

## FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

Peru Community Center

3 East Main Rd. Peru MA

Wednesday, March 1, 2023 @ 6:00 PM

- Call to order
- Roll call
  - Present: Paul Hickling, Jesse Pelke, Doug Haskins, Sam Haupt, Darryl Darby
- State recording status
  - Recorded by community member Kimberly Wetherell
- Pledge of allegiance to flag
- Review and approved meeting minutes from February 9, 2023
- Budget requests for 2024
  - Town Clerk Request
    - Increase assistant town clerk funding due to increase in minimum wage
  - Animal Control
    - Question of salary adjustments and ACO vehicle
    - Idea of using cruiser being retired
  - Police Department Budget Request
    - New police cruiser will be available in summer 2023
    - Chief of Police requested his position to be increased to 40 hours a week, adding 10 hours. Stated that using comp time was not sustainable
      - Would increase from \$44,187 to \$67,500
    - Sidearms

- Budget request of \$2000 to replace 6 firearms and includes trade in of existing firearms
- Discussed need to re-roof police garage
  - Free cash items
  - Still getting more estimates
- Library
  - Increase of \$372
  - Discussion of 2019 study
  - Replacement v. salvage; building owned by Church
- Peru Building Department and Fire Dept
  - Permit Eyes- \$8800 for start up cost with an annual cost of \$4250 (due at start up); discussion of permit cost (10%)
  - Discussion of Fire Chief's salary
    - Option of \$5000 + fees
  - Fire Tanker
    - \$4920 for new tires—free cash item
  - New rescue vehicle
    - Need 3 bids
  - Fire Truck
    - Discussed new brakes for \$6900 at Freightliner—not sure if that will fix problem
- School Committee
  - Discussion of Governor's budget; final budget approved March 9
  - Tax Assessment; previous year \$883,912; next year \$907,139

- 85 children attend Central Berkshire School District from Peru
- Input from public
  - Kimberly Wetherell expressed her concern about attendance of the Finance Committee by town selectmen—stating she felt like it was a conflict of interest
    - Bruce Cullet stated that he was attending as the Police Chief to discuss the police budget
    - Verne Leach stated that he was attending as the Animal Control Officer to discuss the ACO budget
  - Former Highway Department Dale Weeks expressed concern about buying new equipment, stating that he spent years with older vehicles/equipment
  - Council on Aging
    - Question about why Council On Aging account appeared to be overdrawn
    - Issue of whether \$ can be collected for community members who are 55 or 60+
- Next meeting scheduled for March 15, 2023 at 6pm. Committee approved making a joint Selectman/Finance Committee meeting.
- Adjourned at 8:13pm

Meeting minutes submitted by Chairperson Paul Hickling and approved by the Finance Committee