­ Shelburne Finance Committee Meeting

Thursday March 28, 2024, 5:30 pm

Shelburne Fire Station

18 Little Mohawk Road

Minutes

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 5:40 pm by Todd Dubreuil, Chairman. Those present include, Finance Committee members Terri Mitchell, Jim Burnham, Jay Readinger, Matt Popoli, via Zoom, Selectboard Members, Rick LaPierre, Andrew Baker, Town Administrator, Terry Narkewicz, and School Committee Representatives, Willow Cohen, and Jason Cusimano.

**Appointments:**

* 5:45 pm to 6:30 pm – MTRSD Budget Presentation with School Committee Representatives
* 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm – Selectboard – Finance Committee Roles & Responsibilities

1. **Old Business:**

* 5:45 pm - MTRSD Budget Presentation with School Committee Representatives - Changes to the Regional Agreement – Changes to the Regional Agreement are once more being brought to the Towns. It was presented last year at Town Meeting, but not approved by all member towns. The Town of Heath choose not to call a Special Town Meeting and the Town of Plainfield never had to decide based on Heath’s decision. This effectively killed the changes to the Agreement. The Agreement is supposed to allow the district to count enrollment the same way that the state does. The Agreement changes were supposed to only change the way foundation enrollment is calculated. The Finance Committee found other things that had been changed in the proposed Agreement and decided not to support the changes to the Agreement. Voters passed the changes anyway at Town Meeting. Jason presented that the new Warrant Article before the Towns removes the additional changes that the Finance Committee objected to and returns the verbiage regarding repairs and maintenance back to the original Agreement. The Agreement now just changes how enrollment is calculated. The School Committee says it is all about fairness, it is equitable across the board for all Towns. Todd shared that the Finance Committee had not come to a consensus on whether or not to support the changes to the agreement. Andrew noted that the proposed changes were modest to the Town of Shelburne compared with what might be proposed following the sustainability study. Todd asked if there were any updates on the sustainability study. Willow shared that it is in the data collection stage. As time ran out, it was decided that another meeting was needed to continue discussion on the FY 2025 School Budget. Willow asked that specific questions be submitted in advance of the meeting so she can be prepared to answer.
* The Finance Committee asked permission of the Selectboard for the Finance Committee to receive monthly Fund Balance and Revenue and Expense Reports. It was agreed that Terry would have the Town Accountant add the Finance Committee to her email list going forward. At some point the Finance Committee would like to meet with the Town Accountant.
* Discuss the Role and Responsibilities of the Finance Committee with regards to Budgets and Capital Planning – Finance Committee questioned their role in the budget building process. Jay argued that the Boards and Departments should present their budget requests to the finance Committee instead of the Selectboard. Rick read form the Massachusetts Finance Committee Handbook, saying that the Selectboard/Town Manager/Town Administrator/Executive Secretary are the ones to collect budget information and assemble into a balance budget. Once assembled, it is presented to the Finance Committee. It was agreed that a few in person meetings between the Selectboard and Finance Committee would be helpful going forward. Terry suggested that after the current budget season, we could set up a meeting to decide how to best make changes for the future. The Finance Committee also feels that there needs to be changes made in Capital Expenditures and Planning. It was discussed if the $2,000 threshold should be increase to better reflect a capital purchase. After much discussion, not consensus was come to and the policy remains as is for now. It was brought up that in some years there are capital purchases come up that are a complete surprise and not necessarily a result of a failure of specific equipment, ie. Police Cruiser failure. It was agreed upon that while progress has been made in Capital Planning, we still had a way to go*.*  A meeting to go over Operating and Capital Budgets was scheduled for 4/04/24, 4:00 pm at the Fire Station.

2. **New Business:** None

3. **Other Issues not anticipated 48 hours before the meeting**: None

4. **Next Meeting:** April 4, 2024 at 4:00 pm at the Fire Station.

5. **Adjournment**: Motion to Adjourn by Jim Burnham, seconded by Jay Readinger. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:55 pm.