

Town of Charlemont
Finance Committee / Selectboard Meeting Minutes
February 23, 2022
Via Telephone and at the Town Hall

People Present: Rich Filoramo, Amy Wales, Lynn Hathaway, Ron Smith, Jay Healy, Marguerite Willis, Dan Girard, Bill Harker, Sarah Reynolds, Sue Vight
Guest: Dennis Annear, Domenic Poli

Meeting opened at 4:00 p.m.

Approval of minutes taken on 2/9/22

Selectboard - Motioned Marguerite Willis - 2nd Dan Girard

Finance Committee Motioned Rich Filoramo - 2nd Jay Healy

Everybody agreed

Sarah Reynolds talked about Hawlemont / Mohawk money allocated for chromebooks and ventilators. Extra expenses that have been spent for a 2nd person hired at the dump and extra police protection. She spoke about the small bridge program, legate hill, shared street route 2 crossing projects. She also mentioned grants for fire engine #2 and staffing over a 3 year period, plus sidewalk equipment for snow storms. There were reimbursement for these projects with Covid relief money.

Dennis Annear came is to talk about the Fire and EMD Budgets.

Emergency: The need to increase salary is this position gets more emails and calls than the fire chief position. Increase to also cover the generator and fuel at the town hall. There is a \$400 annual service fee to service the generator and he thought that money should come out of the broad band account since the generator is the back up to the computers in the town hall.

Fire: There are 14 active firefighters. He would like to see 20. The need to increase the salaries is to cover all the training, response times and the meetings.

There were grants for new helmets plus a grant to help with communication / on screen radio head sets and radio accessories.

Fire engine quote \$649,000.00 - custom truck with no extra (30ft long and 10 ft high)

He spoke of a need to do a space study for a new Fire / Police / Emergency building. This study by law would need a committee to get an estimate on the land, architectural design and be dig ready for when a grant comes around. The property would need at least 2 acres but he prefers to have 3 acres in case of expansion at a future date.

1. Email from Martha Thurber about support letter for rural schools recommendations.
 - A. The taxes here are affected by schools more than bigger cities and without the high assessment taxes would be cheaper
 - B. The demands for funding a Title 1 school for poor towns
 - C. Sped rate
 - D. School funds and the poor school rating

This item was put on hold until a later time

2. Capital Planning Committee

- A. Items are being pushed out that need to be addressed
 - 1. 3 year project budgets for Highway, Fire, Town Hall
- B. Capital planning sheet and the budget sheet go out at the same time
- C. Committees meet together with group meeting is best so everybody is on the same page in the discussion. Also be easier to come to decisions with little emailing going back and forth.
- D. Possible stipend to Finance Committee and the Capital Planning Committee
- E. Will send an email to Frank Mooney about the process going forward

3. Town Report

Town needs a report from the Finance Committee. Amy Wales said she would type report and submit to Sarah Reynolds.

4. School Committee and sending a request for resignations of School Committee members

- A. Finance Committee and Selectboard have already had a no confidence vote in November.
- B. More parental involvement with school
- C. Town frustration is high with the thoughts of a school closure
- D. School is top heavy with specialized people
- E. Enrollment is going down
- F. Title 1 school
- G. School grades are changing, so the sense of improvement is harder to understand

After the discussion a consensual agreement was made that no letter would be sent at this time. That a letter could send the wrong message and it could effect all boards and volunteers in the future.

The next meeting will be March 9th at 4:00p.m.

Will talk about the budget and there will be no appointments

The meeting ended at 5:14 p.m.

Motioned by Rich Filoramo and 2nd by Lynn Hathaway

Sincerely

Sue Vight

Assistant Secretary to the Boards