

Shutesbury Finance Committee  
Tuesday, August 5, 2025 Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

Members Present: Ajay Khashu - chair, April Stein, Susie Mosher, Molly Moss, Laura Soito and George Arvanitis Absent: Jim Walton Non-Members Attending: Nettie Pangallo

Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

- I. New member introductions
  - A. Finance Committee members introduced themselves to new member Molly Moss
  - B. Molly described her work as a volunteer for the town and her work experience
  
- II. Request to fund childcare at future town meetings
  - A. Nettie requested the establishment of an account for this cost
  - B. This is common in other towns who typically hire the after-school staff
  - C. Nettie will determine the cost for labor and supplies and follow up with the Finance Committee
  - D. We can fund this year's meetings from the Finance Committee Reserve account or add this to the FY26 budget at the Special Town Meeting
  
- III. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 7/8/25 meeting
  
- IV. Hampshire County Insurance Trust - Increased assessment
  - A. Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust, the town's health insurance provider, voted to increase their premiums by 20%, effective October 1. This is on top of the 19% increase as of July 1
  - B. This will result in a 43% increase from the FY25 premium cost
  - C. The Treasurer will be researching other insurance companies\groups
  - D. There is a 90 day "required coverage period" after cancelling the current plan
  - E. A September 23 special town meeting is tentatively scheduled to address this issue
  - F. We will need to consider the funding for this increase and have a warrant article by September 9 for a September 23 meeting
  - G. Concern was raised that this date falls within the Rosh Hashanah holiday. April will contact the Selectboard about this concern
  - H. Funding sources:
    - i. Cash reserves
    - ii. Using OPEB account funds
    - iii. Raise taxes
    - iv. Or some combination of the above
  - I. When using reserves, we need to consider the impact of funding this cost in FY27
  - J. Ajay will check with the regional school to see if they have a similar increase in FY26

V. Final FY25 end-of-year transfers

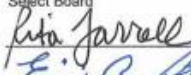
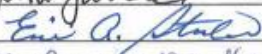
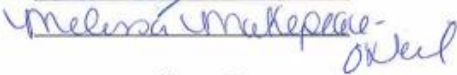
- A. Reviewed the remaining FY25 accounts that were overspent at year end
- B. Reviewed the transfers requested:

<u>Overdrawn Accounts</u>			<u>Source of Funds</u>		
<u>Code</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>Code</u> <u>Reserve Fund</u>
422-5700	Highway Materials	\$1,556.70	422-5109	Highway Superintendent	423-5110 \$935.57 Snow Wages
422-5700	Highway Materials	\$501.54	433-5695	Sanitary Landfill	423-5700 \$32,674.51 Snow Expenses
151-5300	Legal	\$2,000.00	122-5111	Selectboard Secretary	151-5300 \$2,191.81 Legal
151-5300	Legal	\$4,000.00	123-5110	Town Administrator Salary	
151-5300	Legal	\$3,761.00	171-5111	Land Use Clerk	
<b>Totals</b>		<b>\$11,819.24</b>			<b>\$35,801.89</b>

<u>Summary of Sources</u>	
FinCom Reserve Fund	\$35,801.89
Other Budget Categories	\$11,819.24
<b>Total Sources</b>	<b>\$47,621.13</b>

Select Board    Date: <u>7-29-25</u>	Finance Committee _____ _____ _____ _____
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- C. The total amount of the transfers is \$47,621.13, \$11,819.24 from the line items transfers noted above and \$35,801.89 from the Finance Committee Reserve fund
- D. Vote to transfer funds from "Source of Funds" and the FinCom Reserve accounts to "Overdrawn Accounts" as summarized above passed unanimously

VI. Amherst Regional Public School fiscal sustainability group

- A. The region has contracted with the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS) to compile of the financial statistics for the region
- B. The sustainability group is debating the need for this service, which is expected to cost \$3,200. The group may be able to compile the data themselves
- C. Concerns were raised that the data will be used to:
  - i. Argue for increased assessments for other towns
  - ii. Claim that the ARPS' costs are high compared to other towns
  - iii. That the lead town is spending too much relative to other towns
- D. The committee agrees that a facilitator should be hired to ensure clear organization and foster a collaborative environment for this process
- E. Their next meeting is on August 18
- F. The group expects to expand the number of participants as their direction materializes

VII. Department\Committee Liaison assignments:

- A. Elementary School: Susie
- B. Highway: George
- C. Fiscal Team: Laura
- D. Regional School: Ajay
- E. Fire Department: We will ask Jim if he accepts this
- F. Police department: April
- G. Library: Molly

VIII. Committee Reports

- A. The Personnel Board is working with the Town Administrator to draft updated personnel policies
- B. The elementary school has had problems with nozzles gumming up in the HVAC system.
  - i. It was determined that the roof doesn't have a proper vent cap, thus allowing water into the system
  - ii. The town is working with the roofer to resolve this issue
  - iii. The town had \$16k in bills from Jamrog, the HVAC maintenance company, for the cleaning of the nozzles. The school used circuit breaker funds and school choice funds to pay these bills
- C. Discussed asking the town administrator to report on Selectboard activities

IX. Other Business

- A. Susie would like us to consider a few in-person meetings during the FY27 budget process
- B. Ajay is going to determine if an alternative to Tuesday night meetings would meet everyone's schedule

Next meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on August 19

Meeting adjourned at 8:32 p.m.