

**Town of Charlemont**  
**Joint Finance Committee and Select Board Meeting**  
**Minutes February 08, 2023**  
**Via Telephone and at the Town Hall**

Board Members Present: Valentine Reid, Jared Bellows, Jay Healy, Lynn Hathaway

Board Members Joined by phone: Bill Harker, Ron Smith, Rich Filoramo

Absent: Amy Wales

Others present: Sarah Reynolds (Administrator,) Scott Sullivan (Highway Department,) Jay Pelletier (Police Department,) Gordon Hathaway, Cheryl Handsaker, Star Atkeson (Secretary)

Start time - 3:04 p.m.

**ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:**

1. Reserve fund transfer request for Highway propane tank fix.
  - It was discovered that the gauge on the Highway propane tank was broken. The cost to repair the tank is \$1000. Sarah Reynolds proposes a \$1000. transfer from the Reserve Fund for the repair. There is not enough in the Department's maintenance line to cover that cost
  - **Rich Filoramo made a motion, seconded Ron Smith to approve the request and transfer \$1000 from the Reserve Fund. Jay Healy—Aye; Ron Smith—Aye, Lynne Hathaway—Aye, Rich Filoramo—Aye**
  - **Bill Harker made a motion seconded by Valentine Reid to approve the request and transfer \$1000 from the Reserve Fund. Jared Bellows—Aye, Bill Harker—Aye, Valentine Reid—Aye. The Motion passed Unanimously**
  
2. State Cherry Sheet numbers update.
  - The Cherry Sheet numbers from the State are late. Sarah looked at the last few years. Last year State Owned land went down and then up, Unrestricted Government Aid went up. (ARPA etc.) She can't say anything for sure, unfortunately.
  
3. Update on Sales, Rooms and Meals tax numbers.
  - Last Fiscal Year the Room tax went up, this FY it is down slightly. Jun-Aug was down \$300., Sep-Nov it was at \$752.50. They guess that it was because of the high gas prices. The Room Tax increase previously voted in is making a difference
  - The Meals Tax went up last quarter.
  - Jay Healy asks about Airbnb's and VRBO's etc, whether that is part of the room tax. Lynn and Sarah confirm that they are accounted for.
  - Sarah will create a new spreadsheet for next meeting and where there are Cherry Sheet numbers which are missing Sarah will enter "TBD."

**APPOINTMENTS:**

1. 3:15-3:45 Scott Sullivan Highway
  - Because of a rise in current pricing there are increases in Highway Contractual Services, HWY Supplies, Emergency Road Maintenance, Uniforms, and Sand.
  - Everything else was level funded
  - The increases are mainly a Fuel and Fuel Delivery cost issue.

- Ron Smith, in advance of the Capital Planning Committee Meeting asked Scott what they are requesting for trucks. Scott said one of those trucks needs to come off and he will be asking for just one single axle truck, and is looking forward to talking about it with the Capital Planning Committee.
- Lynn has been in touch with a women-owned Municipal vehicle Financing Service out of Springfield and gave Scott the email with information and contact. Gordon said the benefit was that it would keep the Department in newer vehicles for longer. After ten years, new vehicles require a lot of money for upkeep and used cars need it sooner. The Municipality finds the vehicle and the Service does the financing. That way they can stay within with Vehicle's Warrantee period. There are 5 year warrantees and the maintenance is built into the lease.
- Ron Smith could not hear this discussion because of the conference call limitations. Ron requested that Scott meet with Capital Planning as well as the Select Board and the Finance Committee to make the truck decision, he would like them to assess it as a group.
- Scott said he would look at the leasing information and would meet with Bill Harker as a start.

## 2. 3:45-4:00 Jay Pelletier Police

- There is a vehicle maintenance increase.
- There is a slight decrease in uniform allowance.
- Rich asked if the increase was due to actual expenditure. Jay responded that as the vehicles get older there is a greater cost. The current Vehicles in use are a 2008 Chevy Tahoe (bought used) and a 2017 Ford Explorer (bought new.)
- Jay went over the pricing and comparisons that he did between the two styles of cruisers. The Ford Explorer versus the Chevy Tahoe. And with mileage, performance reputation, price, mile per gallon and availability, settled on the Chevy Tahoe. The Tahoe without a light bar is \$58,209.78. With a light bar the cost is \$59,809.75. The cars come fully equipped as the only thing that would be transferable size compatibility wise are the radios; maybe the light and siren as well.
- Jay said he could make one new cruiser work with the expectation that they would buy another in the next year. There is always a cruiser being repaired and he needs to take care that they are not in the shop at the same time.
- Rich said they would need to see where it fits with the other Capital Planning items.
- There was discussion of using Revolving Fund or doing Stabilization for vehicles. They can start the conversation with Capital Planning, also the building which has come up. Lynn said it had helped with infrastructure, they did a set amount each year. Stabilization accounts can be used for everything. Sarah pointed out that it does take money away from Free Cash, but then the purchases come from stabilization so the money is not used all at once.
- Lynn suggested asking McGovern's if there is any trade in for the 2008 Tahoe, although usually police cruisers are auctioned off cheaply.
- Val asked how many miles were driven in a year. Jared answered that the police cars drive about 14,000 to 18,000 miles per car per year. Val calculated that there would be a \$3000. per year savings on gas alone by getting rid of the 2008 Tahoe. Also the Tahoe is costing @\$10,000. per year for maintenance.
- The fuel is purchased for all the relevant departments. Val asked why the departments are not back charged for fuel. Sarah said that there is a breakdown. Val said smaller departments had hard time figuring out the money because of fuel fluctuation and if there was a change it should be noted.
- There was discussion about whether the cruiser could be leased as well, Lynn said there is no trade in value for cruisers.

- Jay went over “Professional services” they pay \$2000. a year for CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Service) and \$300 to \$350 to use radios. There are user fees. Sarah mentioned that in 2021 the CJIS was in the wrong bucket and was going against her internet grant. Jay said the bill was late. Sarah has a bill from Central Square and IMC live, there was a state grant associated with it.
- Val asked if Line Item 35 was a question mark. Jay said there were no figures, they pay Verizon through contractual services for jet pack, it enables mobile and IMC to connect.
- Sarah will look in to asking if they can do a group discount for Ambulance, Fire and Police
- Sarah will look in to ATT and Verizon. Val suggests gathering all the bills and asking for a quote. There could be money saved in switching service providers.
- The only other change that Jay has is the police training. POST (Peace Officers Standard and Training) has not officially come out with anything yet. Jay is keeping some money in his budget because they are not done with the training yet. He still has some FRCOG money in there. Once they are done with the initial 3 yr. period there will be an increase to the requirement of in-person in-service training going forward. He suggested talking to Legislative.
- Sarah said she is compiling a list for Natalie Blaise. Not this FY 24, after the 3<sup>rd</sup> year is up.
- There was a decrease in in uniform to \$200. a year, they lost a position. (Lost 4 law enforcement and saved 3 civilian traffic controllers Melinda, Jared and Greg.)
- Val asks why the Crossing Guard salary is on the police department’s budget. Jay said they have no oversight on the Crossing Guard.
- Crossing Guard was part of Town and then became School. The board thinks it should be under school budget. The amount changed, from \$580. to \$1,585. Board asked secretary to put it on the Agenda with the school meeting. Star will put it on the Agenda.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

1. Approve Minutes from 1/25/2023
  - **Rich Filoramo made a motion, seconded by Jay Healy to accept the minutes as written. Jay Healy—Aye, Ron Smith—Aye, Lynne Hathaway—Aye, Rich Filoramo—Aye**
  - **Valentine Reid made a motion seconded by Jared Bellows to accept the Minutes as written. Jared Bellows—Aye, Bill Harker—Aye, Valentine Reid—Aye. The Motion passed Unanimously**

#### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

1. Town Report preparation (due March 10<sup>th</sup>)
  - Rich said that Amy had volunteered to complete the Report. Sarah has a chart with information to give Amy that she can include. They think it would be helpful to explain the decrease in the tax rate.
  - Val asked if Sarah would do a grants section and Sarah said that she would do a separate Administrator’s Report and put grant numbers in that.
  - Broadband and Fire Department have grants to report as well.

#### **OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

2. Scheduling
  - Sarah is going to find out what time Amy can meet. Possibly 4:30 or 5:00 could work.
  - The Next meeting with the school superintendent on February 15<sup>th</sup> they will keep at 3:00 as planned.
  - The next meeting after that will hear from the Fire Department and Ambulance, Broadband could be in the beginning of March. Tyler Memorial Library has an appointment on March 8<sup>th</sup>. The upcoming meetings are February 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and March 8<sup>th</sup>

- Rich reminded that Town Staff Salaries should be put on the Agenda for February 22<sup>nd</sup>.
- Ron Smith will call Tony Walker to schedule a Capital Planning Committee meeting.

**Rich motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:20, seconded by Lynn. All in Favor.**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 15<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023 by Star Atkeson, Secretary to the Boards.

Documents viewed at meeting:

The Agenda for the February 9<sup>th</sup> 2023 meeting

The Minutes for the January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting

The current Draft budget

Informational packet about vehicle leasing