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*By Linda Amerighi at 1:12 pm, Dec 14, 2023*

SHARON BOARD OF FINANCE

Draft until approved at the next regular meeting

A special meeting of the Sharon BOF was held December 13, 2023 at 2:00PM at the Town Hall. Present were regular members Bartram, Flaton, Duncan, Hecht, Robertson and Fowler; alternates Pastre and Clare; Kevin Chambers and Roger Preston of the State Department of Board of Education; approximately 14 residents, reporter Hawken and the secretary.

Chairman Bartram called the meeting to order at 2:01 with the introduction of the Board of Finance members.

Mr. Bartram explained why the Board requested this meeting with the State Department of Board of Education representatives – understanding the Minimum Budget Requirement (MBR) and questioning how can it be reduced. It was emphasized that Sharon has the highest per pupil cost in the state and the local Board of Education is willing to reduce their budget based on need. This is unfair to the tax payers who are being taxed on unneeded funds. Perhaps allocating funds in the Board of Education budget differently or removing capital projects from the budget completely would allow for a reduction. Mr. Cahill, Chairman of the Sharon Board of Education, pointed out that in past budgets, capital project funds have been allocated to “Building Repair” line items. Mr. Chambers stated that capital project funds should not be included in the MBR. Some of the criteria to meet in order to request an MBR deduction are: decrease in the amount of student population; efficiencies or closing the school – it was emphasized that Sharon met two of these but what denied a reduction in the MBR. Mr. Chambers emphasized that the MBR takes into account K-12 so the Region One budget basically gets the benefit of a reduction. It was agreed that Mr. Cahill will get expenditure figures for capital projects and building repairs going back to the 2017/2018 time frame together, send them to Mr. Chambers and State legal for review to see if any reduction can be made based on errors in reporting the expenditures. After reviewing the information, Mr. Chambers will get back to the Board of Finance/Board of Education. The Board thanked Mr. Chambers and Mr. Preston for this meeting.

With nothing further, Ms. Fowler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hecht, with all in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 2:51.

Respectfully submitted,

Tina Pitcher, Recording Secretary