over the past year that could have been purchased.
4. The minutes of the January 21, 2017 meeting were approved.
5. There’s a need to budget for the various assessments - voc. Schools, veteran’s services, sewer district, retirement system, etc. Carlene will be asked to plug these into the budget sheets.
6. Rich Filoramo went through the department budget requests. Asked Carlene to check with the Planning Board on why they want an increase.
7. Mail Correspondence: Charter School and School Choice assessments – no effect on Town budget.
8. There was mention of an email bulletin from DLS concerning Departmental Revolving Funds, and how the procedure has been updated. There is also a model by-law/ordinance attached to the email.
9. It was agreed to postpone the Mohawk Regional School proposed capital assessment to the next meeting.
10. There was a discussion of Free Cash and Stabilization policies. A handout from Joe Markarian and Baystate Municipal Accounting. Amy Wales moved to change the order of the uses for Free Cash from Joe Markarian’s proposal to the following:
 - a. Build or replenish the General Stabilization Fund
 - b. Reduce the tax levy
 - c. One-time expenditure for capital improvements

The motion was seconded and passed. The SelectBoard then also made a motion to change the order of Free Cash usage, taking the Finance Committee's commendation and approving it. The discussion on Stabilization is to be continued at the next meeting.

11. The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents reviewed:

Email from Kathy Reynolds re: Retiree's Medex Insurance premiums

Invoice from Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans' Service District

FCSWMD Assessment Calculations for Fiscal Year 2018

Rate Sheet for Health Insurance Plans

Assessment Letter from Franklin Regional Retirement System

Email with tuition rates for the Vocational Schools

Budget Request sheets from the Police and Highway Departments

Departmental Budget Requests spreadsheets

Free Cash sheets from Joe Markarian and Baystate Municipal Accounting.