

Shutesbury Finance Committee Minutes
Tuesday, February 13, 2018 – Town Hall, 7pm

Members Present: George Arvanitis, Weezie Houle, Elaine Puleo Jim Walton and Jim Hemingway

Members Absent: Bob Groves and Eric Stocker **Non-Members present:** Becky Torres, Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil, Gabe Volker,

- 1) Discussion about the Regional Assessment.
- 2) Gabe Volker – Town Treasurer
 - a) Discussions about the Broadband/MLP borrowing. Gabe suggests that we roll the \$300,000 in with the total still to be borrowed.
 - b) Gabe presented a level funded operating budget for next year
 - c) At the moment we do not currently have any vets. We need to leave at least \$10,000 in the budget to cover.
 - d) Unemployment – Gabe suggests that we start a trust fund for unemployment. We will discuss how to fund the trust.
 - e) Short Term borrowing – level funded.
 - f) Tax title – She may need to ask for money for this year. She is asking for \$2,000 more next year for a total of \$12,000, a 20% increase that we reap the benefits. This year she has collected about \$40,000.
 - g) OPEB – Our value is just under \$500,000. Our average increase has been 6.03%. Gabe would like us to fund it at \$100,000. If we kept it at \$50,000 we are not meeting the cost. Maybe we fund it from the solar project. The funds come in through new growth.
 - h) OPEB Actuarial is due in FY19.
 - i) The health insurance is a 4.7% increase.
 - j) Debt Service – George and Gabe agree that it is a good practice to keep the debt service level and stable by keeping something in there. She strongly suggests that we restore our debt level.
 - k) Gabe would like us to do a transfer to stabilization from free cash.
- 3) Ellen McKay, Town Collector
 - a) The increase in the FRCOG is \$14,385.
 - b) Her software is made by Point software out of Longmeadow.
 - c) The total budget has gone up \$550.
- 4) Review the Expense and Revenue Report were reviewed and nothing was raised.
- 5) Approve minutes from January 27, 2018, December 2, 2017, and February 6, 2018 as amended.
- 6) Reports from Committee
 - a) Regional School Assessment – Becky spoke with him about S-10 transition numbers. He is presenting to the Regional School Committee tonight. It was more complicated to do the phase in, but he did the best he could. Becky spoke with Steve before the meeting as well. Sean will send it to us tomorrow.
 - b) Personnel Board – They approved the Land Use Clerk position. It will have about \$3-4,000 impact on the budget. The Performance Review / Goal Setting presentation was received with mixed response. A few things need to be reviewed.
- 7) The committee discussed Jeff Lacy's request for 3 bullet points. 1) Having a 5 minute period for public Comments at the beginning of each Fin Committee meeting 2) School budget and further analysis 3) Jeff would like a discussion on the impact of Elementary enrollment on the town budget. George responded to him and thanked him for the suggestion for number 1. He invited him to the Elementary School meeting with us and to talk to Bruce at U28.
- 8) Review the Draft Budget.
 - a) School Choice receiving line for FY19 – \$28,051 will be going to the School budget.
 - b) We will not discuss School Choice Receiving Tuition – ever! It will be removed from the Revenue Budget.
 - c) SES requested an increase of about \$92,000. Draft Budget shows that \$42,000 is being recommended to be funded by Free Cash.
 - d) The Regional budget is based on the 5 year phase in of the statutory assessment method.
 - e) The High School Debt Service - \$27,770
 - f) Salaries are about \$6,800 per 1%. The current budget has a 0% increase for salaries.
 - g) Becky added the increase in hauling. Becky needs to look at a few more lines of the utilizes to figure out how much in each.

9) Meeting adjourned 9:23pm

10) Future Meeting Schedule:

- a) Thursday, February 22, 2018, Assessor,
- b) Thursday, March 8, 2018, Select Board / Personnel Committee, Capital Planning
- c) Thursday, March 22, 2018, School Committee
- d) Thursday, April 12, 2018
- e) Thursday, April 26, 2018
- f) Saturday, May 5, 2018, Town Meeting