

## **Town of Charlton**

### **Finance Committee Minutes**

Town Hall - 37 Main St., Charlton, MA

Date: April 5, 2023, at 6:30pm

Minutes taken by: Jaclyn Bonner, Clerk

**Attendees:** Henry Camosse Jr.-Chairman, Kristin Kustigian - Vice Chair, Jason Julian, Ruth Beringer, Kristen Lemire, Keith Johnson

**Absent:** Mike Jacobs

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

**Board of Selectmen:** Chairman – William Borowski, Vice-Chairman – Patsy Rydlak, Members – Stephen Koronis

#### **1. Call Meeting to order at time.**

The meeting was called to order by Hank Camosse at 6:30 P.M on Wednesday April 05, 2023.

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

Motion to accept the minutes of March 22, 2023, was made by Kristin Kustigian and seconded by Kristen Lemire with one edit from Jason Julian. Keith Johnson abstains due to absence. Minutes approved by Hank Camosse Jr., Jason Julian, and Kristin Kustigian, Kristen Lemire and Ruth Beringer.

#### **3. Discussion on Proposed Budget Alternatives**

- a. Hank states that we have three budget alternatives to discuss. Option #1 includes the budget with Dudley Charlton's original ask of \$2.1. Option #2 includes a budget with school expenses at \$1.7. Option #3 includes the same \$1.7 for DCRS along with additional staffing for town hall.
- b. Hank states that the Finance Committee came into the meeting planning to support option #2 which includes \$1.7 for the school along with a new land-use position and 2 new firefighters.

- c. Hank responding to a comment from Bill Borrowowski who suggest that we bump the school number up to \$1.8 and cut any additional staff to town hall. Hank feels that the fire department is severely understaffed. The overtime budget is already over for FY23 – if they don't get new bodies this will continue. Hank continues that new growth for FY24 did not come in as high as we might have liked and adding the new land use position could help drive additional growth through ease of service.
- d. Kristin Kustigian stating that the town left \$600,779 in free cash on the table from FY22 to FY23. This year we are talking about using \$300,000 to pay for the feasibility study at Shepherd Hill with the other half of the funds coming from ARPA. Kristin would like to know if the remainder of last year's money is still sitting in free cash. Andrew responded that \$150,000 of the \$300,00 will be used for the fire department feasibility study; the remainder would typically be used for snow and ice.
- e. Kristin Kustigian stated the Chapter 70 state funding to DCRSD has decreased by 16% over the past 15 years.
- f. Hank asked Bill why he believes the school will need more money next year. Bill responds that we are currently allocating all our new growth to the schools, and we need to decide what will be the priority.
- g. Bill suggests that we vote to take away all stipends that were assigned last year to boards and committees.
- h. Hank states that he is in favor of a new school over the course of the next 3 – 4 years.
- i. Hank responded to Bill – that he would go to \$1.9. In response the town administrator presents a budget including cuts that would bring the school's number up to \$1.9. The Finance director has since presented a different budget with updated numbers from the state.
- j. Hank entertains a motion to the Finance Committee to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectman to cut all stipends from elected boards and committees. The motion is made by Jason Julian and seconded by Keith Johnson. The motion to make this recommendation to the Selectman is approved by Henry Camosse Jr.-Chairman, Kristin Kustigian - Vice Chair, Jason Julian, Ruth Beringer, Kristen Lemire, and Keith Johnson.
- k. Jason asks if he feels we will spend through the reserve fund if we take this action. Will we have money to cover emergency transfer requests in the future; have we

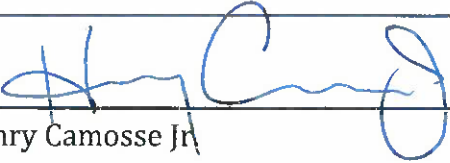
overspent? Hank responded that with the new firefighters he believes that overtime will go down.

- l. Hank stated that he would like to see us keep contributing to OPEB.
- m. Hank stated that the two committees agree on \$1.9 for the schools along with two new firefighters.
- n. Kristin Kustigian asking if our free cash numbers will be as high as last year. Ashley responded that last year was an anomaly and we will not see that number again.

#### **4. Adjourn Meeting**

Motion to adjourn at 7:22 PM was made by Keith Johnson and seconded by Kristin Kustigian. Motion approved by Henry Camosse Jr.-Chairman, Kristin Kustigian - Vice Chair, Jason Julian, Ruth Beringer, Keith Johnson, and Kristen Lemire. The meeting is adjourned.

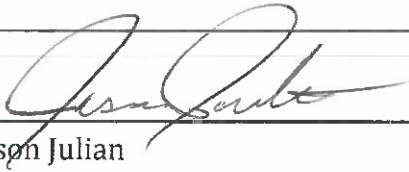
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Henry Camosse Jr

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X \_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Johnson

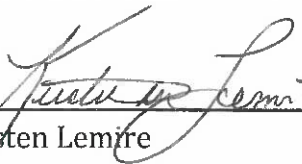
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Jason Julian



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Kristin Kustigian

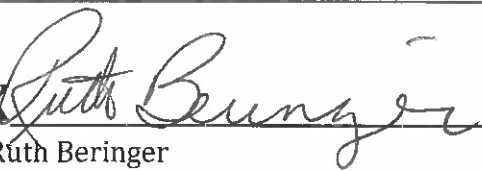
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X   
Kristen Lemire

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X \_\_\_\_\_  
Mike Jacobs

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X   
Ruth Beringer

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X \_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate