**CHARLESTOWN FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2022 AT 6:30 P.M.**

**CHARLESTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM**

Present: Keith Weed, David Richardson (chair), Steve Neill, Bob Davis, Patricia Chaffee, Trina Royce, Sarah Davis, Richard Carter

Select Board: Nancy Houghton

Public:

Absent:

Employees Present: Jordan Cannon, Diane Town

Mr. Richardson opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. Mr. Richardson acknowledged not dispersing the previous meeting’s minutes, and stated he would submit these to the committee for review and approval at the next scheduled meeting.

Ms. Chaffee discussed the Election and Registration budget. She stated that this budget is set for one election, and that this reflected the change from previous budgets. Ms. Chaffee discussed the line items of this budget category. Mr. Richardson then moved to the Legal Expense section. Ms. Chaffee stated that the Selectboard has yet to finalize an amount for Town Attorney. Ms. Chaffee then discussed the Planning and Zoning section of the budget. Ms. Chaffee reviewed the line items, and commented upon those which have yet to be updated to reflect the actual amounts used. Ms. Chaffee stated that perhaps the telephone line item may be able to be reduced at the end of the year. Ms. Town stated that the library would be meeting with the Selectboard on Wednesday, and afterwards the Finance Committee would be able to review this section. Mr. Richardson reflected on the sections to be reviewed in upcoming meetings. Mr. Richardson clarified the Ambulance category, which is for Golden Cross, and commented upon the contract and the step-increases anticipated for each year as part of this contract. Ms. Chaffee identified several line items, and advised Ms. Town of the updates required. Mr. Richardson questioned the peddler’s license line item. Ms. Chaffee reflected on the historical use of this license with vendors within town. Discussion was held regarding the license requirements of food trucks on Main Street. Mr. Neill commented that the same time period of previous revenue years would be beneficial for Finance Committee review. Mr. Richardson reflected that 1.09.2023 would be the meeting with the Selectboard, and each department would be reviewed at that meeting.

Mr. Richardson commenced a review of the police department budget. He commented on the 13% increase of salaries, and 10% overall, of the police department budget. Mr. Richardson questioned each member of the finance committee to volunteer any feedback about this section. Ms. Royce stated that each year the Finance Committee reflects upon the Drug Task Force line item. Mr. Davis provided information as to the utilization of these funds. He stated that Charlestown has yet to send an officer to be on the Drug Task Force, but commented on how the police department incorporates this task force. Mr. Chaffee stated that Software Support line item would need to be reviewed and adjusted. Mr. Richardson discussed the two officer salaries budgeted in hope that they would be filled within the budget year. Ms. Chaffee commented that the communications department also dispatches for the towns of Langdon and Acworth.

Mr. Richardson then transitioned from discussion of the police and communications budget to a review of the highway department budget. He asked those present if there were any questions regarding this section. Mr. Richardson questioned Mr. Weed to the cost of several line items associated with products necessary for use within the department. Mr. Richardson commented that the previous year’s highway budget was $158,000 under the budgeted amount. Mr. Richardson asked if the tire line item should be increased to $15,000. The Finance Committee found agreement to suggest to increase the line item to this amount. The Committee discussed visiting the highway department warehouse. The decision was to visit on 12.07.2022 at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Richardson then commenced review of the Transfer Station budget. Ms. Town stated that this section has not been updated, but that in the following meeting the Committee would have the most recent version to review.

Discussion then transitioned to focus on the Recreation Department. Mr. Richardson reflected on the change to the director position’s salary from the previous year. Reflective review commenced on the history of the pool director and recreation director positions.

Mr. Davis motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Ms. Chaffee seconded the motion. All voted yes.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jordan Cannon, Recording Secretary