

# Town of Charlton

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Selectman's Meeting Room

Date: October 12, 2016

Meeting came to order at 6:30pm

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

1. Approval of Meeting minutes from Sept. 29, 2016 meeting – Motion to accept by: Peter Cooper, Second by Doug Stepien
2. Jerry Foscett– Highway Department: The Highway Department is responsible for maintaining 140 miles of road within the town, 12.2 miles of private roads and several of the town building parking lots. Mr. Foscett is looking for a Dump Truck with plow, One Ton Truck with plow and a Torwel Sanding Unit. The majority of the equipment is older equipment that is being used and because of this, the age of the equipment is becoming a public safety issue – especially should this equipment break during a snow storm. The Department does have a much older vehicle that is still in use, but it is only a backup and is not completely reliable. The Department has worked very hard to maintain the roads with the older equipment, but the age has become a reliability issue and public safety issue.
3. Chief Cloutier – Fire Department: Chief Cloutier is looking to refurbish Engine #2. This equipment had been sitting in one of the houses with consistent standing water. There is now surface rust on the vehicle and the cabinetry. The chief would like to get more life out of the equipment. The pump was just replaced and the engine is strong, his believe is that with the refurbishment, there can be at least another 10 years of operation. The cost is \$60,000. In comparison, a new vehicle would be \$463,000. The fix will certainly be more cost effective. Chief Cloutier is also looking to replace Ambulance #1 instead of #3 as previously decided. Ambulance #1 seems to be having more issues and would like to be rid of it. Also, the need to fix Ambulance #3 which would be a remount is about \$16,000 as opposed to a completely new vehicle for \$226,000 – the \$16,000 is again more cost effective.

New Hires have been going well, currently have a total of 5 and has made a big difference in the schedule and money coming back into the town. The Chief is looking to make more offers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of December.

4. **Article 1:** The Appropriation of the funds for unpaid bills of a prior fiscal year: Moved to postpone indefinitely. Motion to accept by Hank Camosse, second by Peter Cooper – Unanimous decision.
5. **Article 2:** Inter/intradepartmental transfers and /or appropriations for FY2017 Budget: This also includes the new Human Resources Director position. The funding would be \$50,000 from Fire, \$1,000 from expenses and \$17,000 from the Assistant Treasurer whose hours have been reduced. This position is also classified as a Level 8. Tasks will be pulled from other people who already handle some of those tasks. The recent government study also acknowledged that too many people had too many hats which are a huge liability for the town. The study also wanted a performance evaluation plan and to work with boards and commissions. Board of Selectman will appoint the Authority that the HR Director will report to.

Youth Services: Increase due to MGL change in salaried employees (a new law). This will increase the Library Asst. Director 5 additional hours to a full 40 hour work week with an increase of \$3,007.

Police Salary: Chief Pervier is retiring and his payout will be \$20,653 as well as a \$10,000 overlay for the interim chief for training etc.

Water/Sewer – Rebuilding of systems for the Consecutive Order System. Looking at continuing to have Southbridge supply the water, but for Charlton to run its' own system (Grant to do this). The department is also looking to hire an Administrative Assistant which was lost. There is a lot of moving parts within the request for the total of \$103,000. The Collector and the Assistant Collector position are to backfill and looking to increase the salary to \$18,125. The Cable Coordinator is adjusted to #1,365. Motion to accept by Doug Stepien and second by Peter Cooper – Unanimous decision.

6. **Article 3:** Capital Items and Related Contracts: Currently waiting on the certification of the Free Cash approval. The vote may need to be separated into two because of the Free Cash or Stabilization. Motion to accept by Doug Stepien and second by Peter Cooper. If free cash is certified before town meeting, we will use Free Cash, otherwise use Stabilization.
7. **Article 4:** Transfer to/from Stabilization Funds: Motion by Hank Camosse, second by Dan Prouty – Unanimous decision.
8. **Article 5:** Borrowing Authorization Reduction: Authorized and Unissued – motion to accept by Peter Cooper and second by Doug Stepien. Unanimous decision.
9. **Article 6:** Amendment to town personnel by-law classification Plan (Human Resources Director) this is the Grade 8. Motion to accept by Hank Camosse and second by Dan Prouty- Unanimous decision.
10. **Article 7:** Acceptance of the “Stretch Energy Code”: aka Green Communities. This only applies to new construction and most of the items in the code are already in use under the regular building codes. Motion to have town vote to adopt the Stretch Energy Code which the town is already paying for through the electric bill anyway and we should try to get something out of it, we are leaving money on the table if we don't. This code will also create efficiencies in the schools as well. Motion to accept by Doug Stepien – No second motion.
11. **Article 8:** Lease of land police station; 85 Masonic Home Rd for telecommunications tower and facilities. This will provide the town \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year in revenue. Motion to accept by Doug Stepien, second by Hank Camosse – Unanimous decision.
12. Motion to remove Article 9, Article 10, Article 11 and Article 13 from Finance Committee – Motion to accept by Peter Cooper and second by Doug Stepien.
13. **Article 12:** Authorize the development of a Municipal Gas Department: Motion to accept by Hank Camosse and second by Doug Stepien. Let the record reflect that Dan Prouty had abstained from voting.
14. Coming to Finance Committee soon: A gas company would like to build in Charlton. Tentatively they will schedule an Open House on November 7<sup>th</sup> to introduce themselves to the town.
15. Motion to adjourn by Doug Stepien and second by Hank Camosse. Meeting concluded at 7:59pm.