

## Chester Finance Committee Meeting

3/27/25 COA room

In Attendance: Sr.Judith Dalesandro, Florence Bolduc, Brian Fogue, Mary Ann Pease, Don Humason, BOS Rep, Bob Daley, Joe Ryan and Nick Chiusano

Guests: Craig Gauthier

Meeting called to order by Brian at 5:32

#1) Minutes from the 3/13 meeting were reviewed. Brian made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Sr.Judith 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous. Brian to sign and give it to Terry.

#2) Brian stated that Free Cash is actually about \$160,000 not his previously mentioned lower #.

#3) Library 6:00 P.M. Tammy Merenda and Karen Savoy. Mary Ann recused herself from Fin Com and contributed to Library discussion as she is part of the Trustees of Hamilton Memorial Library.

Mary Ann did introductions to the Fin Com and stated the mandatory 2 ½ increase that is mandated by the Board of Library Commissioners for the library to get state aid. Andy Myers included this in every annual budget.

Tammy informed Fin Com of the \$10,000 grant she received to promote the library for people of all abilities. She wants to make the library a space for everyone in the community. Tammy told those present about her work history, education etc.

She told Fin Com about what the library can offer such as museum passes, computer usage, meeting space, the mineral collection etc.

The library is going to participate when HCDC has their open house for the Chester Commons. CWMars was explained as a tool for resource sharing.

Hand outs were given showing statistics for a week of library activity, surrounding town salaries, and circulation.

The library budget was increased on the expense line by the mandatory 2 ½ % and the salary was increased to bring the library staff up to a living wage and closer to what the neighboring libraries are paying. MaryAnn noted this was always something that had been done trying to get a handle on what neighboring towns are paying for certain positions.

#4) Brian stated that \$200,581 needs to be cut from the budget at this point.  
Brian updated the financial spread sheet and was comfortable with a 3% Cola.

#5) The Part-time H/R person pay could be taken out of Free Cash for this year but would need to be included in budget for FY 26.

#6) FinCom started to review the entire budget line by line.  
The Town Council Budget has already been reduced by \$13,000.  
Discussion about how many people need to be on the assessor's board. \$1,854 was deleted, still need to find \$185,727 to cut. Need to verify # that need to be on board.

#7) Discussion about the large increase for the Highway Salary Account. It was stated that 5% was a raise for Chipper from \$38 to \$40 per hour. The other \$\$\$ was to increase the part time worker. Further discussion of this line item is necessary.

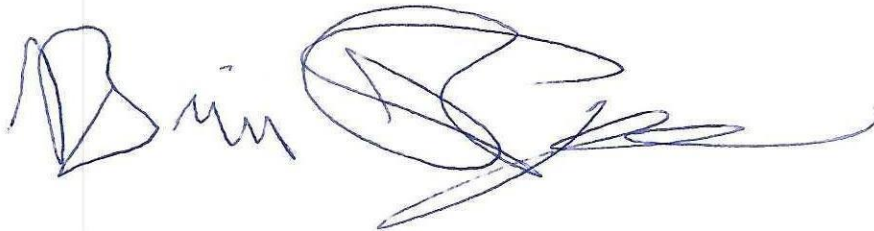
#8) Bob Daley was in favor of a 3% Cola for everyone across the board.

#9) Brian stated that Insurance, Retirement numbers need to be updated and reviewed further. He also stated that perhaps the Transfer station could operate on an enterprise fund system.

#10) meeting was adjourned at 8PM.

Next Meeting scheduled for 4/3/25 at 5:30 in the COA

Respectfully Submitted,  
Mary Ann Pease

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mary Ann Pease', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.