

Shutesbury Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2010, 7 p.m., Town Hall

Finance Committee Members Present: Patrick Callahan, Bill Wells, Lori Tuominen, George Arvanitis, Weezie Houle, Rus Wilson, Gary Hirshfield, **Visitors:** Becky Torres, Leslie Bracebridge, Gail Stein, Al Springer, Elaine Puleo, Joan Wickman, Dan Hayes and David Chiara

1. Call to Order: 7:05pm

2. Meet with Joan Wickman, U28 superintendent, also Michael DeChiara, to discuss the next budget cycle.

- a. Patrick would like to keep the tradition of having the Superintendent and members of the School Committee visiting with the Finance Committee early on in the budget process.
- b. We are looking at another bleak upcoming budget.
- c. Two things that Patrick thinks are good for the school that they would have ordinarily come out of their budget that actually came out of Fin Comm reserves:
 - i. The funding of the outplacement of a child in the school because we heard about it early in the FY.
 - ii. The dead dishwasher; Replacing the dishwasher went pretty quickly, \$10,000.
- d. Question: How was the SPED funded in the past? It was out of a revolving fund. We need a way to be sure that SPED funds don't need to be discussed and voted on each year. The child in question will continue for four more years. Fin Comm built up a fund of \$30,000. It just sat there for 5 years and then since it wasn't used it was spent some other way.
- e. We will get some of the SPED \$ back in Circuit Breaker reimbursement.
- f. In the monthly report that U28 sends around, they have gone out a second time for Charlie Paulin's replacement. U28 is hoping to have the hire completed by Jan. Joan feels that not having a key person doing to the budget process at this point is ok. She received some training from Charlie before he left and she has some backup if need be.
- g. Last year Bob was hesitant to come forward until later in the year with a -5% budget. What is this year going to look like in terms of timing? It is a concern for the morale of staff.
- h. Teacher negotiations will happen this year. Last time we had a two year contract in hopes of financial clarity. No preliminary conversations have happened yet. All 5 towns are renegotiating their teacher contracts. George suggested they bring in a couple of budgets with several options. 1% COLA is about \$14,800, a .09% increase in their budget.

3. Approve minutes

- a. October 9 – date changed to reflect the actual date as opposed to the date on the minutes.
- b. October 5 – date changed to reflect the actual date as opposed to the date on the minutes.
- c. July 13 – Minutes approved as edited

4. Update on state election outcome and how it might affect town finances: Looks about the same as before the election. The state still has a \$2B budget deficit in the current cycle.

5. State revenue figures are up for the second month in a row. Yeah!

6. Select Board joins the Finance Committee

- a. Discussion of funding for outplacement of SPED child. Funds are not currently in the school budget. Should that money be put back into the school budget, and what happened to the fund we used to have for SPED. They anticipate needing that \$ for the next 4 years. There was \$30,000 in Fin Comm Reserves. Two choices are Fin Comm Reserves or putting a line in the school budget for the money. After much discussion, it was concluded that the best way to handle this is to ask them create a line item in their budget. We need to monitor this line item each year until the student moves on that they can backup with data. We would like to see their budget in February.

- b. Update on fire station cleanup, discussion of any necessary budget adjustment. The people from Boston want their \$200,000 from the LUST (Leaking Underground Storage Tank) fund back so they can re-disburse it or pay some debt. Around the first of the year they will probably be asking for the \$ back. We are going to enlist Steve K. & Stan R. to help delay the payback. We can now borrow some of that money. We might want to consider moving the money into a Capital Stabilization at ATM. More to come on this.

7. Other transfers or reserve fund actions - none

8. Reports of Committees

- a. **CPA** – Bill Wells – They met last week where they finalized their application form. They have \$89,000 in the fund. They only have one applicant for funds now. The thinking is that the whole packet needs to be put together so folks can find out what the process is and what qualifies.
- b. **Personnel** – George Arvanitis – The Personnel Board was struggling to write a good sick bank policy. They are going through the handbook, cleaning it up and eliminating issues that cause conflict. They have completed the goals forms with the department heads and other professional employees. Becky will meet with them to set goals that will be reviewed next year.
- c. **LFNAC** – Lori Tuominen – LFNAC is working on the MBLC grant. George gave a report on the Library Fundraising Committee.
- d. **School Committee** – none more than what was revealed in the above notes with the meeting with Joan, Dan & David.
- e. **Regional School Update** – Discussion of the hiring of the new superintendent.
- f. **Education Study Committee** – They met with the principle of the Elementary and with the principles of the Middle and High Schools. They are going to be meeting with the Superintendents. The committee will be fleshing out the best possible scenarios.

9. Review of Upcoming Budget Planning Meetings:

- a. December 7: 7pm Police Dept
8pm Fire Dept
- b. December 14: 7pm Highway Dept
8pm Library
- c. January 4: 8pm School Committee
- d. January 18 : 7pm Open Boards, Committees, other Departments
- e. February 1: 7pm Capital Planning
- f. February 15: 8pm Select Board (general FY12 discussion)

10. Next Meeting: December 7, 2010

11. Adjourned at: 9:25pm