

**Town of Charlemont**  
**Joint Finance Committee and Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 12th, 2025**  
**Town Hall and via Conference Call**

Board Members Present: Ron Smith, Jay Healy, Lynn Hathaway, Amy Wales, Kim Blakeslee, Valentine Reid  
Others present: Sarah Reynolds, Star Atkeson, Bob Handsaker, Cheryl Handsaker

**Amy Wales called the meeting to order at 5:04 PM**

1) Review/ Approve minutes from 4/09/2025

**Jay Healy made a motion to approve the April 9, 2025, minutes as written. Lynn Hathaway seconded the motion. All in favor.**

2) Administrator's Report:

- Update on Free Cash, The Free Cash number is \$269,382.00. As a side note, the Broadband retained earnings number is \$423,768.00

Sarah went over a few over-expenditures that will be cleared up next year from Ambulance. Some grant reimbursement may have been entered into the wrong Fiscal Year.

Sarah has an updated budget item for FY26. There are more tech students than budgeted for. The tuition for non-special Ed is \$20,600; with Special Ed is \$25,730. The information isn't given upfront, therefore Sarah recommended budgeting for Special Ed. The budget should go up \$83,000.

3) Finance Committee budget recommendations

Animal inspection is up because of Rabies testing.

Broadband had considered adding money to pay for indirect cost for administrator's time, but decided to wait until the digital equity grant comes in which has budgeted for administrative oversight stuff.

As an FYI Whip City had agreed to do an extra \$30.00 tied to the Lifeline subsidy. If someone qualifies for Lifeline, as of July 1st, they will now have \$39.25 off their monthly bill. The new installation subsidy will increase from \$500. to \$700.

Val and Bob talked about Broadband expenses to be incurred by the National Grid pole projects. They spoke about how Broadband faired during the winter storm (cost \$12,000.)

They talked about the plan to have a new construction installation fee of \$4,800. The town would pay for a road upfront, and then as people connected, it would be \$4,800 for each house.

4) Capital Items recommendation

There are 12 Special Articles that need to be funded. Amy Wales recommends funding: 7 Mohawk Late Bus, 8 cemetery maintenance, 9 bridge repairs, 10 road infrastructure, 11 yearly town audit, 12 Lucas Machine for ambulance, 13 Heat pumps town Hall, 14 used rail tractor, 17 Fire hose and 18 Mohawk water heater repair from Free Cash.

**Ron Smith made a motion to fund the articles that Amy listed, out of Free Cash. Lynn Hathaway seconded the motion. All in favor.**

They talked about the fire truck; it would be 150,000 towards the purchase of a used one in combination with the \$200,000. commitment to borrow for the fire truck from the previous year. Sarah will refile for an earmark for FY27.

The Board discussed how to fund the fire truck, borrowing, Free Cash, stabilization or taxation. In June there will be \$390,000 in Stabilization. There is only 50 or 60\$ put into stabilization per year. Amy wants to keep the future purchases in mind that will need stabilization instead of borrowing.

**Amy Wales made a motion to recommend to borrow the additional \$150,000 for the Fire Truck. Ron Smith seconded the motion. All in favor.**

They talked about the freightliner and the problem with putting that money aside to purchase when a truck becomes available, it would need a meeting, and a 2/3rds vote to take it out of stabilization. If they decide to vote to borrow for the freightliner, he could purchase as soon as he has the information about the truck, Lynn could borrow for it. Jay said it would be more expensive. Amy suggested passing over the freightliner.

**Jay Healy made a motion to pass over the freightliner at this time. Lynn Hathaway seconded the motion. All in favor except Ron Smith, who abstained.**

Amy said they could propose something on the floor if he gets more information before Town Meeting, they can meet on how to fund it.

Cemetery, this money is growing, as the 3 people mowing are doing it as a donation.

**Valentine Reid opened the SelectBoard meeting at 6:10 PM.**

**Valentine Reid made a motion to approve the posting of the 2025 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.**

**Ron Smith made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 6:10 PM Lynn Hathway seconded the motion. All in favor.**

**Valentine Reid made a motion to adjourn the Select Board meeting. Kim Blakeslee seconded the motion. All in favor.**

Documents viewed at meeting:

Agenda of 5/12/2025

Minutes of 4/09/2025

Draft 3 Budget Worksheet

Warrant 2025 Annual Town Meeting Town of Charlemont

List of Capital Items