

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Tuesday, December 1st, 2020, Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Members Present: Jim Hemingway, Ajay Khashu, Jim Walton, Susie Mosher, Bob Groves, Melody Chartier, George Arvanitis

Members Absent: None

Non-Members present: Becky Torres, Leslie Luchonok, Diane Jacoby, Michael Vinskey, Rita Farrell, April Stein, Tim Hunting (Highway), Dan Fernandes (Police)

7:02 pm Finance Committee Call to Order

1) Discussion of 11/17/2020 draft minutes.

- BG requests additional details be added to the minutes regarding the State's guidance on school choice funding.
- AK will update the minutes, and they will be reviewed at the 12/15 FinCom meeting.

2) Budget Review – Highway Department (represented by Superintendent Tim Hunting)

- The following budget lines are level-funded in the Department's proposed FY22 budget:
 - i) Snow removal materials = \$50,000
 - ii) Uniforms = \$4,000
 - iii) Highway materials = \$24,870
 - iv) Machinery maintenance = \$30,000
 - v) Gravel road maintenance = \$30,000
 - vi) Road markings = \$7,500
- Modest reductions to the following budget lines:
 - i) Tools & Equipment (- \$300) = \$2,500
 - ii) Highway expenses (- \$186) = \$2,500
- Significant reduction to the following line:
 - i) Catch Basin Cleaning (-\$1,000) = \$4,000
- Potential future capital need = purchasing a woodchipper to share w/ town of Leverett. Department has rented from Clark's in the past.
- No changes to the staffing structure for FY22. Three staff members w/ same time allocation. Only changes in salary and wage lines will come when COLA increases are voted on later this year.
- If there is a reduction in the shortfall in the catch basin cleaning line, Highway Dept should come to the FinCom for a reserve transfer.

3) Budget Review – Police Department (represented by Police Chief Dan Fernandes)

- The operating budget will remain level-funded. This includes training, supplies, etc. (\$19,000).
- The Cruiser Maintenance budget will remain level-funded (\$5,471).
- Police Wages line has been reduced by \$14,102 (\$110,231.68).
 - i) FY22 proposed police wages budget = \$124,535.68
 - ii) FY21 budget = \$138,638

- iii) The Department has hired a new Saargent on staff that is being paid at a lower hourly rate than was the case in FY21.
- iv) Reduction in part-time wages because the Department is only operating two part-time shifts. This is a reduction from the three part-time shifts that were budgeted for FY21.
- v) Contract negotiations are coming up this year. Wage lines will potentially increase if pay rates include a cost-of-living increase.
- Department has one member who is doing very well at the police academy.
- There has been an effort to solicit citizen feedback on police matters. The key messages heard from these efforts is that residents encourage the Department to have a more visible presence in town.
- Massachusetts is moving to a post-certification model, which will make it challenging to hire part-time staffers.

4) Four Town Meeting Prep

- At 8:20, the Select Board, School, and Finance committees will meet to plan for the meeting.
- Each of the three committees should designate a representative to speak on behalf of their committee.
- Shutesbury representatives will advocate for the big picture goal of moving the region's assessment method toward the statutory method (w/ a 5-year rolling average).
- Enrollments for students from all four towns were down for October. The Chapter 70 formula takes into account each district's official October enrollment. There is a question as to whether the State will hold towns harmless for this year due to reductions in their school enrollments. If they do not, there may be a significant reduction in Chapter 70 state aid coming to Shutesbury and the Region.
- Points we want to raise at the Four Towns Meeting about Shutesbury's financial outlook:
 - i) The town borrowed a significant amount of free cash to reduce its tax rate. This is not a sustainable strategy. If not for this move, our tax rate would be \$23.54, which is bumping up against the \$25 ceiling.
 - ii) Town has two major capital projects that have to begin this year: the elementary school roof and the culvert. Both of these projects have potential \$1,000,000 budgets.

5) Future meetings

- December 5th: Four Town Meeting
- December 15th: Budget reviews with Fire Department and Library

Meeting adjourned at 9:06

Attachment A: Highway Department Budget Request

Attachment B: Police Department Budget Request

Police Department Budget FY 2022

Operating- Budget will remain level funded. This includes department supplies, training and other expenses related to the everyday operation of the department. FY2022- \$19,000

Cruiser Maintenance- With the purchase of the new cruiser, this will remain level funded as well. FY2022- \$5,471

Police Wages- FY2022-Regular Time Pay- \$110,231.68

Night shift differential for 10a-6p= 4 hours diff /2p-10p= 8 hours of diff. On average the department works with one 10a-6p shift per day and one 2p-10p shift per day. This equals 12 hours per day that qualify for shift diff, bringing the total hours of shift diff to 4,380 equaling \$4,161 Dollars.

| | Sgt | Patrolman | Part Time |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---|
| Regular Pay | \$49,420.80/\$23.76 | \$43,430.40/\$20.88 | \$17,380.48/\$20.89 Total=110,231.68 |
| Overtime Total Potential | ----- | ----- | ----- Total= \$4,000 |
| Holiday Payout/ Time off | \$2,578.56 | \$2,004.48 | Total= \$4,583 |
| Night Shift Diff | ----- | ----- | \$4,161.00 / .95 cents per hour |
| Cell Phone Stipend | \$780 per year | \$780 per year | ----- Total= \$1,560 |
| Total Police Budget = \$124,133.84 | | | |

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Total Overtime potential | \$3643.84 |
| Holiday Overtime | \$2643.84 For Sergeant, FT Officer and PT Officer |
| Excess Overtime | \$1000.00 For Sergeant, FT Officer and PT Officer |
| | |

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|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Regular Wages FY2018 | \$120,533 |
| Regular Wages FY2019 | \$124,148 |
| Regular Wages FY2020 | \$122,278 |
| Regular Wages FY2021 | \$124,334.08 |
| Regular Wages FY2022 Requested | \$110,231.68 |

Attachment C: Public comment sent to Finance Committee on November 30, 2020

From: Diane <d.jacoby.me@gmail.com>

Subject: expenses, taxes, funding

Date: November 30, 2020 at 12:53:06 PM EST

To: fincom@shutesbury.org, sullivans@shutesburyschool.org, selectboard@shutesbury.org

Hello, neighbors on the School Committee, Finance Committee, and Selectboard:

I'm writing today to request that Shutesbury move to the 75% statutory level in FY 2022 and 100% in FY 2023. Shutesbury taxpayers have been paying more than our fair share of the regional school budget, to the benefit of our wealthier neighbors in Leverett and Pelham for about 10 years. This must stop. I know that your time is valuable, so I will not restate the arguments in favor of the Statutory Method that others have made over the years.

I am tired of subsidizing the other towns with this overpayment toward the regional school budget. I believe that my interests as a Shutesbury resident and taxpayer have been ignored by Shutesbury town officials over the years. There is an opportunity to correct this moving forward. Please support 75% or greater statutory method today, not sometime in the future.

Be well, be in peace,
Diane Jacoby
230 Leverett Road
Shutesbury, MA 01072