

**Town of Charlton**  
Finance Committee Minutes  
Selectman Room Town Hall  
Date: March 16, 2022 at 6:30pm  
Minutes taken by: Jaclyn Bonner, Clerk

**Attendees:** John Grondalski-Vice Chairman, Henry Camosse-Chairman, Kristen Lemire, Carol Brodeur, Keith Johnson, Kristin Kustigian, Jason Julian

**Absent:** N/A

**Guests:** Ashley Obrzut -Town Finance Director & Andrew Golas-Town Administrator

**1. Call meeting to order at time**

Meeting was called to order by Hank Camosse at 6:30pm on Wednesday March 16.

**2. Approval of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

N/A

**3. Department Budget Meetings**

**a. Conservation**

- The conservation director Angela Panaccione is in attendance to speak about the conservation budget.
- Salaries increased \$20.1K due to an increase in hours and responsibilities for the conservation/storm water director apprentice.
- A Line item for MACC dues was added the expense and equipment budget for \$523. The director states MACC is valuable resource for conservation agents.
- Environmental management expenses decreased \$6K due to a decrease in stormwater management expenses. The new conservation director was able to cut \$52.9K in engineering costs related to storm water because she is personally qualified to perform certain tasks that the engineers were previously being paid to perform.
- Ziggy Waraskiewicz & Wayne from the lakes and ponds committee are in attendance to explain the \$25K increase to the Lakes & Ponds Deweeding Program. Please refer to the informational packet attached.

**b. Assessing**

- The director of assessing Kathleen Stanley is in attendance to speak about the assessing budget.
- Kathleen states that all property taxes levied on real estate in Massachusetts are ad valorem; meaning that the tax is based on the assessed value.
- Salaries increased \$20.8K with the Chief and Assistant Chief Assessor's salaries increasing 10K and 8K respectively.
- Overall property revaluation expenses increased \$13.3K as FY23 is a certification year.

- Hank Camosse asking how common it is to hire an assessing company like overlook and what types of properties require this. Kathleen responding states that it is not – we had one other company (millennium) that required an outside assessor because it was transitioning from exempt to taxable which resulted in new growth for the town. Another example would be telephone and gas companies who are assessed by the state. Amazon (per the tiff) will also be an outside assessment.

**c. Recreation**

- A member of the recreation board Diane Doherty is in attendance to discuss the recreation budget.
- The board would like to fill the position of a part time clerical person as Diane is currently performing these duties. The cash that had been allocated to the position has been moved the expense line for the time being.

**d. Water Sewer**

- Water/Sewer did not attend the meeting.

**e. Bay Path DCRSD**

- Bay Path did not attend the meeting.

**f. Dudley – Charlton Regional School District**

- The superintendent of the Dudley Charlton school district Steven Lamarche; a member of the school committee Kenny Laferriere; and the finance director Richard Mathieu are in attendance to discuss the Dudley – Charlton RSD budget.
- Hank Camosse asking if DC has an unfunded liability with Worcester County Retirement. Responding Richard Mathieu states all municipalities do have this.
- Fixed costs increased \$1.1M due to increased student service needs attributed to online learning consequences and higher school choice costs respectively.
- Concessions to reach a 4.3% increase include targeting class sizes of 22; eliminating positions through attrition; and cutting teacher supplies.
- Concessions to reach 3.23% increase include elimination of new school choice programs in middle school, eliminating positions through attrition, and implementing a school bus transportation opt-out program.
- The Esser FY23, FY24 grant received for \$1.1M will be allocated to student services. Hank Camosse asking if this grant will expire after FY24. Steven responding states that the grant will no longer be available, and they will have to absorb the amount to the budget.
- State and district fund revenue decreased \$6.8K which will place a larger burden on the two towns.
- The state believes Dudley Charlton is being over funded chapter 70 by \$1.4M
- Hank Camosse asking if we are handicapped by being a regional school district. Richard Mathieu responding that de-regionalizing would increase administrative cost significantly. Steven Lamarche responding that he worked for a school that went through this process and it took a lot of time and resources to complete. Ken L. responding building a new high

school could cost \$150M while the town is struggling to fund a new fire department. Kristin Kustigian adding student services would suffer.

- Jason Julian asking if there is anything the town can do for the school to push back on the state regarding MSPA eligibility. In response Steven offers that it is unlikely that the town could do anything constructive.
- Kristin Kustigian asking why the state only funded 90% of regional transportation. Responding Richard Mathieu states this is correct – although the goal for regionalization was to have the state take over 100% of costs.

#### **4. Dan Prouty - Senior Center Building**

- A resident of the town Dan Prouty is in attendance to pitch the idea of purchasing 107 dresser hill rd. for a new senior center. Dan provided a proposal outlining the structure of the project.

#### **5. Other agenda items not known at the time of this posting**


- In between the recreation commission and Bay Path RVTHS Ashley speaks to the board about budget changes made since February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. She informs the room that the Police will be getting two new officers instead of a new officer and dispatcher. The town clerk, council on aging, and fire will all be getting part time administrative positions. Currently we will be putting \$200K into stabilization.
- Andrew Golas adding that the budget provided includes all the above listed additions.
- Kristen Lemire asking about the requested fire mobile integrated health care and community EMS position. Ashley responding states that the program would require \$6K to join and the town of Charlton would be a 'guinea pig'. They don't feel that this would be beneficial at the time for the cost.
- Ashley stating that the clerical union dissolved. Everyone who was in the union now has an updated salary. Andrew adding that more tenured employees saw a larger salary increase as a result.
- Hank Camosse asking if the departments are aware of budgetary changes. Ashley responding that the departments are all aware.

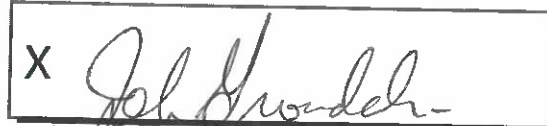
#### **6. Adjourn Meeting**

Motion to adjourn was made by John Grondalski at 9:00 P.M. Seconded by Kristen Lemire. Motion is accepted by all present members, meeting adjourned.

Town of Charlton Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Voted:

X   
Henry Camosse


X   
John Brondalski

X   
Keith Johnson

X  
Jason Julian

X  
Kristin Kustigian

X  
Carol Brodeur

X   
Kristen Lemire

X  
Alternate