

Meeting Minutes
Shelburne Finance Committee January 4, 2024, 3:30 PM

Members Attending: Don Porter, Chair; Ken Albert; Jeff Carr; Lee Suskin
Other attendees: Luce Hillman (representing the Selectboard), Matt Lawless (Town Manager), Aaron DeNamur, (Planner) and Peter Frankenburg, (Finance Director).

Approval of Minutes of meeting of Dec 13, 2023.

Motion made by Lee Suskin, seconded by Jeff Carr. Approved unanimously

CBC coordination Updates:

--Aaron DeNamur outlined the Shelburne Planning Commission upcoming neighborhood meetings. They will take place starting the end of Jan and go into early February. The Planning Committee generated a list of questions to be presented at these meeting for public feedback. There will also be 2 listening sessions with the consultants. Lee Suskin expressed that for meeting success a very good facilitator is a must. Aaron indicated that they are very confident in the 30 year experienced person they have selected.

-Lee Suskin;

Housing Committee. At this point the committee is concentrating on setting the priorities for going forward.

The Library Committee has a good grasp on their needs and may be coming forward with items that did not make it into the overall initial build budget.

-Ken Albert: Bike and Paths Committee. The committee is quite far along on their top path projects and working on scheduling and coordination with funding opportunities. Don Porter observed that given the current budget without careful planning, paths could take all of a given Capital budget. Jeff Carr suggested an examination of the Path Committee individual plans to best sync the variety of projects into the spectrum of available funds.

-Town-School:

Matt Lawless (speaking for himself and Joan Lenex) on their communication with Champlain Valley School District Officers. There is the predictable 10% cost curve increase limit from the state. But the concern is that 5 years out the level of state funding is uncertain,. And a large degree of federal funding is going away and Town hires are dependent on this funding. Therefore, the concern...how to fit funding demands into the state formula going forward.

Review and discussion of the FY 2024-2025 Capital Improvement plan:

An outline of the proposed 5 year Capital plan was presented by Matt Lawless. Matt indicated the coming year figure is close to the Selectboard goal. The date for formal Selectboard adoption in January 23rd. Overall it is felt that \$2 million/year of capitol expenditures is felt to be an affordable rate for the town. Lee Suskin suggested that for presentation to the wider

public the plan need more of a narrative. Discussion followed by the Committee members that this approach made sense.

Jeff Carr suggested that we make it clear that the capital items are long-term projects separate from the items in the expense budget.

Don Porter next presented a detailed spread-sheet based CIP for 2025-2030. The presentation covered the Town items as well as the Water and Waste Water enterprise funds and their outlook over the 5 year time period. The plan details the funding sources (LOT payments, ARPA funds, Property Tax, Bonding) and where they come into play, for each item. It was recognized that this was a critical building block document, for use by the committee and Town staff. The large wastewater project was positioned to begin in 2025 and spread over 2 years, with the assumption that 20% would be funded by outside financing and the town portion would be eligible for 2% financing.

Public reaction to the financing activity to date? Per Luce Hillman, the Selectboard received questions on the proposed increase in Natural Resources figure. In the discussion that followed it was felt that a "round" figure, perhaps 2x the past year's \$50,000 might be more understandable. Lee Suskin suggested that it's important to properly articulate the use of the fund. For most past land acquisitions, the Town portion of the overall purchase fee constituted a small percentage that facilitated and leveraged the overall purchase and conservation easement in the case of working farms.

An updated chart showing Shelburne's relatively favorable tax rate vs the rate in the other Chittenden County towns has been prepared. It was suggested this might be useful for presenting at the March Town meeting.

The Meeting was adjourned a few minutes after 5PM. Motion by Albert, Seconded by Carr. Approved by all.

Submitted By Kenneth Albert