



Town of Shelburne, Vermont

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 4, 2021

4:00 P.M.

Via Zoom

The remote meeting was called to order at 4:05 P.M. Roll call was taken.

Present: Chair Don Porter, Tom Denenberg, Roz Graham, Ken Albert; also, Town Manager Lee Krohn.

By consensus as a 'consent agenda', the meeting agenda and the minutes of February 18, 2021 were approved unanimously, noting that Tim Williams was also present remotely.

There was no public comment.

Selectboard matters and the 'changing of the guard' with two members was noted.

Regarding the Fire/Rescue bond now that the vote was affirmative: proposals from two area banks are in hand, both of which we've worked before. Neither has a prepayment penalty. Timing of a closing and construction of shared infrastructure are both uncertain as of yet, and depend upon Healthy Living's timing. The committee will be kept informed as matters progress.

With property tax revenues in relatively good shape to date (although the next installment is due on March 15), non-property tax revenues were reviewed to gain a fuller picture of overall revenues. Deeds and recordings are up \$57,000 due to a 'hot' real estate market; but passports are down \$16,000 due to a 'pause' on handling passport applications due to COVID. Similarly, vital record revenues are down, but grants to help cover election expenses are up. In PD, judicial fees/fines are down significantly, as traffic stops and enforcement declined dramatically due to COVID. Dispatch contracts (\$285,000 in revenue) are on track as anticipated. Planning/Zoning fees are down, although there has still been a fair amount of activity in that arena. Parks/Recreation revenue is down significantly, but so are corresponding expenses, with so many programs cancelled this past year due to COVID. Current Use revenue from the State is over budget right now (actual \$144,000; budgeted was \$130,000). Otherwise, non-property tax revenues such as State aid for highways and other matters appear stable and on track.

Audit: discussion postponed for now. Process went smoothly overall with the new firm. Overall expenses were over \$1M less than projected, due to collective efforts to hold these in check. Most budget deferrals remain in effect for this fiscal year, pending March property tax receipts. The FC may wish to update the Selectboard on its activities, perhaps as a part of the audit review/discussion, which will also include strategies to implement auditor recommendations.

Discussion followed on a desire for a long-term capital investment plan, likely as part of an overall asset management program. Denenberg described a matrix used by the Museum to track and plan for these; perhaps a similar approach would be helpful for the Town. Aside from existing facilities and needs, we will be considering in the foreseeable future significant expenses for stormwater management, the wastewater treatment plant consolidation, and a possible new Fire/Rescue station.

Subgroup reports:

Discussion ensued with Graham over a possible new survey to gauge current issues, concerns, and/or strategies for success in the local economy. The challenge of getting back to old routines, if even possible, might be a part. Are there other actions the Town can take to help? Krohn suggested that the interim zoning adopted last year allowing outdoor business activities might well need to be extended or even expanded in scope.

Economic development: Denenberg described efforts underway to assist consultant David Leckey, as well as regarding linkages between major players, and resources that UVM may have to help. Graham and Krohn participated in a recent webinar by “Hello Burlington”, intended to help businesses prepare for reopening; they were very clear that Shelburne wishes to be part of this ongoing conversation and initiative. Along those lines, the State’s “Forever Green” program of online concerts was discussed, and whether that could be expanded to other aspects of the economy.

Committee members who had not yet reported out were each asked to return with concrete suggestions for tangible actions that could be taken in each of their sub-group areas.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 5:07 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Krohn.