

Minutes of the Charlemont Finance Committee and Selectboard Joint Meeting

February 12, 2024

Town Hall and Via Phone Conference

Present: Jay Healy, Rich Filoramo, Lynn Hathaway, Kim Blakeslee, Sarah Reynolds, Jason Pelletier, Dennis Annear and Maddison Schofield from the Greenfield Recorder.

Administrator Report:

The Mohawk budget draft shows no increase for Charlemont and Hawlemont shows an approximately 5 % increase, hearings are scheduled if the board members would like to attend. Rich suggests inviting school committee members to the next meeting to discuss it.

4:35 appointment -Jay Pelletier to discuss the police budget for FY 26. The budget is level funded, within the lines he has reduced some items and increased others to be more reflective of what is spent. Will look at what is spent on vehicles this year to consider reducing vehicle line even more. Uniform and contracted services lines adjusted to cover additional officers and increased the cost of contracted services. Some increases are in the state system, so they do not have any control over the cost. Jay also mentioned wanting to increase the police hours to add more shifts and help with personnel retention. Rich Filoramo explained this is a selectboard item. Kim Blakeslee asked that he write out how the hours would be used for the discussion with the selectboard.

4:50 Appointment -Dennis Annear to discuss fire FY 26 budget, the FY 26 Emergency management budget had no changes- level funded so he requires no appointment for that. Fire budget sees an increase in building maintenance. The building is old enough that items like the garage doors and the well pump and pressure tank have had issues this year. Vehicle maintenance is up due to the age of the vehicles (the average age is 20 years) – this line will also be affected if the new Osha regulations regarding the mandate of how often items are replaced like the vehicle tires goes through. Mandates also affected the breathing apparatus, gear (due to the pfas regulations), and hose expenses (all the department's 4-inch hose failed inspection due to age). Dennis also mentioned that 28% of the departments calls were commercial and river calls this past year.

Jay Healy explained this would be a good way to advocate for the recreation tax as it gives solid numbers to justify help in the fire, ambulance and police departments budget offsets. Dennis also gave Jay the time that is spent on items such as bike races and bike rides that come through town. While businesses in town like Berkshire East get permits from the town and DOT there are some that do not and making sure to have personnel to cover is harder in these cases.

Dennis also proposed a salary request that will go to the Selectboard, he would like to give a two-hour minimum for personnel responding between the hours of 10 pm and 6 am. This proposal will go to the selectboard for their consideration when doing the salaries portion of the budget.

On a motion by Lynn Hathaway and second by Rich Filoramo the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 pm

There was no quorum of the selectboard.