

CHARLEMONT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – CHARLEMONT TOWN HALL

(Joint Meeting with Charlemont Board of Selectmen)

March 18, 2017

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

Also in attendance: Peg Dean, Town Administrator

1. The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. by the Chair, Rich Filoramo.
2. Bob Handsaker, Chairman of the Broadband Committee, appeared to report on the latest developments. He discussed the costs of broadband. Seems to be leaning towards choosing Westfield Gas & Electric, who would own the network and remove liability from the Town. But it's not clear how much more money would be available from MBI and/or the State. If all the towns own their networks, which could cost an additional \$40 million, can it get an 80% match? For Charlemont, its share would be \$500,000. Some towns in the south are going with Frontier: the town would be charged \$30/month /per house for 15 years. Everyone is guaranteed a basic level of service for free and if you go above the basic package the fee is waived. There was discussion about who would do the new pole survey – MBI or W G & E, which would cost around \$40,000. Charlemont has \$960,000 to manage design and engineering. Rich Filoramo said he would like to see this done soon. Bob suggested we wait until they meet with W G & E on March 27, to see how their prices would compare and how complete the survey would be. Toby Gould stated that we need a solid presentation for the Town Meeting. Bob said he would push to see what he could do with MBI. Toby moved that the Town go ahead with MBI doing the survey. Beth Bandy seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
3. The minutes of the March 3, 2017 were reviewed and approved.
4. EMS budget expense issues: Peg and Lynn will correct Ambulance and EMT expenses. There were no EMT Meetings expenses for the past three years.
5. Town Hall Copier Expense: need to decide which account to charge copier lease and maintenance fees.
6. Omnibus Budget Review: Amy Wales reported that so far the budget requests have increased by \$75,000, but that does not include things like the school budgets and related costs. The transportation costs for Smith Tech are unknown. The Town is trying to learn if it would be more affordable to join the school, but has yet to get a response after several requests. Amy agreed to see what she could do. For the capital warrant articles, there is a question whether or not the Town can lump the articles by department and vote with separate ballots for the borrowing, instead of putting them all together as one borrowing ballot measure. Will check with Town Counsel. Consider a debt exclusion for the warrant articles.
7. Special Funds Report: we need follow-up from Justin – Revolving Funds, Stabilization, fiscal years 2015 and 2016.

8. Mass Works Grant: Gill Engineering wants to hire two firms for sampling/testing work on the two Route 8A bridges – AJ Virgillio and ABC Testing. Beth Bandy moved that the request be approved. Motion was seconded and passed. It's felt that we need to modify the contract with FRCOG to eliminate the need to for us to sign for approval. FRCOG will be asked.
9. Justin needs to be told that we need a Free Cash amount for our next meeting.
10. The next Joint Meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 31, 2017, at 8:00 a.m.
11. The meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents reviewed:

“Emerging Trends in EMS Grants”, Fire Rescue News

“EMT and Paramedics” & “EMT Salaries in the United States”, Occupational Outlook Handbook

Ledger History spreadsheet

FY 2017 Budget Worksheet