

SHUTESBURY FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes for Oct. 23, 2007
Shutesbury Town Hall

Members present: Eric Stocker, chairman, Rus Wilson, Elaine Puleo, Al Springer, Lori Tuominen, Mark Pocsik and Patrick J. Callahan. Guest: David Dann, town administrator.

The meeting convened at 7:06 p.m.

The minutes of the Sept. 11 meeting was approved unanimously.

Elaine reported that the School Committee wants to purchase a key-less entry system for the elementary school building and has gotten a bid of \$7,500 and will present this to the Capital Planning Committee. Eric says that amount will require approval from the Finance Committee, the capital planning panel and a vote Town Meeting.

Elaine also says the school panel doesn't like the proposed 3 percent spending cap requested by the Finance Committee. She says Union 28 has raised the pay rate for substitute teachers. In addition, she says there may be a need for another teacher next year and that the school has met the yearly adequate MCAS scores.

The Finance Committee then discussed and voted approval of the shared employee policy proposed by Joan Wickman, the Union 28 superintendent. Under this plan, member towns will pay shared employee according to what proportion of time they spend in each community. The motion to endorse that plan was unanimous.

Eric and David say Walter Tibbets will meet Dec. 4 with the Finance Committee to discuss the proposed new payment plan for ambulance services.

Eric reported on a meeting with Amherst selectmen. He says Amherst officials are seeking a change in the school departments reserve funds moving the cap from 3.5 percent to 5 percent. Eric also state education officials don't like some aspects of the regional school transportation agreement.

David asked for a Finance Committee for a representative to a new subcommittee reviewing the Community Preservation Act to make a presentation to town voters on whether to adopt the act. Mark Pocsik volunteered.

The committee reviewed the expense and revenue reports.

David Dann then told the committee that a state audit of the elementary school construction project from 1994 has questioned up to \$500,000 in reimbursements and the town may be held liable for those costs. The problem, David says, is that many documents are no longer available for review and have been destroyed. He is checking to see if the town treasurer at the time had written, explicit permission to destroy the documents. He says he is sure there was informal permission.

Future meetings were set for Dec. 4 with Walter Tibbets, Jan. 15 with the police and library.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Submitted by Patrick J. Callahan