

Chester Finance Committee Meeting

4/30/2026 at the Fire Department

In Attendance: Sr. Judith Dalesandro, Florence Bolduc, Mary Ann Pease, Joe Ryan, Bob Daley and Jon Williams

Guests: Brian Forgue, Andrew Alward

Meeting called to order by Flo at 5:30.

4/23/26 meeting minutes were reviewed, Bob made a motion to accept as written. Joe 2nd. All in favor. Flo signed minutes and gave to Andrew to forward to Town Clerk.

Bob asked about the COA and wanted to review what was decided. COA will be level funded with the director getting 3% COLA. Any extra funding that is necessary can be taken out of the funds allocated to the town by the state.

Bob also inquired about the back up #'s for the number of calls the police respond to. Flo will follow up with the chief.

Jon asked what the goal of tonight's meeting was. Flo stated we are tasked with the reduction of the \$38,000 ish deficit with the current budget numbers. Jon stated we have spent approximately 14 hours vetting the budget.

He stated the top 10 managed accounts are Accountant, Assessors, Tax Collector, Highway, Library, Fire and Police, ~~Assessors~~, Selectboard and Town Hall. TOWN CLERK

The present budget was reviewed and Flo indicated what changes she had made to reduce the \$38,000 deficit down.

Fire Chief down to 5% increase. Bob motioned that we honor what we stated last year to bring the fire chief salary up over the coming years. Salary for chief was placed at \$14,875.

The Building Inspector received the 5% increase.

The Aed's were taken out of the Fire Department Budget.

Fuel was pumped from the Fire Station on Bromley and is stored at main fire station for future use. Fuel account for Fire Department reduced.

Reduce the assessor principal down by \$4,081 as the new employee won't start till after start of new fiscal year. Reduce the hours down not the rate.

Board of Health. Open item waiting to hear from Liz on salary account and clerk line item.

Possible reduction of Town Hall expense account.

Education may go down depending on VOC enrollment.

The rural aid increase did not pass with the state.

Reduce the Fin Com reserve fund by \$2,000 to \$15,000

More items for reduction will be reviewed at next meeting.

Bob asked about drug testing and if this was included in the highway budget.

Andew stated they only do Corri checks.

Other items discussed.

Overrides on budgets,

Plumping inspection fees raised to put more \$\$ in town account.

Ask Craig Gauthier to come to next meeting to discuss the BOS stipend.

Ask the Recreation Committee to come to explain their budget, many questions on funding.

Next Meeting Thursday, May 7th at 5:30 at Fire House

Meeting Adjourned 7:30

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ann Pease

Elmer A. Beden

5/7/26