

**Shutesbury Finance Committee**  
**Tuesday, August 10, 2021, Virtual (Zoom) Meeting**

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

Members Absent: none

Non-Members present: Becky Torres, Mike Vinskey

Meeting called to order at 6:32

**1) Conservation Commission Transfer Request**

- a) We previously approved a request from the Planning Department (on 5/4/2021) to increase the Planning Board budget to allow for the reimbursement of Board members who require that a professional appraisal be conducted before they can participate in Planning Board votes that they would otherwise be conflicted on. Here we have a similar request from a Conservation Commission member, Miriam Defant, who is attempting to rebut a conflict of interest recusal for a project before the Con Com.
- b) These type of approvals have to come to the Fin Com if they are requested by sitting members of the Planning Board, Select Board, Conservation Commission, or Historical commissions.
- c) **BG makes a motion to approve a request to reimburse Miram Defant \$500 to cover the cost of a comparative appraisal which will assess whether she is exempt from recusal because there is a lack of a financial interest.** Seconded by AK. Motion passes unanimously 6-0.
- d) We anticipate another similar request from a member of the Historical Commission.
- e) BG asks for further information about how these appraisals are establishing that abutters have no financial interest. BT will see if she can share a copy of one of these appraisals.

**2) Expense Report Review**

- a) Will review 8/5 Expense Report at next meeting.
- b) Some expense lines have quite a bit spent down at this time because there is an initial bill that is paid at the beginning of the year.
- c) BG asks for further clarification on the Cruiser Maintenance line. We covered some maintenance costs internally using staff from the Highway department. This was charged to a new Cruiser Maintenance line.
- d) BG points out that there is School Choice expense line but there is no corresponding School Choice revenue line. GA clarifies that any school expenses that are paid out using School Choice revenues would be applied to the school budget line.

**3) Review of July 20, 2021 minutes**

- a) **Motion to approve July 20, 2021 finance committee meeting minutes was approved unanimously (6-0, AK abstains).**

**4) Fincom Agenda Items Worksheet update**

- a) See Attachment A: FIN COM AGENDA TOPICS worksheet.
- b) Some committee members are eager to discuss our free cash spending guidelines. Topics to be covered in this discussion would include: What should the targets/levels for our reserve accounts be? What should be the process be for transferring monies from one account to another? When do we use cash to pay for projects? When do we borrow?
- c) SM suggests that the Capital Planning Committee spend some time reviewing and updating the 25-year Capital Plan document. There are no road or culvert projects on the timeline other than the Locks Pond Culvert project.
- d) SM volunteers to draft a letter to the Amherst Regional School Committee encouraging them to begin planning for the FY23 regional assessment negotiations.

## **5) American Rescue Plan**

- a) BT provides an update on new capital projects:
  - i) School HVAC project: Engineer is doing some work that will help develop the bid.
  - ii) Culvert project: there was a pre-construction meeting w/ selected contractor.
  - iii) School roof: Our contractors are dealing with delays in availability of materials.
- b) AK recommends that we work on identifying potential consultants that could help us research and/or apply for available pandemic relief/infrastructure funds.

## **6) Committee updates**

- a) Building committee: Sliding doors have been ordered for the school. The Building committee has identified some potential installers to do the work.
- b) MLP: The MLP is exploring working with Leverett, New Salem and Wendell to create ring network protection for all of our broadband networks. By using diverse fiber paths through other towns we reduce overall risk for outages. Another part of the exploration is to see if we could share primary and/or secondary backhaul data to reduce overall operations costs. The project will involve significant coordination between each town's Internet Service Provider. Shutesbury will only pursue if it reduces monthly operating costs below what we could provide alone.
- c) School choice and police study committees have had their initial meetings.

## **7) Future Meetings**

- a) September 7<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30PM: GA and BT will prepare long range model/forecast.
- b) JW asks if there is any plan on returning to public committee meetings.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:54 PM**

## Attachment: FIN COM AGENDA TOPICS

FINCOM AGENDA TOPICS			
TOPIC	TARGET MEETING DATE	LEAD	NOTES
<b>OPEB</b>			
- Decide FY2023 budget (currently set at \$50k)	3/31/2022	Fincom	
- Plan Status, Determine appropriate funding level	TBD (12/2022)	Ryan M	BT 10/05/2020 email,
- OPEB Funding Analysis spreadsheet, modeling	TBD (12/2022)	GA	BT 10/06/2020 email, Expect actuarial report ~ 11/22, Ryan to confirm
<b>Free Cash</b>			
- Current/target levels, spending guidelines	9/21/2021	BT,Ryan M	
- Propose FY23 level	3/31/2022	Fincom	
<b>Stabilization and Capital Stabilization</b>			
- Current/target levels	9/21/2021	BT,Ryan M	
- Propose FY23 level	3/31/2022	Fincom	
<b>Capital Plan</b>			
- 25 year plan review	9/21/2021	Fincom	BT 10/20/2020 email
- Approved FY23 Project Review	3/15/2022	Ellen M	BT 10/06/2020 email
- Capital Plan Funding options	3/31/2022	Fincom	
<b>Town Revenue/Expense, Long Range Modeling/Forecasts</b>			
	9/7/2021	BT, GA	BT 09/22/2020 email
- Establish initial range of scenarios (BT spreadsheet)	9/7/2021		BT to share long range model in advance of 9/7 meeting.
- Solar projects and other potential revenue sources			
<b>Regional Assessment</b>			
- Draft joint Fincom/School Com/SelBd Letter	9/7/2021	SM	Letter to DougS/MichaelM requesting plans for FY23 assessment methodology
- Develop FY23 assessment strategy	12/31/2021	Fincom	
<b>FY23 Revenue and Expense Prep</b>			
- Update Rev and Exp Docs, i.e., include COLA, personnel contracts	3/15/2022	GA/MC, Fincom	
- Final review in prep for warrant articles	3/31/2022	Fincom	
- FY22 Tax Rate Proposal	3/31/2022	Fincom	
- Town Assessed Value Forecast Update	3/31/2022	BT, Kevin R	
<b>Warrant Articles, Approve for Town Meeting</b>			
	4/12/2022	Fincom	BT 04/06/2021 email
<b>Fincom Annual Report</b>			
	4/12/2022	Fincom	
<b>Federal Pandemic Relief and Infrastructure Plans, Impact on FY23 and beyond</b>			
	Ongoing	BT	BT 04/07/2021 email
<b>Fincom Info Session (Annual Report Review)</b>			
	4/19/2022	Fincom	
			ATM Target date is 4/30/2022