**Lenox Finance Committee Meeting Minutes.**

Date: November 1, 2023

Members Present: Kristine Cass (KC), Blaise Gregory (BG), Mindi Morin (MM)

Guests: Chris Ketchen (CK), William Gopp (WG)

Absent: Josh Levin (JL)

Meeting called to order at 5pm

KC motioned to approve minutes from July 12th, 2nd by Blaise and all in favor.

CK let us know budget templates will be out this Friday with strong reserves and a 5% levy. It was mentioned the only weakness in our local revenue has been with excise taxes. Rooms tax continues to increase along with meals tax. GE settlement of $26M will be coming to the town and effective when they certify free cash next year, July. CK gave us an overview of debt limits, the plan for the GE settlement and that procedure and discussed the cost of a potential new school. KC asked if we expected to see large increase in any budget and CK mentioned the library and community center, with wages being that driver to retain and compensate appropriately. KC asked if it was felt that a particular committee would benefit from working with the finance committee. CK suggested we work with the town, community center and the library. KC asked how many people are employed by the town and it is about 46. CK shared the shared service we previously had with Lee is being terminated, therefore a plan that should be put in place.

CK distributed three articles for us to review. CK and WG walked us through article 2, the towns plan for new pavers and construction throughout the towns sidewalks. WG walked us through the options and critical path for the sewage line replacement followed by the new sidewalks. This would start 2024 spring, break in the summer and repaving to start in the fall. Sidewalks will also be realigned for better sightlines of ongoing traffic. The intent would be to borrow for the project and issue notes that would be paid over the next 3-5 years through free cash.

WG walked us through Housatonic street and the plan to deal with the drainage issues and adding a sidewalk from east through to Lenox Dale. This would be a spring 2024 project!

CK walked us through article 3 and in detail article 4 relative to the work Weston and Sampson will be doing relative to the rest of river cleanup.

KC asked when they are planning the town meeting and it will be most likely November 30, 2023.

CK let us know of upcoming meetings for these articles that will be on the 14th at 7pm or 15th before the selectboard meeting, and last time to approve the articles will need to be on the 16th.

MM motioned to approve the articles this evening, KC reviewed all, and all approved.

KC discussed we divvy up committees.

MM to send email to the school finance committee to initiate a meeting, KC will reach out to library, BG will reach out to community center.

Next meeting scheduled for December 6th at 5pm.

Meeting adjourned at 5:55pm

Respectively Submitted,

Mindi Morin