

**FINANCE COMMITTEE
TOWN OF CONWAY, MA
DRAFT MINUTES
Jan. 14, 2008
7:00 PM, Town Office**

Present: Roy Cohen, Amy Louise Pfeffer, Jim Bosman, John Pitzi, Tanya Campbell

Review of Minutes of 11/19/07 and 01/07/08 Meetings – Minutes were approved as submitted.

Agenda for Next Meeting – Review of the report John got from Bob Baker on highway spending. Next meeting will be 1/28/08 at 7 pm.

Wage increase – There is some wage data available on the FRCOG website.

Met with Select Board on Personnel Committee at 7:30 pm for budget hearings

Assessors – They are adding two hours to the weekly wage budget for training of a new assessor because Totman is not going to run for office again this year. Year-to-date labor expense is low due to the time being spent on the reval. Normal projects are pushed off to later in the year. Changed postage from \$25 to \$50. ZBA – re-distributed budget request dollars between accounts.

Side note – The town accountant is named Chris Martin.

Wage increase – Comments from the SB: In past years serious discussions about level funding occurred, impacting the annual wage adjustment; having a reference point would make the decision transparent; SB counterpoints: do other towns use such reference points? If were tied to a reference point, what happens when the squeeze is on? Then you still have to make a judgment as to how serious the squeeze is and how that should be taken into consideration. Consensus/discussion is fairer than strict formula. Possible reference points for wage increase” FRCOG, other towns, SS increases, what the teachers get. Jack indicated that prop 2 1/2 would indicate a 2.5% annual increase.

Point to Ponder – Roy indicates that a taxpayer has asked why not eliminate all stipends for elected town officials?

Board of Health – (510) Last year, they added some salary dollars to the budget to add an additional person for some of the time at the transfer station. Now they feel that they need two people more of the time (all of the time). They see that they will be over budget in salary this year.

BOH has the option of using the escrow account at Franklin Regional Solid Waste to pay for hauling fees. Also this fund purchases paper for the town copiers and printers. They now have a target of \$6K to keep in that escrow account.

Comparison was made with attendants in area towns regarding hourly rate. Ranged from \$13-\$17/hour. Charlemont, Deerfield, Shelburne, Whately paying more, Heath about the same, Colrain less. \$900 added to the salary line item would be enough to adjust the wage rate.