

Minutes of the September 7, 2023 Finance Committee

Members

Shaun Galliher

Heather Brown
Chair

Jim Chivers

Bonnie Conner

Mary Rice

Russ Parks

Sarah Baumann

Tracey Lussier

Absent

Other

Bob Graves, Town Administrator

Bart Collins, Select Board

The meeting was opened at 6:30 pm.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the August 3, 2023 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously.

A few questions were raised concerning the Accountant's report and were answered by Bob Graves.

Bob Graves reported that the unmarked cruiser was totaled in a recent accident and the Town has “replacement” insurance that should cover any cost to the Town. The other driver was cited in this accident and our two Officers were uninjured.

The new cruiser, that had also been in a prior accident, (no injuries) was sent to a certified GM dealer in Springfield for repair. We will need to pay the deductible on that claim.

Bob also reported that there was an unemployment claim that was disputed by us and there was a ruling in the Town's favor. The recipient was ordered to pay

back the Unemployment office all amountes paid by them. The Unemployment Office will be in charge of collecting it, not the Town.

Mary Rice reported that on August 23rd the Water Sewer Commissioners, Bob Graves, and the Water Sewer Committee met with DPC, Dave Prickett, to review the Water Study recently completed. His firm developed a GIS based - grid mapping of our entire system, documenting the type of pipe, size of pipes, projected condition, and estimated replacement costs. He prioritized each phase starting with the cast iron pipes estimated to be in 1/3rd of the system. Bob Graves pointed out that the Gate House has some issues that need to be resolved first. Dave Prickett will set up a time to take a look at it and recommend the work needed. To anticipate the costs involved in these projects, DPC presented a chart with several rate increase senerios over the next four (4) years. After a discussion, the Commissioners voted to increase the Water Rates by 15% for each of the next four years. This will build up the Reserve Account and have more funds available for this work without a drastice increase in rates in the future.

At the regular Select Board meeting that followed, they discussed requireing Sewer Flow Meters on all the camps to insure they are paying their fair share of the cost of usage. Camp Taconic already has one, one other camp does not have Town Water, and another Camp has multiple water sources that may be flowing into the Town Sewer Sysytem. This will need further discussion on how this will be implimented.

Chairman Galliher and Bob Graves reported that Ballard -Mack, the dealer that had ordered the bigger highway truck several years ago, (that we have not yet received or had any word on delivery) recently had a truck arrive on their lot unexpectedly and offered it to the Town for purchase. Jamie Callahan, Road Superintendent, agreed that this would be a comparable replacement for the one ordered. We will use \$150K from Ch. 90 and \$85K from the \$155K appropriated at the last ATM to purchase this truck. The smaller, 550, will cost \$120K. We will use \$90K from Ch. 90 and \$30K from the ATM appropriation. Jamie can work with a local dealer on that purchase . Currently there is \$567,875.00 in Ch. 90. If both trucks are approved by the State, then we would have \$322,875.00 left in Ch.90.

We will need to equip each with the plows and sanders needed. We anticipate having both trucks by winter.

The reclaimation of East Washington Road, voted on recently at a Select Board meeting, can be paid with some funds out of Ch. 90 (200K), and funds out of the Road Stabilization Account (157K). In order to use the Road Stabilization monies, there has to be a Special Town Meeting to vote on using that money. After a discussion, the Finance Committee agreed on all of the above. The Select Board will need to approve these funds also. Bob will set up a SPTM as soon as possible for this authorization of funds.

Bob Graves asked the Committee to review the need for FMLA insurance during the next Budget talks. This would cover employees, full or part time, when they need time off for medical or family reasons. Recently, two employees have faced this issue and this insurance would be a huge help to them.

Bob Graves reported that one of the big Sewer Pumps had failed over the holiday weekend and Jamie was up there every 4 hours pumping it out.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 7:23 pm, the motion passed unanimously. The next regular meeting of this Committee is Thursday, October 5, 2023 at 6:30 pm in the downstairs Community room at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Rice, Secretary