

Shutesbury Finance Committee
Tuesday, June 16, 2026
Virtual (Zoom) Meeting

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

Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.

I. Minutes of previous meetings

- A. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 4/28/26 meeting as amended
- B. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 5/7/26 meeting as amended
- C. Reviewed and approved the minutes of the 5/26/26 meeting as amended

II. Elementary School Capital Needs Meeting

- A. Ajay attended a meeting with elementary school and town representatives regarding the school's capital needs. Most are related to the parking lot repaving project
- B. Projects that were discussed:
 - i. Sidewalks: some sections are uneven causing some stumbles
 - ii. Parking lot: layout\design needs to be analyzed
 - iii. Oil tank issues have been resolved, but additional work may be needed
 - iv. A fire mitigation tank is needed for the school
 - v. Possibility of replacing the HVAC system with a ground-based heat pump system or more conventional systems such as mini splits, for which there are available grants as well
- C. Converting to a heat pump system was identified as a priority. A grant application was submitted for a \$150k feasibility and design analysis. Construction grants are also available for the conversion to heat pumps. Timeline is summer of 2028
- D. The result of the meeting was that group prefers to delay the parking lot project until the heat pump analysis is complete and the oil tank issues are resolved. The parking lot analysis will proceed
- E. The sidewalk repairs will proceed. There is \$24k of funds available for this work
- F. There is a need to determine who is responsible for the school projects, maintenance and repairs. When is it the town and when is it the school

III. Long Range Planning

- A. Reviewed a new five year model of projected expenses and revenues
- B. The model will help determine property tax impacts of various financial decisions, possible state funding changes and other budget challenges
- C. Members discussed the need for cash reserve forecasting. How to model this was discussed
- D. Ajay will collect debt service info from the Treasurer
- E. It was noted that multiple versions of the plan can be created for various scenarios such as different inflation rates and revenue changes

- F. The committee agreed to use preliminary inflation rates for various categories (i.e. elementary school, regional school, health insurance...) for the baseline forecast
- G. Added a contingency line of one percent of budget to expenses to account for unanticipated costs
- H. Next steps will be updating the debt service, analyze revenues, consider the various issues impacting the town and modeling various scenarios

IV. Other Business

- A. Discussed budget documents and a means for keeping them permanently available on the FinCom home page:
 - i. The committee decided it would like to create a folder for each year's documents
 - ii. The documents include all communications to the public and various documents and sheets the committee uses during each year's budget process. It would not include department budget request details
 - iii. Discussed archiving the accountant's expense reports for each year as well
 - iv. Susie will follow-up with Web Communications committee
- B. Discussed need for analysis of debt with the Treasurer. Ajay will reach out to the Treasurer to discuss this and the long range capital plan
- C. PFAS Loan in FY27 budget. There are two loans and there was confusion about where these are funded in the budget. We recalled that one was not under debt service. Ajay will follow up with town Accountant to determine in which lines these are funded
- D. Ajay reported that the Four Towns Group is still meeting, about every six weeks:
 - i. Progress is slow due to other activities and needs at the regional school
 - ii. Each town is completing a data gathering template. The purpose is to understand what each town spends in total on education
 - iii. Ajay reviewed the blank template and will send the draft of the completed one to the FinCom for review, before submitting it to the group
 - iv. Pelham is analyzing options for school funding with a deadline of September. Their findings are expected to be available to the public

Next meeting is Tuesday June 30 at 6:30 p.m. at town hall

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.