

**Shutesbury Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, April 1, 2014, Town Hall**

**Members Present:** Eric Stocker, George Arvanitis, Rus Wilson and Weezie Houle, **Members Absent:** Al Hanson, Lori Tuominen and Gary Hirshfield, **Visitors Present:** Becky Torres, Ellen McKay, Mike Vinsky, Alan Warner and Paul Lyons

1. Meeting Called to order at 7:10pm
2. Ellen McKay
  - a. Needs a 3% increase primarily for better software, a bit for extra postage
  - b. Ellen may need some Fin Comm Reserve funds for her software and computer upgrade for this year.
3. Capital Planning Report
  - a. Fire Truck \$434,000, tanker/pumper
  - b. Police asked for a cruiser, \$36,000
  - c. Highway needs to replace a pickup (17years old), \$43,000
  - d. Library, \$25,000 into library building fund
  - e. Cabling and new phone system \$6,590, saving the town about \$250 /month paying for itself in 2 years.
  - f. Grand total: \$544,590, \$38,000 in funds is available in the budget next year
  - g. The recommend borrowing for some of it, if not all of it.
4. Water Resources: Alan Warner and Paul Lyons
  - a. First time visitng the Fin Comm.
  - b. Established to answer a lot of questions about water quality in various areas.
  - c. 7 slots, with 2 vacancies
  - d. Assess water resources in town. Data gathering and trying to make sense of it, they produced a huge map of our water resources, identify important water resource issues and data gaps, have a cooperative relationship with Mt. Holyoke College to get research done,
  - e. Critical questions that still need to be answered:
    - i. What are our ground water resources in town that are deep in the ground and difficult to assess, how much is in there, are the deep water wells levels changing,
    - ii. How is the water interacting with the soil layer, where we face contamination issues,
    - iii. Other water quality issues, Nitrates, salt contaminations, nitrogen loading,
  - f. The committee would like to present a budget request in order to do a reasonable assessment. Al is going to be spending his sabbatical studying the water in Shutesbury.
  - g. Al glacial specialist, presented some slides explaining our water flow, the wells, and the ground water.

- h. He proposes that we set up 5 monitoring wells to monitor the bedrock ground water.
  - i. The cheapest way is to install a stilling well in someone's well, but there is potential for bacteria and access issues.
  - j. The better approach is to drill dedicated wells and it will cost \$5-6,000 per well. Ideally they would be sited on some town land. He is looking into several possibility of funding.
  - k. The budget request
5. Discussion of Capital Planning funding possibilities.
  6. Approve the minutes of March 18, 2014 as amended pending Leslie's notes.
  7. Budget Review – Draft for 4-1-14 is within \$100,000. Modifications since last review include:
    - a. Put in adjustments to capital – line 156 used to have 56
    - b. Retirement line went down: 159,297
    - c. Increased the fuel line \$1,000
    - d. We are go with the 2% with salary increase, the police is getting 3% increase
    - e. Ellen's request is in
    - f. Water Resource's request is going back to Capital Planning.
    - g. Elementary School working to get as small as possible request. They need \$25,000 to get through the year. We will need a Special Town Meeting to pass the funds.
  8. Discussion of funding the Capital needs
    - a. General consensus is that we could deplete the stabilization accounts by \$200,000 and borrow the balance, \$341,590.
    - b. Becky is going to find out the minimum amount we need to borrow to get the rate we were quoted for the \$541,590.
  9. Regionalization assessment – Request for lowering our assessment
    - a. Folks agree that they need to review the alternative assessment
    - b. The discussion turned to this year's town meeting; Becky expressed concern that it might not pass
    - c. There is not enough time to review the alternative method before TM
    - d. Becky will prepare some assessment history.
  10. No Committee Reports
  11. Next meeting is Tuesday, April 15th, 2014, 7pm
  12. Upcoming Finance Committee meeting dates and Department Head presentations of FY15 budget.
    - 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
  13. Meeting adjourned at 9:59pm.