

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Thursday, September 4, 2025 Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Members Present: Ajay Khashu - chair, Susie Mosher, Molly Moss, Laura Soito, Jim Walton and George Arvanitis Absent: April Stein Non-Members Attending: Hayley Bolton – Town Administrator, Rita Farrell – Selectboard Member and Brennan Mailloux – Administrative Assistant

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

I. Review of Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles

- A. Article 1: Authorize an increase to the FY26 Highway Superintendent salary of \$3,694, to raise the budget amount to \$75,217. This will be funded by the tax levy. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- B. Article 2: Authorize an increase to the FY26 Tax Collector salary of \$1,787, to raise the budget amount to \$25,498. It was determined that this position should have been adjusted for the salary alignment study in the budget approved at annual town meeting. This will be funded by the tax levy. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- C. Article 3: Authorize an annual stipend of \$3,000 for the Emergency Management Director in FY26. This will be funded by the tax levy. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- D. Article 4: Authorize an increase to the FY26 Health Insurance of \$124,000, to raise the budget amount to \$743,000. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
This increase will be funded as follows:
 - i. \$12,500 from the Stabilization Fund
 - ii. 1 year, FY26 decrease OPEB Trust Fund budget line by \$50,000
 - iii. \$61,500 funded by the tax levy
- E. Article 5: Pay prior year IT bills totaling \$1,332.83, from the Stabilization Fund. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- F. Article 6: Transfer \$5,695 from the Stabilization Fund to cover a FY25 deficit in the Snow Removal Materials line. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- G. Article 7: Transfer \$1,611.46 from the Stabilization Fund to cover a FY25 deficit in the Elementary Transportation line. The committee voted to recommend this article: 6-0
- H. Article 8: Authorize endorsing the replacement of the Middle School Roof Project:
 - i. The cost estimate for the project is \$9,834,341
 - ii. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) will provide a grant that will reimburse the district for 61.95% of the project cost. The MSBA will make a presentation of the administration of the grant, on September 23
 - iii. Each towns' share of the cost will be calculated based on the funding methods in the Regional Agreement which are based on the towns' Equalized Values (EQV), property values
 - iv. The project is contingent on the MSBA grant being awarded
 - v. It was determined that this project was included in the capital budget presented by the ARPS, during the FY26 budget meetings

- I. Discussed creating a report to summarize the warrant articles and their financial impact:
 - i. Explanations of each article that we recommend
 - ii. Impact on the FY26 tax levy
 - iii. Impact on the Stabilization Fund
 - iv. Explanation of OPEB and the decision not to fund it in FY26
- J. The number of votes required to approve each article was discussed. All articles will be reviewed by legal counsel including this issue

II. Other Business

- A. The Selectboard decided that the Police Chief Search committee should be comprised of individuals with law enforcement experience. Therefore, a FinCom member will not be assigned to this committee

Next meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on September 9

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.