

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Tuesday, November 4, 2025 Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Members Present: Ajay Khashu - chair, Susie Mosher, Molly Moss and George Arvanitis;
Absent: Laura Soito and Jim Walton; Non-Members Attending: Hayley Bolton – Town Administrator

Meeting called to order at 6:31 p.m.

- I. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 10/23/25 meeting
- II. Review and finalize the FY27 budget request letter
 - A. Reviewed and completed a letter drafted by Ajay
 - B. The request will be for the actual costs needed to operate their departments in FY27
 - C. Department heads will be reminded of the financial difficulties affecting the FY27 budget
 - D. The request notes that we will schedule a meeting with department heads to present the preliminary budget in January or February
 - E. The letter requests that everyone consider potential cuts in their budgets in case the preliminary budget results in a significant deficit. We are not requesting this information at this point
 - F. The request will be emailed and Hayley will follow-up with the departments at their next department head meeting
- III. Developed the FY27 budget meeting schedule
 - A. Set dates for all departments and other budgeting events
 - B. The first department meeting will be on December 2
 - C. The FinCom department liaisons will discuss with their department heads, the possibility of the liaison submitting their budgets. This would work for less complex budgets with few changes requested
 - D. The schedule will include the meeting with department heads to review the preliminary budget
- IV. Planning for the 11/8/2025 Four Towns meeting
 - A. The meeting will be on November 8 at 9:30 a.m. at the middle school library
 - B. The Fiscal Sustainability Subcommittee and the Four Town Working Group will be making presentations
 - C. Each town will present their fiscal outlook
 - D. Ajay's presentation of Shutesbury's fiscal outlook for the meeting was reviewed and finalized
- V. Update of long range planning
 - A. George provided a description of the planning model
 - B. Discussed how it will prepare us for fiscal summit
 - C. The committee will see the model in upcoming meetings and will develop various inputs and assumptions for formulating the plan

VI. Communication of the FinCom activities to the community

- A. Laura drafted a communication document (news release) and Susie presented it to the committee
- B. It will be posted on Shutesbury.org with links to relevant items such as legislative bills
- C. Its availability on Shutesbury.org will be communicated to the community with a “town announce” notice
- D. Susie and Laura will determine ways to provide information to specific groups such as the Shutesbury Elementary School committee
- E. The releases will be reviewed by the committee before each release
- F. These will be released on the second week of every month

VII. FinCom reserve fund transfer request: MA Municipal Association’s annual conference

- A. Request for a transfer to the Town Administrator Expense line
- B. \$1,400 registration fee and lodging for Haley to attend the MMA conference
- C. It will be a four day conference in Boston
- D. The committee approved this transfer

VIII. Other Business

- A. The current interim town clerk will be working through the end of November. Two people responded to the advertisement to fill the opening
- B. Police Chief search: The first round of interviews will be in the next few weeks and the goal is to have a recommendation at the end of November
- C. The committee approved a motion allowing Susie to sign the warrant to pay expenses funded by the FinCom Expense budget line
- D. The committee approved the \$150 bill from the Association of town Finance Committees

Next meetings: November 8 at 9:00 a.m. (Four Town Meeting) and November 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.