

Charlemont Town Hall

Minutes of the Finance Committee and SelectBoard Joint Meeting

March 7, 2020

Present: Amy Wales, Rich Filoramo, Lynn Hathaway, Ron Smith, Marguerite Willis, Jay Healy and Sarah Reynolds.

1. The Meeting was called to order at 8:19 a.m. by Sara Reynolds.
2. The minutes of the Joint Meeting of February 22, 2020 were reviewed. In Item #2, a correction was made naming Sarah Reynolds instead of Marguerite Willis as the person who offered to contact Rowe about the Town Accountant's employee status. The minutes were then approved as corrected.
3. There was a discussion about Library issues, as a follow-up to the previous meeting that was attended by representatives of the Library Board of Trustees. The Hawley contribution of \$1,000/year goes only toward book purchases, and not towards the Director's salary. And there is no formal agreement with Hawley regarding such a contribution. There was a suggestion that perhaps the Director's requested salary increase could be spread over five years. Committee members would like more information about the number of people served by the library from each town, and then a follow-up with negotiations with Hawley. Marguerite agreed to contact Andrea. The final agreement would be with the SelectBoard.
4. Cheryl Handsaker appeared to present information about changing the Town's webpage. There is a proposal from a company called "Webworks", to design a new page. We must maintain it afterward, or we shall be charged for that service. There is a question of "permissions" for updating the new site by anyone except an "administrator", that needs to be looked into. A disadvantage of this company is that the owner basically is a "one man show", and there are questions of his back-ups. He will check on ADA compliance issues. It will cost \$3,500 to move to the new website. Cheryl's Committee is recommending \$4,999 be set aside for moving the site and for one year of service. The Town needs to own the domain. There is an email component available, but it is very expensive and therefore is not being recommended. Another solution for emails will be sought. Cheryl suggested that perhaps the Town Administrator (if we have one) could be trained to manage the site and handle the emails. Her Committee is recommending this as an interim solution. Cheryl said she will send us a copy of the report.
5. Marguerite Rancourt appeared to discuss the Hawlemont School Budget. She handed out spreadsheets detailing assessments, operating budget and a budget summary. She reported that FY's 2018 and 2019 were underfunded. She feels that the School Committee has cut all they reasonably can! The SelectBoard agreed to draft a letter to the State Rep's outlining the School Budget concerns, and the impact it could have on the Town's Tax Rate.
6. Budget for Salaries: use COLA increase? Social Security increase is 1.6%.
7. Recreation Tax issue: the SelectBoard will draft letters of support.
8. The next meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2020, at 8:15 a.m.
9. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Smith

Documents viewed:

FY 2021 Budget Worksheet, 3rd Draft

Hawlemont Regional School Systems Budget Spreadsheets

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