

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Tuesday, May 18, 2021, Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

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

FinCom Members Absent: Bob Groves

Capital Planning Committee Members Present: Ellen McKay, Michael Broad, Steve Sullivan, Ajay Khashu

Select Board Members Present: Melissa Makepeace O'Neill, Rita Farrell, April Stein

Personnel Board Members Present: Linda Avis Scott, George Arvanitis, Melody Chartier

Non-Members present: Becky Torres, Mike Vinskey, Jane Plaza, Miriam Defant

4:31 PM Finance Committee Call to Order

1) Joint Meeting w/ Capital Planning Committee: Discussion about the SES Heating System Controls

- Ellen McKay reports that the Capital Planning committee has approved a \$25K allocation to the library building fund.
- Ellen McKay reports that the Capital Planning committee has voted to sponsor a warrant article to fund an upgrade to the elementary school's HVAC system for a cost not to exceed \$200,000 contingent on grant funds not being available for this purpose.
- JH has visited the school and reviewed the HVAC system. The existing air control system controls had to be opened up completely in order for the school to have met the COVID-related requirements on air changes.
- If Fin Com does sponsor a warrant article funding this project, we will need to specify what funding source will be used if the American Rescue Plan funds are not able to be used for this purpose.
- AK and GA recommend that we use stabilization funds for this purpose.
- **AK makes a motion for the Finance Committee to recommend the use of \$200,000 of stabilization funds for the upgrade to the Shutesbury Elementary School HVAC system, contingent on grant funds not being available for this purpose. GA seconds. Motion passes by a vote of 6-0.**

2) Joint Meeting w/ Personnel Planning Committee and Select Board

- GA explains that there was concern among some members of the Finance Committee and Personnel Board about the Select Board's decision to expand the COLA to 2% which is .25% above the benchmark established by the Personnel Board's recommended policy. GA states that the concern was not about the COLA itself, but about the process that led the Select Board to deviate from the recently approved Personnel Board policy. The policy states that if something extraordinary happened, the Select Board and Personnel Board could meet to discuss a deviation from the approved formula.

- Melissa Makepeace-O'Neill states that the Select Board supports the Personnel Board's policy, and this was just an effort to acknowledge employees for the unprecedented circumstances in which people had to do their work this year.
- Select Board members confirm that the intention was not to circumvent the policy, but rather to acknowledge the challenges of the past year. It is agreed that the COLA for FY22 will remain at 1.75% and that the town will spend a total of \$1,850 in bonuses.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17