

Minutes of the Heath Finance Committee
March 4, 2025 at 6
Municipal Building

Present: Dena Briggs (Chair), Alice Wozniak, Bob McGahan, Wendy Whalen, and Ned Wolf
meeting jointly with the Select Board

Dena called the meeting to order at 6:11.

Fire Department

Colrain and Heath Fire Chief Nick Anzuoni submitted a proposed \$1000 increase in the Fire Department expense line. It reflects a potential increase in heating and electrical costs. A dehumidifier will run daily from April to September.

Highway Department

Highway Department Superintendent Tyson Howard's proposed budget includes the following increases: \$9,330 for Highway Materials; \$2,000 for Vehicle, Gas, and Oil; \$2,000 for Winter Equip. Maint./Repair; \$5,000 for Winter Salt/Sand and Other; and \$18,562 for Salary Winter Temp. Help.

The Superintendent's first capital request is as follows: 2024 F-550 with an estimated total cost of \$110,927. The criteria is marked as 'emergency.' It would replace the 2016 Dodge which has so far this year cost \$5,500. Tyson said that it needs \$8K - \$12K to get it functional.

The second capital request is for road repair projects with a total cost of \$1,413,918.

Robyn said she will get to us more information on chapter 90 funds including how much we have and what it can be used for.

Robyn will send more information on the coming costs of the new salt shed.

A pressure tank at the highway garage has failed. New door seals are needed to reduce the cost of heat.

A bigger deck has to be built at the transfer station to accommodate the new dumpsters.

Library

Kate Barrows said that the trustees propose an hourly increase for the Library Substitute. With such an increase they would still be within their FY25 budget and would match other library

substitute rates. The proposed \$503 increase in operating expenses meets the spending requirement for getting state aid.

Police Department

Police Chief John McDonough's proposed FY26 budget is the same as last year's. Dena asked whether more hours are needed. John said that with more hours they could provide more service.

Robyn said that on March 18th officials from Mohawk will come to report on the sustainability study.

A follow-up with the Highway Department budget is needed.

The FinCom left the cafeteria to reconvene in the atrium.

Members read the minutes of the February 4th meeting. Dena moved that the minutes be approved as written. Bob seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Members discussed how much the COLA should be for Heath salary and hourly wage employees.

Action Taken *Dena moved that we recommend a 3% COLA for Heath salary and hourly employees. Wendy seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.*

Annual Report

Members read Ned's draft of the Annual Report of the Heath Finance Committee 2024. They recommended the following amendments:

1. Strike the word 'were' from the second sentence, fourth paragraph.
2. Wherever the word 'approved' appears, replace it with the word 'recommended.'
3. Replace '4' by the word 'four' in the second to last paragraph.

Action Taken *Alice moved that the Annual Report of the Heath Finance Committee 2024 be sent to Hilma after Ned has made the above changes. Bob seconded the motion. The motion passed with four ayes and one abstain.*

**Dates of Next Meetings: March 18th at 6 PM, report on MTRSD sustainability
March 25th at 6 PM**

Wendy moved that the meeting be adjourned at 9:06. Bob seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf

