

Shutesbury Finance Committee  
Tuesday, April 28, 2026, at Town Hall

Members Present: Ajay Khashu - chair, Susie Mosher, April Stein, Laura Soito, Molly Moss, Jim Walton and George Arvanitis; Absent: None; Non-Members Attending: Hayley Bolton – Town Administrator

Meeting called to order at 6:39 p.m.

- I. State Budget Updates
  - A. The state budget process is not complete and the FY27 Cherry Sheet estimate is not final
  - B. The Senate approved the Quabbin bill to provide \$50k to Shutesbury in FY27 and FY28. The bill is now being debated in the House of Representatives
  - C. The state’s Chapter 70 analysis is ongoing and any resulting changes will not be implemented in time to impact the FY27 state aid
  
- II. FinCom Reserve Fund Transfer – Fire Department Call Wages
  - A. The Fire Department is requesting \$5,500 to cover this line
  - B. The volume of calls has been greater than expected resulting in a budget shortfall
  - C. Reviewed the Fire Chief’s calculations showing the total forecasted spending and the requested amount
  - D. The FinCom approved the transfer - unanimously
  
- III. Minutes of previous meetings
  - A. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 4/7/26 meeting as amended
  - B. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 4/23/26 meeting as amended
  
- IV. Annual Town Meeting and Budget Hearing Preparation
  - A. Ajay created a spreadsheet summarizing the FY27 budget proposals in other towns showing their budgets, budget increase, budget increase drivers and if they are requesting a 2 ½ override. We added a column to identify towns that are using cash reserves to fund their budgets
  - B. Reviewed the Town Administer annual town meeting warrant guide. Discussed the budget breakdown chart and the appropriateness of that format. Members will review and send edits or comments to Ajay or the Town Administrator
  - C. Ajay reviewed two tables he created:
    - i. One comparing FY26 actuals to the FY27 budget by department
    - ii. The other, a waterfall chart bridging the average single family tax from FY26 actual to the projected FY27, by the primary budget drivers
  - D. Ajay prepared a table of the budget increase by discretionary increase and non-discretionary. More research is needed to complete the analysis
  - E. We will try to avoid redundancy in our presentation. Rather than just repeating information on the reports we provide, we will add perspective to how the data fits into the town’s finances
  - F. The presentation of the FY27 budget will be split across several FinCom members

- G. Reviewed the FinCom annual report and discussed how to represent the budget
- H. Decided to discuss key themes:
  - i. Budget increase and drivers – April will present
  - ii. The funding sources: Tax levy, state & local revenue and cash reserves – Laura will present
  - iii. Provide state and regional level perspective and what other towns are doing - Susie will Present
  - iv. Review the ways we plan for and prepare the town's budgets, and the analysis projects we will be undertaking – Jim will present
  - v. The need for economic growth – Ajay will present
- I. Ajay will contact the Town Moderator to coordinate the timing of the FinCom presentation at town meeting

V. Other Business

- A. The School Committee is working to establish a Special Education Stabilization Fund

Next meeting is Thursday May 7 at 6:30 p.m. at town hall

Meeting adjourned at 9:06 p.m.