

CHARLEMONT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING – CHARLEMONT TOWN HALL

(Joint Meeting with Charlemont SelectBoard)

March 14, 2018

Members Present: Finance Committee – Amy Wales, Lynn Hathaway, Rich Filoramo, Vaughn Tower, Ron Smith; SelectBoard - Sarah Reynolds, Marguerite Willis, Beth Bandy

Also in attendance: Peg Dean, Town Administrator

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Rich Filoramo.
2. The minutes of the February 21, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. The minutes of the February 28, 2018 meeting were reviewed and approved.
4. The CIC (Capital Improvement Committee) presented an update. New spreadsheets for the 5-Year Plan were distributed.
 - a) Emergency generator: the Broadband Committee as well as the Town needs a generator, and the cost can be shared. An estimated Town cost share is \$7,000, which would include the installation of a propane tank. A question was asked about maintenance costs. It was suggested that we look at what other towns are doing for emergency generators.
 - b) Town Hall renovations of \$1,100. Since the total cost of the Town Hall renovations was reduced for next year to under \$5,000, it was decided to remove it from the CIC proposal - and put it into the Town Hall Maintenance budget – line # 01-192-5240.
 - c) There was a question as to how to word items with matching grants in the warrants for the ATM, since approval of those items might be contingent on the Town getting the grants. Town Counsel will be asked about this.
 - d) Capital Infrastructure Account: to be used for bridge and road projects – widening access roads to bridges, for example.
5. Jared Bellows appeared to discuss the Police Budget.
 - a) Salary increases: said he cannot fill all the shifts at current allocation. Need increase to take care of cost of living increases.
 - b) New police vehicle is in service and is under warranty. Presently have three police vehicles.
 - c) Radar speed sign: Mass DOT is helping to look for a cheaper unit.
6. Bob Handsaker and Trevor Mackie appeared to discuss Broadband issues.
 - a) “Make Ready Letter” received: does not address our issues – says very little, and is not acceptable. Very “fuzzy” as to who will pay for cost overruns. What will be the “long driveway” policy? We need to write one.
 - b) There’s \$24 million in the State contingency pot for Broadband. Why can’t it be used for all the towns’ make-ready overages?
 - c) WiValley issue: the Town is looking for something in writing that if WiValley is installed in Hawley, they will not affect the subscriptions or financial situation in the Town of Charlemont, since there seems to be a plan to place a wifi tower overlooking our town. Beth Bandy will work with Bob Hansaker to meet with those involved on this issue.

- d) Bob Handsaker asked if he should be thinking about establishing an operating budget for the Broadband. There was general discussion as to what kind of entity would be established – perhaps with an “enterprise fund”, which would be like a mini government business.
7. Special Accounts Discussion: what is legally required to close these types of accounts? Can the SelectBoard just vote to close them? Further discussion was moved to the next meeting. Justin the Accountant will also be asked for clarification.
 8. The Joint Committees then reviewed the latest FY 2019 Budget Proposal. The budget and changes approved at the meeting are reflected in the attached spreadsheets, dated 3-20-2018, as edited by Town Administrator Peg Dean and published by Secretary to the Boards, Carlene Hayden.
 9. Fire SAFER Grant: this would be a three year grant, if approved, and would require 25% Town matching funds. At present, no other towns are interested in sharing services. The question is what would happen after three years to any hired staff members? The SelectBoard is going after the grant. We can decide to step away from it at the ATM if it’s determined to not be feasible.
 10. The next Joint Meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.
 11. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents viewed:

CIC Proposal spreadsheets

Police Department Budget request

FY 2019 Town Budget Proposal spreadsheets

Special Funding Account listing

This document is a draft until approved by the Finance Committee.