

Minutes of the Meeting of the Heath Finance Committee
March 17, 2015

Time: 7:00 pm

Place: Assessors' Office, Sawyer Hall

Present: Ned Wolf, Jan Carr, Gloria Fisher, and Don Freeman (chair), and at 7:30 Kara Leistyna, Sheila Litchfield, Brian DeVriese, Bill Lattrell, and at 8 Ken Rocke of the School Committee

Absent: Jeff Simmons

Members read the minutes of the March 10th meeting. Gloria made a motion seconded by Ned to approve the minutes with corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

There was discussion of Wired West. Don spoke of having attended a meeting in Leverett where it appeared as though representatives of the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) were trying to exert control. Members determined that the 25% subscription rate reported for Heath on the Wired West website is 25% of the needed 161 households.

Members discussed the financial stresses on Heath voters. Jan mentioned the spike in electric rates. Concern was expressed over the projected enrollment figures of just 2 and 1 students in the 5th and 6th grades of the Heath School. Should the possible closing of a Mohawk District school be discussed at the Annual Town Meeting?

At 7:30 members adjourned to join the Selectboard meeting in progress. Don reported concerns heard from voters by Finance Committee members about present and possibly future financial stresses. Brian noted that many more subscribers in Heath will be needed for Heath to become a fiber-optic town.

Selectboard members deliberated about the appropriate grade for the new position of Assistant Assessor. They decided on the low point of grade 15. The position will be posted as 8 – 10 hours per week at about \$20 per hour. The figure for the salary line in Article 3 will be \$10,857.60.

Turning to the Police Budget, members discussed whether or not the \$1000 for policing the Heath Fair should have a separate salary line or be included in the Police Salary line. There was a consensus that it not have a separate line.

Ken Rocke helped members understand how the state has been aiding the Mohawk Regional School District. He offered advice on the most effective way for officials of towns within the district to interact on financial issues.

Finance Committee members expressed interest in attending the Northampton breakfast on March 21 organized by Senator Rosenberg for discussing matters of concern to town officials.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm. Respectfully submitted, Ned Wolf, Secretary

Respectfully