

Finance Committee Notes
Dec 13th, 2023
Town Offices, 4:30 p.m.

Ginger called the to order at 4:35 p.m.

Present: Ginger Robinson, Nate Messer, Pam Brown

Nate made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting on May 31st 2023. Ginger seconded. Pam abstained as she was not on the board at the time. All in favor.

Ginger introduced the new Finance Committee member, Pam Brown. Pam talked about her background. The Finance Committee talked through general town updates and staffing. Ginger asked if there were any desired changes to the Budget Request forms or the process the Committee used to collect proposed budgets. There was no feedback and it was determined to use the same process as last year.

Finance Committee reviewed a set of building repair and improvements recommendations presented by the Building Needs committee. There was discussion about whether these improvements should be budgeted by the Finance Committee and how to prioritize them. There were several considerations discussed including:

- What to do with the old police department building.
- Whether or not it made sense to do a tour of the buildings to better assess the priority.
- Were all buildings required for the town or should there be deeper discussion about consolidating some of the town buildings.

The conclusion was the Finance Committee would schedule a time to tour the buildings and discuss the overall building needs with the Selectboard at a future date.

The Finance Committee then reviewed updated tax rates for Leyden. No significant questions or comments.

Ginger gave an update on the Bernardston police agreement. There were no significant questions or comments, though Ginger did point out the difficulty the Bernardston police department has had with hiring and retention. There has been difficulty finding officers that meet the new POST standards.

The Finance Committee then reviewed the Assessment of the GMRSD (Gill-Montague Regional School District) and PVRSD (Pioneer Valley Regional School District) merger. The Assessment detailed possible expenses for each town based on the various possible configurations. The Finance Committee discussed the growing costs of the school system to Leyden and the

possibility of leaving the district. To do so, it was determined that a subcommittee should be established to analyze this further if the Selectboard approves.

Paul made a motion to discuss with the Selectboard to about establishing a subcommittee to discuss the possible costs of leaving the school district. Nate seconded the motion. All in favor.

Paul made a motion to adjourn at 6:14. Ginger seconded. All in favor.