

Shutesbury Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, March 18, 2014, Town Hall

Members Present: Eric Stocker, George Arvanitis, Rus Wilson and Weezie Houle, Gary Hirshfield, Al Hanson, Lori Tuominen and, **Visitors Present:** Becky Torres, Walter Tibbets, Fire Chief

1. Meeting Called to order at 7:04pm
2. Walter Tibbets
 - a. Walter is ok with the Fire Dept's Operating Budget staying level funded for FTY15.
 - b. Waiting to do some maintenance after pot hole season.
 - c. Equipment line item is where it should be.
 - d. Line item not used yet is the funds for SCBA air tanks. Holding off for a grant that may change cost. See # o.
 - e. Calls are up. At this point they have had 97 calls so far this year. Average of 120 per year, but they have been up as high as 160.
 - f. Personnel: They are down in numbers in comparison to last year. They are down to 8 right now, with one at college so it's really 7. He is recruiting another guy from Vermont. With him they will be at 8 and 9 once summer hits. It's a roller coaster.
 - g. "Big topic is the upcoming fire truck." Last year Walter said it would be 2 years before he would need a new engine. Feedback from Fin Comm to him was to move up initiating the process of buying a new truck. He has been researching with some companies with his specs to get a fairly accurate ball park estimate. Its needs to be designed for now and into the future as far out as 25 years. It is more expensive to add electronic vs. manual functionality on the engine. Technology will be added, but keeping things as manual as possible. Walter prefers to have manual operating as possible. The new engine will have dual functions. It will be an attack pumper and it will function as a tanker. It will carry 2,000 gallons of water and it can function as a shuttle too. If the options are to choose air, electric or manual, Walter will choose manual. The only thing he won't choose manual is the electronic governor. It must be done electronically by law. Everything else was designed for our kind of town. He did ask for air-conditioned cab and stressed the importance of having one available for the firefighters. The estimate is \$433,000. In comparison, bare-bones regular pumpers are coming in at \$400,000. Tankers can come in as low for \$200,000. We would be getting a pumper/tanker for just over the price of a new pumper. The new truck also has class A & B foam on it. Since ethanol fuel (vehicle accidents) cannot be put out with water, it will be great to have the foam readily available. Other equipment that comes with the truck includes several ladders, a portable holding tank, 3 new sections of hard suction, and pike poles. All of the equipment is stored low on the truck so it is easily accessible by the firefighters. Both of the companies that he has quotes from are on the FCAM (Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts) state bid list. If Walter

- joins FCAM for \$200, he doesn't have to send the truck out to bid. Every item is on the bid list. It makes the process less costly and far easier.
- h. Walter would like to purchase it as soon as possible. The DEP is coming out with new regulations in 2015 for fire trucks. With the new regulations for fire trucks, the more expensive it will be to purchase it after 2015. This new truck would replace the Engine 1 pumper.
 - i. Rules and regs: The NFPA (National Fire Protection Assoc) regulations specify that any trucks over 15 years have to be taken out of service and put into reserve status. Additionally, they state that you should take all trucks over 25 years out of service completely. They also specify that all hose be taken out of service after 10 years. MA is not an NFPA state.
 - j. Engine 2 a pumper and is 17 years old. Engine 1 is a pumper and is 27 years old.
 - k. They have been doing hose, pump and ladder testing or plan to do so soon.
 - l. Walter is going to start buying new hose to replace the hose.
 - m. Is it possible to get a value on the old truck?
 - n. Future: Someone asked, "Can you envision a dept. that runs on just one truck because it is dual?" Walter says "no, if one truck is out of service than you have backup. You have to have a backup truck."
 - o. We have joined in with Leverett, Amherst, Montague, New Salem and Wendell put in for a regional AFG FED grant for new SCBA for just under \$1M. Shutesbury was eligible for 14. That total comes to \$91,000. Shutesbury's cost to match will be 10%, \$9,100. If we do get it, we don't know when it will happen. We need to prepare for the request for the funds for the match. We could sell the old ones and get funds for that.
3. Cemetery Maintenance
 - a. They need funds to remove 7 trees with a crane so they don't have to move head stones. One company's estimate to remove all of the trees, their brush, etc. is \$12,600. Stump grinding is \$2,400.
 4. Approve the minutes of February 20, 2014 as amended pending Leslie's notes.
 5. Budget Review
 - a. Change in the Regional assessment: Request from the Fin Com to the region to reduce Shutesbury's portion of the budget. Becky met with Maria, Sean Magano, Mike DiChiara, Rus Wilson and Kathleen, regional HR. Rus laid out the situation very clearly. They found a way to reduce their budget by \$100,000, \$50,000 Insurance premiums and \$50,000 from their E & D. All of that reduces our budget (line 98) by \$8,000. Our current budget proposal for the region is up \$79,300, 5%.
 - b. Change in the debt/expense the region was going to assess next year: They are proposing to move the \$12,000 assessment for capital expense (windows) to the following year.

- c. Another change: We just signed a new contract for our dumping fees from \$86 to \$61 per ton. A savings of \$8,500
 - d. Salary increases are now reflected at 2%.
 - e. The deficit has dropped to \$122,910.
 - f. We can put \$100,000 of Free Cash to get the budget gap down to \$22,910.
6. Expense Report:
 - a. All line items are looking appropriate for this time of the year.
 7. Revenue Report: All line items are looking good for three quarters way through the year.
 8. Vote passed unanimously for to transfer \$1,174.40 from Fin Comm Reserves for Police Cruiser Maintenance.
 9. No Committee Reports
 10. Next meeting is Tuesday, April 1st, 2014, 7pm
 11. Upcoming Finance Committee meeting dates and Department Head presentations of FY15 budget.
 - Apr 1: Water Resources, Capital Planning, Tax Collector
 - Apr 15: Final Budget, Warrant voting
 - Apr 29: Town Meeting presentation prep
 - May 3 Annual Town Meeting
 - Schedule the OPEB review with George's spreadsheet for this summer
 12. Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.