

**Shutesbury Finance Committee Minutes**  
**Tuesday, January 3, 2012, 6:50pm**

**Members Present:** Lori Tuominen, Eric Stocker, Weezie Houle, Al Hanson, Rus Wilson, George Arvanitis and Gary Hirshfield; **Members Absent:**; **Visitors Present:** Becky Torres, Tim Hunting, Michael DeChiara, Joan Wickman, Mike Kociela, Bob Mahler

- 1) Meeting called to order at 7pm.
- 2) Approved minutes of 11/1/11 as amended
- 3) Tim Hunting, Highway Dept., presented a level funded FY13 budget proposal
  - a) Tim is fine with the level funded budget
  - b) Gravel Road maintenance has \$35,000 still in it. He thinks he could manage with \$25,000 but it still came through with \$35,000. He is requesting a reduction in gravel road maintenance to \$25,000 and increasing machinery maintenance (currently at \$27,855) by \$5,000 and highway materials (anything we need for the roads besides gravel – currently at \$24,870) by \$5,000.
  - c) Tim may have to come to us in the spring to ask for more money for maintenance due to having to send repairs out as they are down from 3 to 2 staff.
  - d) The loader doesn't need to be replaced for a couple more years. It is 16 years old and has 6,300 hours. It will be dead between 7 and 8,000 hours. A new one will cost over \$100,000.
  - e) The new 5/4 ton truck is coming in February or March.
  - f) The next oldest truck is the 1998 International dump truck.
  - g) Backhoe was new in 2008.
- 4) George pointed out that there is longevity line item in Tim's budget. He suggested that Becky review all employees and determine who will need longevity bonuses to make sure they are in next year's budget.
- 5) Join Select Board to meet with School Committee
  - a) Introductions
  - b) Review of the spreadsheets distributed.
  - c) **Michael DeChiara:** In the absence of any direction from the Finance Committee, this is the School Committee's first "give" of the budget process – built around the needs for the school to work well: increase of 4.8%.
  - d) **Joan Wickman reviewed the Erving School Union #28 budget:** Shutesbury's Union 28 cost allocation for FY 13 has increased due to a 1.28% increase in Shutesbury's student enrollment. The FY 12 cost allocation is 23.70% of the total Union 28 budget and FY 13 is 24.98% of the Union 28 budget.
  - e) Union 28 administrative salaries were calculated on and accurately reflect the FY 12 teacher % increases.
  - f) Technology must be up-graded at an increased expense.
  - g) A "driver page" was requested by the Finance Committee to give further explanation of the Elementary School budget lines.
  - h) The budget reflects the town-appropriated money. Other revenue sources are listed on the last page of the proposed budget. Those reflect a \$41,848 decrease in revenues.
  - i) The fuel line is down due to a contribution from the preschool budget as the preschool benefits from use of the utilities.
  - j) Contingencies are not built into the budget. The school tries to cover emergencies by moving things around within the budget. If the school can't meet the expense of an emergency, the school comes to the town Finance team, which has been "very gracious" in accommodating recent school emergency expenses.
  - k) The School does not participate in Capital Planning Committee meetings anymore.
  - l) The total increase of the FY 13 Elementary School budget is \$79,422, which is different from the Finance Committee's desire for zero budget increases across the board.
  - m) It's early; we're still waiting for Chapter 70 numbers to come in.
  - n) Half the increase in the proposed budget can be attributed to the loss in revenues.
  - o) Principal Mahler:
    - i) The "Stimulus jobs money" covered some salary money in the past.

- ii) Participation in free lunch has doubled in a year from under 20 to over 40, representing the social economic demographics of these times.
- iii) This year we're serving 100 meals/day as compared to 50 or 60 meals/day last year.
- iv) The possibility of providing breakfast is being looked at.
- p) School population for this year is about 150 including preschool without preschool, 137 to 140.
- q) Changes in the school budget due to level funding over the years: Funding for field trips, and some costs to participate in the music program are assumed by parents or other sources.
- r) Teachers are in year one of a 3-year salary contract.
- s) How much can be cut from the school budget? Answer:
  - i) The school has faced 3 years of zero percent increases.
  - ii) We'll work with what you give us.
  - iii) The proposed budget adequately meets the needs of the children.
- t) People have "stepped up" with volunteering and contributing needed supplies.
- u) Teachers need 3 CEU's (Continuing Education Units)/year.
- v) If the state doesn't increase the Cherry sheet, we will probably have to trim the budget.
- w) We'll know on Saturday what the Regional budget will look like.
- x) The 1% salary increase for last year amounted to about a \$10,000 total additional expense.
- y) Steps have been equalized where possible in the new contract.
- z) School Committee Chairman DeChiara requested that in future years the Finance Committee let the School Committee know what budget expectations are before the school budget is built.
- 6) Discussion on ideas for managing the SPED budget, equipment maintenance, etc.
- 7) Finance Committee returns to meeting with just themselves.
- 8) Discussion on responding to the misinformation distributed about the Finance Committee.
- 9) Future agenda items:
  - a) IT backups
- 10) Next Meetings:
  - a) January 10, 2011, 7pm
    - i) Gabe Volker, Treasurer, 7:15pm
- 11) Adjourned at 10:25pm

Respectfully submitted, *Weezie Houle*