

SHUTESBURY FINANCE COMMITTEE
Minutes for March 15, 2005
Shutesbury Town Hall

Members present: Eric Stocker, chairman, Al Beswick, Russ Wilson, Al Springer, Lori Tuominen, Patrick J. Callahan. Guests: David Dann, town administrator.

The meeting convened at 7 p.m.

Eric reported on the activities of the Personnel Board. At the police department, he says Gary Thomann is now working half time and remains the officer in charge. Thomas Burger has been promoted to sergeant.

The minutes of the March 1, 2005 meeting were approved with amendments.

Walter Tibbetts, fire chief met with the committee. He says the volume of calls in recent months is down. The department is training with the Leverett department in the former Taylor House on Thursdays. He says there are plans to burn the wrecked structure in the future.

Walter reported that a \$15,000 state grant will be used to purchase new radios and another \$2,000 grant will be used to fire education programs in the school. He is seeking a federal FEMA grant for the purchase of a new brush truck. The total cost is \$75,000.

Overall, Walter says his new hourly arrangement is allowing him to get much more work done during the day. He says his maintenance budget is depleted to \$5.50 due to expenses for truck repairs. He says next year there will be more maintenance costs for the No. 1 engine. The call wages line has not all been expended because there are only 8 people in the department. It was suggested to adjust the call wage line to \$8,500 and change to the stipend line to \$7,500. A possible capital expense would be \$20,000 for a skid unit for fighting brush fires.

At 8 p.m. the Capital Planning Committee arrived. Ellen McKay, chairwoman, Jeff Quackenbush and Anne Lundberg were there. Eric and Lori are also members.

Walter says he may want \$3,000 to \$4,000 for a temporary shelter to protect a truck and trailer, maybe to be house on the Taylor property.

Walter explained to the capital committee about his need for a brush truck and told the member about his effort to get the FEMA grant to pay for it. It was agreed to move \$17,882 appropriated by Town Meeting for a previous grant for a brush truck to free cash because it was no longer needed. Eric suggested putting \$5,000 into a contingency fund as the town's match for the FEMA grant if it is approved.

The two committees and Walter then discussed various capital needs. Overall, it was agreed to seek \$50,700 in capital item, including a lawnmower for the school, software

for the accountant, library access design funds of \$5,000 to \$10,000, another \$2,500 for replacement of town hall computers, and funds for a composting toilet for the library.

Both committees approved this list of items.

The Finance Committee then reviewed the proposed town budget with David Dann. It was noted that the School Committee now has a line item for a circuit breaker account that means the finance panel no longer has to keep \$30,000 in reserve for special education costs.

Becky Torres, chairwoman of the Board of Selectmen arrived from the Regional School Committee meeting. She told that board that Shutesbury will not be able to afford their proposed budget. Becky called for a meeting of the four member towns and the Regional School Committee to discuss the matter. David Dann says he will recalculate the town budget to see what we can afford.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Submitted by Patrick J. Callahan.