

CHARLEMONT FINANCE COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting: May 2, 2009, Saturday, Town Hall. The meeting was called to order at 9:00 A.M. by Chairman Norma Lynch.

Attending: Norma Lynch, Richard Filoramo, Theodore Willard, William Coli, Camille White, Julia White, Marguerite Willis, Michael Buoniconti, Joanne Blier, Lynn Hathaway

Minutes of the April 18, 2009 meeting were approved after a VOTE to amend by eliminating the word “articles” in item #10. It was also VOTED to delete Item #4 and to replace it as follows: “Salaries: The Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) recommends salary increases of 1.7% but Charlemont Selectmen have not yet made any decision relating to salary increases”.

An additional item added to the agenda was a brief meeting with J. White, Chairman and M. Willis of the Hawlemont School Committee and Superintendent of Schools M. Buoniconti and Business Manager, J. Blier. This discussion related to the proposal for the merger of Hawlemont Regional School with the Mohawk Trail Regional School District.

Superintendent Buoniconti presented a fact sheet and outlined possible benefits of such a merger. The Finance Committee posed questions to him and the School Committee members present.

1. Budget Review
 - a. Lowering fuel charges – The Finance Committee needs more information regarding this item and will make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen to enable the Town to collect such data. The Finance Committee will also recommend they request the Accountant file yearly for state tax reimbursement for fuel usage.
 - b. Level funding – It was noted that the Finance Committee previously called for level funding of all departments.
 - c. Salary recommendations – The Finance Committee is not ready to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. N. Lynch, T. Willard, W. Coli and C. White will meet with the Selectmen regarding this matter.

2. Revenue Predictions
 - a. Tax Rate --More information is needed before projecting the tax rate.
 - b. State Aid 2009 – The Finance Committee cannot yet determine what impact the decrease in 2009 state aid will have.
 - c. State Aid 2010 – The Governor and Legislature have not yet determined final figures and therefore this is still not predictable.

3. Free Cash
 - a. Tax Rate – The final tax rate is not able to be determined at this time.

- b. Ambulance Purchase – After discussion, it was VOTED to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that they place an article on the Annual Town Meeting warrant to authorize the Treasurer to borrow \$170,000.00 for the purchase of an ambulance or to take any other action relative thereto.
4. Budget Format.—At this time, the Finance Committee is not ready to determine this.
5. May 5, 2009 Meeting – N. Lynch, T. Willard, W. Coli and C. White will attend the Selectmen’s meeting on Tuesday, May 5 at 7:00 P.M.
6. Treasurer/Collector Update – L. Hathaway met briefly with the Finance Committee to discuss both present and anticipated revenue receipts from the State as well as revenues due to the Town from all other sources. Also discussed was the new software which was purchased recently and is in use by L. Hathaway at this time.
7. Other – N. Lynch reported that in a recent conversation with Mr. Boudreau from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue he confirmed that the mechanism the Town has been using to carry over some items of the budget needs to be changed to appropriations by warrant article. The Finance Committee will inform the Board of Selectmen as to what needs to be done to accomplish this.
Several other carry-over items not in this same category will be discussed with the Selectmen as well.

The next meeting of the Finance Committee will be on Friday, May 15 at 9:00 A.M.

The meeting was adjourned at 12 Noon.

Respectfully submitted,

Camille C. White, Recording Secretary

(This document is to be considered a draft until approved and signed by the Finance Committee.)