

CHARLEMONT TOWN HALL

Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting – By Teleconference

February 17, 2021

Present: Finance Committee - Rich Filoramo, Amy Wales, Lynn Hathaway, Jay Healy, Ron Smith

Also present: Marguerite Willis, Elizabeth Van Iderstine, Sarah Reynolds

1. The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by the Chair, Rich Filoramo.
2. The minutes of the February 9, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved.
3. Marguerite reported that she and Sarah are working on a "Succession Grant", as we are facing Gordon's retirement in 2022 and others within a five year period. We are considering a consolidation of certain activities, changing from a Highway Dept. to a Dept. of Public Works. This would have no impact on the proposed budget if we were to do that this year. We would transfer funds, such as from the Tree Warden account, into the Highway budget. We will also look at contracting services to respond to the request at the last ATM.
4. Gordon Hathaway joined the meeting to discuss the Highway budget requests. A spreadsheet was presented. One of the plow trucks broke its plow, and the plow needs to be replaced. Gordy said it happens occasionally as part of the job. There was discussion about buying new trucks earlier rather than spending a lot of maintenance money on older trucks. Gordy suggested trucks should be replaced every five years, while they are under warranty. Rich asked Gordy if he could lay out his trucks over five year periods. Ron Smith suggested it could be put on the Capital Planning projection sheet. It was suggested to Gordy that he be prepared to defend his budget, especially the winter increases, at the ATM. Amy Wales suggested that at a future meeting there should be an in-depth discussion of the idea of perhaps reducing Town services if we cannot afford to replace certain equipment, and not increasing the tax rate, rather than now as suggested by Marguerite, and how the Town would react to that. As for his capital requests, Gordy said the tires and repairs for the grader are a "must". The tires "are bald".
5. Jared Bellows joined the meeting to discuss the Police Department budget. A spreadsheet was presented. He increased Building Maintenance because they really need to replace some things, like the door. Vehicle Maintenance was increased because vehicles cost more to maintain than they used to. They are maintaining two vehicles. Jared mentioned that the State is proposing new police reforms that will probably require more training. The effect on town budgets is unclear, as we don't know how much the State would contribute to the cost of the training, if any. Jay Healy thought that the River Patrol amount seemed rather low, considering all the work that was done before. It's only \$2,000, and Jared said they spent about \$4,000 last year. They will look into what was actually spent, and put that amount in the line item. Marguerite said that the Police Training amount is also open right now.

6. The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents viewed:

FY 2022 Highway Budget Spreadsheet

FY 2022 Police Budget Spreadsheet

Draft 2 FY 2022 Budget Worksheet

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