

## Minutes of the December 7, 2023 Finance Committee

Members	Absent	Other
Shaun Galliher	Heather Brown	Bob Graves, Town Administrator
Bonnie Conner		
Mary Rice		
Russ Parks		
Tracey Lusier		
Candy Galeucia		
Sarah Baumann		

The meeting was opened at 6:30 pm.

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the November 2, 2023 meeting as written. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Galliher and the Committee discussed the Expense Report and noted a few accounts that were trending high. There were explanations for some, and Bob will get the answers on a few others.

The Committee discussed how some of the information is in a General Expense Account and not a line item for each expense. Chairman Galliher explained that when the budget is submitted by the Department Head, the detail is in the proposal. However, while some line items are known at budget time, some are estimates. An example would be a fixed payment on Equipment, or yearly fees, but the parts estimated to fix that equipment would be in a General Expense Account. If everything was in a line item, the only time it could be transferred within that Department's budget, is the last 2 months of the fiscal year. Any other needed expense would have to be voted on out of the Reserve Fund. This practice would deplete our already low Reserve Fund. The Reserve Fund can only be used for "unknown or unforeseen expenses".

Bob reported that the Peru Road, Rt. 143, project is complete except for one item they will do in the Spring. East Washington Road work is near complete, the drainage has been improved and the road crowned to allow for the water run off. One resident, that was not in favor of this project, met with Bob and complimented on the work done so far, that is much better than expected. Jim Fox "Foxy" is about ready to exit for the Winter months and return in the Spring. He also told Bob that Justin Sullivan, the son of the late Selectman Jim Sullivan, is working out great and is a hard worker.

Bob also reported that he has talked with Attorney Jay Towne about the proposed new Central Berkshire Regional School agreement. Bob asked that we all review this and email Bob any and all our thoughts and/or concerns. He will be in contact with Attorney Towne to go over any concerns we have.

One major issue that Bob pointed out, and our Committee agrees, is that KP Law that represents the Town, also represents the School District. This can be done legally, but Bob and our Committee is not ok with that. Windsor, that is also represented by KP Law, has asked them to review the proposed document for them. This just seems a little unsettling to us. Attourney Jay Towne is not connected to KP Law and can better represent Hinsdale in this matter.

Bob also reported that the work on the Plunkett Spillway is underway with Topographical work being done. The Hazzard Mitigation public meeting will be with the Select Board on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 6:30 pm. There will be a consultant there to make the presentation and encouraged everyone to attend. Bob also reported that Barry O'Keefe, will return to his post at the Landfill following his absence due to some medical issues. The extra cost during his absence was \$531.00 paid to a Town Highway employee, and when Brian Phelps was hired, he was paid Barry's wages.

Dave Prickett, DPC Consultant, reported to Bob things he found during his inspection of the Belmont reservoir. He said the Well house needs to be replaced and should be a top priority. More trees should be cut down to limit debris and he thinks we could eliminate the Sand Filters as there are now better options available. He also recommends we have another way to get the water out of the reservoir,

currently, there is only one. He also thought we should invest in a maganese filter since that is a recurring issue because of the water source. He said there are Grants available to help fund these projects that could be upward of 102 Million.

Bob reported that one of the bigger Highway trucks has now arrived and the one we ordered 3 years ago is still not here. He also reported that the Real Estate Tax Bills have gone out and the cash flow is starting to come in.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 7:19 pm, the motion passed unanimously. The next regular meeting of this Committee is Thursday, January 4, 2024 at 6:30 pm in the downstairs Community room at Town Hall.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary A. Rice, Secretary