

## MEETING MINUTES

Town of Heath  
Finance Committee  
January 30, 2018

Called to order at 7:02 p.m. by Chair Ned Wolf with Gloria Fisher, Jan Carr present. Kathy joined us at 7:05.  
Absent: Jeff Simmons.

**Agenda** – The agenda was reviewed with a change to join the Selectboard (SB) for school discussion.

### **Minutes**

Motion made by Kathy to accept 12/18 minutes as amended, Jan seconded. Motion passed unanimously.  
Motion made by Jan to accept 1/23 minutes as amended, Gloria seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Ned will send out an email ascertaining everyone's availability for stipend discussion on next Monday.

Gloria moved to adjourn the FinCom meeting after meeting with Selectboard. Kathy seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Joined the SB at 7:30.

### **School Budget**

*Regionalization*- Budge and Bob Gruen will work on Regionalization letter.

*Budget* is kept to a 1% increase.

-.38% decrease in assessment for Heath.

Heath's Minimum contribution, determined by Commonwealth (wealth factor, income...) is down .80%.

*Preschool Funding - \$15,000.00 under Article 3.* How best to utilize it? Both districts offer 3 mornings for 3 - yr olds and four days for 4-year-olds. Overall is \$11,469.00 to Hawlemont/BSE. We don't not know why parents send or don't send their children. We could choose to have a Hawlemont revolving account. Hawlemont may roll all preschoolers into their budget. If parents want more hours, the SB needs to be notified for funding for the following year. Sandy Gaffney, bookkeeper for Mohawk District, will bill Kara in May.

Regionalization is a part of the Community Compact Grant. Possibly Charlemont and Hawley could apply with Heath.

Cleanest withdrawal from Mohawk District is for Heath to have NO capital debt. (approx. \$80,000)  
Budge will check on "other retirement benefits costs." Is OPEB considered "debt?"

### **Broadband Update**

**Heath's Dashboard is up on WG&E site.** Kara will pass on URL. Current date of completion is 7/19.  
Pretty much level funded.

### **Fire Department Budget**

Nick Anzuoni, Colrain Fire Chief, met with SB and FinCom

Colrain FF's get paid hourly for calls (\$16.00 per hour) vs Heath's point system. True volunteer departments are becoming extinct. Heath's call volume was up last year to just over 100. Calls are generally short duration (medical, chimney fires). Heath could retroactively switch to Colrain system starting 1/1/18. Further discussion will be ongoing with Nick re shared services.

Protective gear increase -\$1,735 spent this year. Personal protective replacement went up but so far this year only \$391.00 has been spent. We were supposed to get two sets of gear every year to keep current. Gear is only

good for ten years. Bottles time out in fifteen years. Best to do a three-year average. Also, 2 EMT trainings per year are included.

Town pays for trainings *and* books. MA law requires firefighters train for FF1 and FF2 *standards*. Certification is optional. Does Colrain cap number of responders? It's a balance. Colrain has volunteer paramedics and EMT's.

Heath's Compressor is old. New replacement is \$25,000 - \$28,000. There are good used ones that have been replaced by grants for about \$7,000. A logical sequence for our last grant is to write one for a new compressor. We don't want one that is too big as it is not efficient. Bottles can be filled in Colrain station for now.

1970's Engine #2 is manual, non-synchronized – few Heath FF's are able to drive it. Engines #1 and #3 are newer. It was suggested that Engine 2 should be taken out of service. We do not need a third truck for our manpower and size of Heath. SB voted to remove old #2.

All budget hearings are settled – Kara will send schedule to Ned.

The FinCom meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Jan Carr