

Town of Charlemont
Joint Finance Committee and Select Board Meeting Minutes
March 26th, 2025
Town Hall and via Conference Call

Board Members Present: Rich Filoramo, Ron Smith, Jay Healy, Lynn Hathaway, Kim Blakeslee
Others present: Sarah Reynolds, Star Atkeson

Rich Filoramo called the meeting to order at 4:30PM.

1. Review/ Approve minutes from 3/12/2025

Rich Filoramo made a motion to accept the Minutes as written. Jay Healy seconded the motion. All in Favor.

2. Administrator's Report:

- Update on cherry sheet numbers

There is no change to the cherry sheet since the last meeting. The Chapter 70 money is \$106,868, \$4,053 more than last year. Unrestricted Aid is \$219, 968; up from \$215,233.

- Chapter 90/ roadway money possible increase

If a proposed bill passes, there may be an increase because of a formula change proposed by the Governor using road miles only, (not road miles, unemployment, population figuring into the formula), and with the use of Fairshare funds Currently, Charlemont has been averaging 170-177,000 a year. If the bill passes, Charlemont could receive \$318,337.69. All the Western Mass Towns will write letters in support of the bill when the time comes.

Capital Items: The Capital Planning Committee met with the department heads.

- The money for the heat pumps for town hall is the remainder required after incentives and grant money.
- Highway is shopping around for a freightliner used truck. They can take the plow from the current truck. Scott is asking the Board if they can put \$150,000. aside in a kitty, so that if a good deal comes up, they can purchase the vehicle quickly. They went over leasing. There aren't any true leases. Everything Sarah has researched has been lease-to-own. It would be more cost effective for Lynn to pull a loan and Town Meeting to approve it. Or, every year put money into vehicle stabilization account, as Shelburne and Colrain do. It would require a 2/3rds vote to take it the money out and could take a few weeks to get a special town meeting together. Lynn suggested a State Street account or a Greenfield Bank Savings Account, keeping track of how much for what and where. It wouldn't require a vote to take it out. So, a warrant article would be better.
- Ambulance needs a LUCAS medical device

- The Earmark on the Fire Engine is dead, Sarah can reapply for FY26. They will talk about a fire district later. Between the fire truck and brush trucks, the fire truck and hoses should be bought first. A used firetruck has been found which will get the town through the next several years. \$150,000. could be allocated towards the used truck this year, on top of the \$235,000. from last year. They will explain the situation on Town Meeting floor, that the money is now proposed to pay for a used truck and not the new truck.
- The rail mower should be bought and not rented
- The firetruck is the highest priority, \$50,000 a year could be set aside for the freightliner.
- The budget has been tighter which affects free cash. Once they have free cash number the Board can decide how to recommend the capital items to Town Meeting.

3. Budget Overview

- The school is 55% of the budget and all the departments are jostling in line for the remaining 45% for much needed purchases. The new regional school could be 7 years down the line.
- On this budget, the Finance Committee reserve line number is wrong, Sarah said to add extra \$15,000. The bottom line becomes 4,550,606.43 which is a 2.5% change over last year. There has been a school increase, and a 20% insurance increase. A \$12,500 increase in fire; HWY contracted services up \$4,000.; Electric is up \$2,000.; Transfer station attendant adjustment has been made; Town Counsel line: there had been a discussion of splitting the amount in half and making a line accessible for Board business. The Town wide fuel is level funded. COLA is 2.5% and has been included. Broadband debt is included and gets paid back.
- The state wants to do a funding mechanism for municipal buildings. They will get a list together of the Town's priorities.

Rich Filoramo motioned to adjourn at 5:18. Jay Healy seconded the Motion. All in favor.

Next meeting to be held on April 9, 2025.

Documents viewed at meeting:

Agenda of 3/26/2025

Minutes of 3/12/2025

Draft FY 2026 Budget Worksheet

Capital Planning items