

Town of Charlton

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Selectman's Meeting Room

Date: August 3, 2016

Meeting came to order at 6:30pm

In Attendance: Jerry Doble – Chairman, Peter Cooper – Vice Chairman, Doug Stepien, Hank Camosse, & Maura O'Connor.

1. Motion to accept meeting minutes from the June 29th meeting by Hank Camosse, with a second by Doug Stepien. All in favor – minutes are accepted.
2. Transfer for Code Red (Reverse 911) contract will be \$6,309 per year for three years. This is the total cost because this is a web based product and will not require any servers, computers or other components. Code Red is the "go to" for many other communities in the State. Currently Sturbridge, Oxford and Dudley have this system and should a Regional Dispatch go into effect, this will make for a better transition. Last August the decision was made not to renew with the previous provider (Everbridge) after the contract ran out. The service was cumbersome and was not utilized the way everyone had hoped. However, after an incident last fall when residents were not notified in the specific area of the incident, Chief Pervier believes that having a new system would be an enhancement to public safety and communication. Code Red will automatically download all public numbers into its system and anyone with a cell phone number who would like alerts to be sent to their cell phones as well can register online at the town's website. Some of the alerts that can be used are for road closures, accidents, weather events etc.

Town Administrator, Robin Craver pointed out that should the Finance Committee approve the spending, this is something that must stay in the budget and cannot be utilized, then taken away for budget and then added again. Will confuse residents and could give a false sense of security.

Motion by Peter Cooper: approve the three year contract with Code Red, along with a Reserve Fund transfer, and second by Doug Stepien. All in favor – motion passes.

Chief Pervier also added that he and Town Administrator, Robin Craver have been working on the new tower behind the Police Station. It will be a good source of income to the town besides taxation and an improvement of public services. The tower will be 175 feet tall with six carriers utilizing it. The town will be receiving a percentage of income for each carrier that uses the tower along with the payment for having the tower on town property for thirty years.

Thank you to Chief Pervier for coming before the Finance Committee

3. Fire Department Grant: Chief Cloutier is seeking a funding grant for nine new town Firefighters for two years. The Select Board discussed the grant letter with the deputy chief last night. The decision is contingent upon a joint Select Board/Finance Committee meeting and if the grant is approved. Chief Cloutier will be running numbers to see what the effect and exposure of budget money would be should the grant be approved. These numbers should be available by the next Finance Committee meeting.
4. General Discussion/Description of LNG: Liquid Natural Gas. LNG is liquid gas that is used for the winter months to keep line pressure to customers. (Peter Cooper recused himself during this discussion)

5. Town Administrator, Robin Craver: Yesterday was the Department Head meeting. The Special Town meeting is on the calendar. The Town Accountant, Gene Ferrari is in the process of closing the books and the auditors are also looking at the books. The energy audit grant has been approved, and is going well. Still working on the deal with Oxford and a National Grid meeting is coming as well.

Another grant will be written for windows in the town hall. Some of the grants coming down the line are \$25,000 for water with another \$200,000 coming. A CPI has been written for WPI students to do space allocation to work with the Water Department. Charlton would like to create a public water supply for ourselves and have recently brought a retired town Administrator to help build this potential system. He is looking over old reports, investigating how to streamline and fix issues as well as looking to have better conversation and communication with DEP. By bringing the WPI students on board, hoping that it will build faith with DEP and let them know we are serious.

6. Casella and the contaminated wells. Casella is fighting the town and we are but waiting for the DEP to make a decision. Also, there are complaints on the zoning between Charlton and the Town of Southbridge in relationship to the landfill, the ZBA and BOH are involved. The town of Lexington is loaning us their commissioner free of charge to help on the opinion on how to handle this issue. No one wants the Landfill closed, everyone needs to work together to make the situation right for everyone. Also, our capped well has had testing and it shows slight contamination of 1,4 Dioxane.
7. Town's sale of the foreclosed land is moving forward, Robin has asked all department heads need to look at the list of properties. Zekos Group auctioneer has been hired; the date is not set yet though. The money made from the sales will go into the Capital Budget.
8. Selectman are starting the Fire Building committee again. 20K set aside for incidentals and research.
9. Records facility design for the archival storage will be starting. The concept is a stand-alone brick building behind the town building. (brick is safer from fire)
10. The Air Conditioning for the hallway outside the Assessor's office wing is being worked on.
11. A special town meeting should be scheduled. The Government study has recommended that the Finance Committee and Select Board consider hiring a Human Resources Director, which Robin highly recommends having this person hired because it would be better for streamlining and new laws. Also an Information Officer has been recommended. Robin sees that this position could be a dual role, but the HR position is a priority.
12. The town has some savings coming: One student of the four has withdrawn for out of district schooling. Snow and Ice has had some savings and Monica's hours have gone down.
13. Todd Girard's new hire may need to have an increase in pay and hours. Robin would like to discuss this further at another meeting with more information. So, consider this an advisory.

14. Next meeting has not been scheduled.

Motion to adjourn: Doug Stepien and second by Peter Cooper. All in favor.
Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm