

12.02.2026

Attention: **Mr Reynald Blanchud**

President Chamoson Commune

Chemin Neuf 9

Chamoson

1955

Dear Mr Blanchud

### **Chamoson Budget 2026**

At the Chamoson budget meeting held on 04.02.2026, we were told that the Finance committee had approved the budget. I am reliably informed that this untrue. In fact for the past two Finance committee meetings, Chamoson's head of Finance was not in attendance, preventing the committee from getting explanations to queries that they have.

During the question session after the budget presentation, the issue of the 16.3% increase in salaries was raised. The explanation provided, that this was to bring underpaid employees over the pension threshold, requires a more thorough explanation.

Since it is only those employees who fell below the threshold who are affected, the increase must be considerably more than the average reflected in the budget figures.

Salaries represent the single largest expense category in the budget. As a result this increase has a significant impact on Chamoson's finances.

Who made this decision? Why were the community as a whole consulted on the decision? It appears that the Finance committee were not consulted either. That it took an independent analysis to identify this increase and was not highlighted in the presentation begs a question about transparency.

Was this decision precipitated by action on the part of the affected employees or was motivated by management?

Prior to the budget meeting on 10.12.2025, I was informed that the issues that I had raised relating to the budget would not be brought up in the budget meeting because you believed that was not the the budget meeting was proper forum for these issues. Since this salary question was one of the issues that I had requested be addressed, it is clear that members of the community are concerned and that the questions raised in my previous correspondence should have been addressed.

During the meeting on 10.12.2025 you requested that the meeting vote on whether the ballot should be held in secret. The voters do cannot elect procedures that protect the integrity of a vote. That is the responsibility of the administration. If even a single voter feels that their vote is compromised by external influence, they have the right to protection, and the authorities failed to fulfil that responsibility.

These are problems and the manner in which they are being handled gives a negative impression.

## Comments on Chamoson 2026 budget

Many of Chamoson's problems predate your tenure, but it appears that little is being done to address them.

If you wish to make the changes that are necessary, this is your opportunity to distance yourself by taking definitive action. However, if you fail to do so, your administration will be as tarnished as that of the previous administrations.

I will be holding meetings with members of the community in the next few days. Can you kindly provide a response to this letter in writing setting out how you intend to address the problems, and providing the community with answers to the above questions about the unprecedented increase in Chamoson's salaries.

Thanking you in advance,

Roy

## Comments on Chamoson 2026 budget

Chamoson is a beautiful location, basking in the sun all year round, and surrounded by vineyards. Unfortunately, Chamoson's taxes and financial position do not reflect this beauty.

As stated in the budget summary, one of the primary objectives is to reduce Chamoson's overwhelming debt level. But it this must happen while also reducing the tax levels that are higher than those of the surrounding areas.

Adam Smith published the Wealth of Nations 250 years ago. There, he set out the four principles for taxation:

PRINCIPLE	DESCRIPTION
Proportionality	Taxes should be levied in proportion to the revenue individuals enjoy under state protection.
Transparency	Tax systems should be clear and stable, avoiding sudden changes that confuse taxpayers.
Convenience	Taxes should be collected at a time and in a manner that is convenient for taxpayers.
Efficiency	Taxation should minimize waste and administrative costs, ensuring that the burden is not excessive.

The recent waste water tax fails on the first two principles, and may fail on the fourth. I have written to the commune twice requesting a proper explanation. The first response suggested that the increase was the result of consolidation with the drinking water charges. The second response attempted to lay the blame on the voters who had approved the tax increase. These responses do not reflect the democratic processes that Switzerland upholds.

There is circumstantial evidence to suggest that there are errors in the apportionment of this tax, and we need to verify the accuracy with a forensic audit.

The percentage changes for the 2026 budget are set out in comparison to the 2025 budget. The figures provide no reflection accurate the 2025 budget figures are relative to the actuals for 2025, and it is therefore preferable to compare the 2026 budget to actual figures for 2024, even though these are already a year old.

When making this comparison, there are 23 expense categories that are budgeted in excess of SFr20,000 where the increase is in more than 10%.

There are a number of figures where the increase is explained as being the result of a change in the allocation. It is generally accepted accounting practice to restate the previous figures in accordance with the new allocation methodology allowing decision makers to determine whether there are changes that require investigation. Without this, the voters are being asked to approve this budget with incomplete information.

## Comments on Chamoson 2026 budget

There is one figure that stands out when compared to the 2024 actuals: Salaries reflect a 16.3% increase over the 2024 figure. If we are striving for efficiency and lowering costs, this figure should be going down, not up.

We should look towards automating as many processes as possible if we are to achieve the multiple objectives of reducing debt, lowering taxes, and improving the services to the commune.

A budget should reflect the commune's ambitions set out in the strategic plan. As a commune, under the guidance of our elected leadership, we would be well served to produce a strategy that gives guidance to future budgets.

In summary, we need to have:

1. A detailed explanation of why the waste water tax was introduced and how it was calculated;
2. Data supporting the calculation so that we are able to verify the accuracy of the amounts charged;
3. Restatement of the previous 2024 actual and 2025 budget figures to reflect the changes in allocations;
4. A response as to the strategies being adopted to lower expenditure, particularly salaries;
5. The steps that are being taken to develop a strategic plan for the commune.