

**Amherst Finance Committee Meeting Minutes    Approved 2/15/2018**  
**Four Town Meeting**  
**Saturday, January 27, 2018, 9:00 am**  
**Amherst Pelham Regional Middle School Library**

**ATTENDANCE:** Joseph Jayne, Bernie Kubiak, Tim Neale, Sharon Povinelli, Janice Ratner (Vice-Chair), Anurag Sharma, Marylou Theilman (Chair).

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Sonia Aldrich, Co-Finance Director; Paul Bockelman, Town Manager; Michael Morris, Superintendent of Schools; Sean Mangano, Finance Director, Amherst Pelham Regional School System; Select Boards, School Committees, and Finance Committees of Amherst, Pelham, Leverett, and Shutesbury and others.

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 am.

**AGENDA AND DISCUSSION:**

Superintendent Morris and Finance Director Mangano gave a presentation on the regional budget, assessments, additions and reductions proposed to the school committee, capital and debt, and cost saving initiatives as described in the handout "Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Four Town Meeting, January 28, 2018". Rising health insurance costs, an increase of about \$1 million, are creating challenges for the budget. Lists of possible reductions were discussed.

An assessment method has not yet been agreed upon by the 4 towns. Several options with assessment costs were presented. The towns broke up into groups to discuss possible support for any of these options,

Amherst preferred the Tier 1 option (New Statutory Method, S10) but would accept the third option, Method 4, Tier 2 (Five Year Phase in - Current Statutory) but only for one year. New growth is expected to support a 3.5% increase in the assessment for this year, Fiscal Year 19, but that cannot be relied on for future years. Pelham and Shutesbury also liked Tier 1, but this was not acceptable to Leverett. It seemed that all could accept the third option. A request was made for information about phasing in the Tier 1 (S10) option.

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 am.

Janice Ratner, acting clerk

Handouts

"Amherst-Pelham Regional School District Four Town Meeting, January 28, 2018" packet

