

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Tuesday, October 3, 2023 Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Members Present: Ajay Khashu, Bob Groves, Jim Walton, Jim Hemingway, Susie Mosher, April Stein, and ex-officio member, Town Administrator Becky Torres

Absent Member: George Arvanitis

Finance Committee meeting called to order at 6:31 pm

Minutes from Sept. 19, 2023 were approved as amended.

1. Liaisons have contacted their assigned departments. Talking points were included in the Sept. 19 minutes
2. Project updates
 - A. Ajay gave us an update on the Regional School Track project as represented on their 10/3 agenda
 1. All options for the surface (turf, grass) seem to be on the table. The RFP language signals low-PFAS is being researched for price
 - B. The culvert project at the Locks Pond dam is moving forward despite challenging rainfall levels. Steve Sullivan, Becky Torres and the construction company, MAS, all monitored and responded to developments over the weekend of rain. The sogga continues
 1. MAS is tracking the labor cost of switching to the bigger outlet pipe.
 - C. The school roof came in \$3K under bid and the town will receive that credit
3. Chapter 70 discussion
 - A. We want to gather information about the current Chapter 70 foundation formula so we can better advocate for state aid, which has been decreasing
 - B. Susie will contact DESE to see if they have a FAQ more current than 2010 and forward materials to Fin Com members
 - C. Bob wants to research information on school choice funds
4. Expense Report review
 - A. Legal line has already expended 48.5%
 - B. The Veterans' program line says 104% expended – Becky will check that
 - C. All other lines seem to be okay
5. Committee updates
 - A. School Committee
 1. The School Committee reported the superintendent, Jen Culkeen, will retire at the end of this school year. A search process is beginning

2. There is turmoil in Erving and discussion as to whether they want to leave Union 28. More developments to follow
3. The Shutesbury teachers' three-year contract will be negotiated this year
4. There is an out-of-district placement for a student this year that will cost a significant amount, including transportation. The school department is reviewing the situation and will come to the town for additional funds as needed
5. The kitchen floor replacement requires a significant amount of time so it will have to be completed next summer
6. The completed roof is much appreciated. Next up is the parking lot repaving

Our next meeting is Tuesday, October 17 at 6:30. Please review the Ch 70/foundation materials before the meeting so we can draft questions, a format, and a schedule for a future discussion with DESE and others.

We will also review the list of Finance Committee Agenda Topics that we try to cover each year.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.