

CHARLEMONT FINANCE COMMITTEE – CHARLEMONT TOWN HALL

(Joint Meeting with the Charlemont Board of Selectmen)

March 18, 2016

Members Present: Finance Committee – Amy Wales (Chair), Richard Filoramo, Ron Smith, Lynn Hathaway; Select Board – Beth Bandy, Toby Gould

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by the Chair, Amy Wales.
2. The minutes of the March 11, 2016 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. Treasurer Lynn Hathaway presented her budget request.
 - a. Tax Collector: working on past collections – using Berenson and Bloom. Discussion on whether or not to publicize delinquent accounts. Buckland does. No consensus on doing it. Expenses going up – mostly office supplies and postage for reminders to delinquents.
 - b. Treasurer: on budget sheet change “Bank Fess” line to “Payroll Services”. Unemployment Insurance - change to “\$1,000”. Deceased residents is an issue. Finance Committee agreed to look at Deceased list.
 - c. Lynn Hathaway announced that she has been officially appointed to the Charlemont Finance Committee and sworn in. Congratulations to Lynn, and welcome!
4. Library Budget – presented by Andrea Bernard. Circulations are up and number of patrons using library services is up. Trust Accounts should be \$41,000. Some trust accounts are restricted as to use. Asking for level funding, and could use State funds if they need more money for automation. It was pointed out that there is no sign on the building indicating there is a library inside, and for that matter, that it is even a Town Hall! Library would like signage, and Select Board will co-sponsor request.
5. Accountant Memo from Justin Cole: he will be asked to meet with us at the April 1, 2016 meeting to explain request.
6. Ambulance Budget – presented by Dana Johnson. The ambulance is currently out of service and is being tested for some unknown mechanical problem. They now need to purchase their own drugs. The radio system in Franklin County is antiquated, and would be very expensive to replace. There were 140 call responses from last July 1 to now. 5 people were transported from the mountain. Mountain biking is expected to increase the call volume. Dana questioned why the Fire Chief is making \$2,000 more than the Ambulance Director. It will be looked into.
7. Bridge Closing Letter: other suggestions were made as to what to do about this crisis. One idea is to get together with the other towns in Western Mass who probably have the same budgetary issues with bridge repair. Several towns together could make a big impact in securing State help. A trip to Boston was also suggested. The SelectBoard will take up the issue at its next meeting.
8. Salaries: there was a 0 % increase in COLA, but health insurance premiums have increased for Town employees. Should employees pay be increased to cover that added cost? After much discussion, it was decided to continue the issue at the next meeting.
9. Next meeting: more budget hearings, Bob Handsaker and the Town Accountant.
10. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents distributed:

- Budget sheets from Town Treasurer, Library and Ambulance
- Letter from Town Accountant Justin Cole

This document is a draft until approved and signed by the Finance Committee