

Town of Charlemont
Joint Finance Committee and Select Board Meeting Minutes
May 15th, 2024 4:00 PM
Town Hall and via Conference Call

Board Members Present: Lynn Hathaway, Rich Filoramo, Ron Smith, Amy Wales

On phone: Valentine Reid

Others present: Sarah Reynolds, Star Atkeson

Rich called the meeting to order at 4:04

1. Review / approve minutes from 4/24/2024

Rich Filoramo made a motion to accept the 4/24/2025 Minutes as written. Lynn Hathaway seconded the motion. All in favor.

2. Free Cash / items debited against the amount

The Board spoke about the logistics of adjusting the Free Cash amount. Sarah suggested waiting until next year. Some funds are hanging this year and will need to be deducted from Free Cash. They would like to wait and not rush the final number. The main thing is that it is recorded properly.

3. Budget

Votech tuitions is a work in progress, a lot of kids are on the waiting list. Money has been moved from tuition to bussing. If a large number of students go to Tech it could be an issue. They had put a large amount in, in the past. The bus cost is absurd. There is only one bus company.

Amy Wales made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend the omnibus requests. Rich Filoramo seconded the motion. All in favor.

Next year Val would like to discuss getting a compactor for paper recycling. Sarah thinks that next year there will be more of a tranche of DEP funds to cover it. It can be proposed as a capital item, as Charlemont would own it. It would save a lot of money on transportation of the recycling.

4. Recommendation / discussion of Warrant Articles The financial warrants are the same. The fire truck wording will need to be changed on Town Meeting Floor.

\$200,000 is the max that they can borrow for the truck. \$30,000. has been set aside from an 'assistance to a fire fighter' grant, so It's possible they can ask for \$170,000.

The operating budget will be raised and appropriated; the late bus will come from free cash, 911 system - free cash, bridge - Free cash, and the audit - free cash. It leaves \$35,786.

The cruiser can come from stabilization. Fire truck can take some from stabilization. Congressman Neal inputted for a grant project for the truck and can advocate for an earmark. They spoke about the possibility of getting a cheaper fire truck. They want to ask if they can use the grant if there is an earmark as well. \$800,000 For Fire truck will be on warrant, ask for \$200,000 for matching fund for grant.

It's possible that the town only needs \$170,000. Sarah will make a motion on town meeting floor and tell them what they are trying. \$200,000 can be a loan or from stabilization. There is \$392,000 in stabilization. The Capital Planning Committee will need to advise on the police cruiser.

The Board spoke about the idea of borrowing as a regular annual expense, a number that everyone is comfortable with, like \$50-100,000, they can use it for Capital Items, look at the debt schedule, and can spend x amount of money for debt, and build it in as a regular expense. That way they can be more consistently buying capital items.

An idea was floated to take the Police Cruiser out of stabilization and borrow for the fire truck, with a ten-year loan. **Rich Filoramo made a motion to borrow for the fire engine up to \$200,000., pay for the Police Cruiser out of stabilization (\$68,000 quote,) and the rest of the warrant articles (7-12) be paid for with Free Cash. Amy Wales seconded the motion. All in Favor.**

As far as the tax rate is concerned, Amy will work with Sarah and Carlene to project the assessed valuation and new growth for next year. When prices go up the tax rate goes down, but the amount you are paying does not change. There has been a lot of new growth.

Amy Wales recommended that the rest of Free Cash go back into Stabilization to use for capital items. To not use Free Cash to lower tax rate.

Rich Filoramo made a motion that the remaining Free Cash be put in Stabilization. Lynn Hathaway seconded the motion. All in favor.

Amy Wales made a motion to recommend all the financial Warrant Articles. Rich Filoramo seconded the motion. All in favor.

Rich Filoramo moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:50. Amy Wales seconded the motion. All in favor.

Documents viewed in meeting

Agenda for May 15, 2024

Minutes of 4/24/2024

Draft 6 FY 2025 Budget Worksheet

Sheet of budget lines that need attention to close out or correct

Fiscal year 2024 Free Cash certification, dated 5/8/2024