

Finance Committee Minutes

June 9th 2016

The meeting was called to order at 6:07 with the circulation of the minutes from May 26th 2016. Present were Mr. John Pshenishny, Mr. Robert Miller, Mr. Mark Carson, Mrs. Marilyn Fracasso and Mrs. Prudence Spaulding. The minutes were accepted as amended, Mr. Carson 1st, Mr. Miller 2nd passed unanimously.

Mrs. Enoch had left a revised form to handle requests for funds to transfer from Reserve Fund. Upon scrutinizing the form a further correction was made. The paragraph title "Specific purpose for the funds requested:" was eliminated and the next paragraph would read "This expenditure is extraordinary and/or unforeseen for the following reason (s). Please itemize needed purchases". A motion to accept the new form was made, Mrs. Spaulding 1st, Mr. Pshenishny 2nd passed unanimously. Mrs. Spaulding took the form and placed it on Mrs. Enoch's desk.

Mr. Carson stated that the Committee needed a Vice- Chairman and Mr. Carson nominated Mr. Pshenishny to take this position, Mrs. Spaulding 2nd passed with Mr. Pshenishny recusing.

Mrs. Spaulding then told the Committee that Mrs. Barbara Lowman had asked to speak with her with the topic of where the Finance Committee was going! Mrs. Spaulding met with Mrs. Lowman and took some papers that might prove helpful to her in her endeavors. She took the Duties of the Finance Committee made by her in 2012, and the end of the year report in June 2015, along with the two front pages of the State Book on the duties of the Finance committee, and the Financial Policies that had been drafted for the town. Mrs. Spaulding stated that of course the fewer items bought "on time" the better! However one of the difficult things that the committee struggles with is that over half of the budget is school expenses over which the Committee has no control. Budgets submitted by other departments are always carefully evaluated.

Mrs. Spaulding also added that this year the Committee welcomed three new members. Mr. Carson as the chairman is always able to listen to complaints by town citizens since he grew up in New Marlborough and runs a business in the town. Mr. Stalker joined the committee and is a "detail" man, Mr. Miller brings a businessman's point of view and Mrs. Fracasso brings a wealth of knowledge about finance. Thus Mrs. Spaulding stated that she thought that this Committee would be well able to prepare the yearly budget. Mrs. Lowman agreed to let Mrs. Spaulding review the article once written.

The committee then turned its attention to the proposed cuts in the budgets with the goal to bring the total budget under 2 ½. The members of the committee remembered when they were establishing the budget that several accounts had large sums of left-over funds. The committee returned to the end of the Fiscal Year statements and found that the Propane budget in July 2015 had \$7,886. That winter had been a difficult one not at all like last winter and that the amount left over in the 2015 budget, and

\$12,047.06 left over at this time of year, the Committee suggested that \$4,000 could be reduced in the Propane Budget. Similarly in the Diesel budget for 2015 there was \$10,882 left and as of this month the Diesel Budget had \$34,769 left in that account and the committee suggested that that account could be reduced by \$4,000.

In the Fire Protection budget the leftover funds at the close of the 2015 year was \$21,712.00, and that account has at present \$42,514.15, the committee suggested that the Fire Protection budget for 2017 could be reduced by \$8,000. With these reductions and with the revised budgets that had given up some of their proposed amounts there would yield \$57,200 plus \$16,000. With these reductions the budget would be under 2 ½ with a cushion to guard against unforeseen events. Of course there is always the Reserve Fund if these cuts prove too large. Mr. Carson and Mr. Miller will discuss these proposed cuts and then go to Mr. Loring and ask him to agree to them. Mr. Nathaniel Yohalem will be consulted.

Mrs. White reported that Mr. Yohalem had asked the school if they could help out and reduce their budget. The Egremont School is in the process of obtaining a grant to do some major physical improvements. If these improvements take place during the school year the students might have to transfer to Mount Everett and the Egremont School would be temporarily closed. Should this happen there would be a savings of a considerable amount of money.

The next meeting was scheduled for June 23rd at 6:00PM when Ms. White stated that there were two accounts that needed funds from the Reserve Fund and by that time the revised budget with the proposed cuts should be ready for the Committee's review.

The meeting adjourned at 7:37PM Mr. Carson 1st, Mr. Pshenishny 2nd passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted

Prudence Spaulding, Secretary.