



## **Finance Committee** **Meeting Minutes** **February 9, 2022**

*The regular meeting was called to order at approximately 6:00PM by Acting Chair Stefanie Coxe. Roll call of Finance Committee members present: Stefanie Coxe-Y, George Perkins-Y, Nathan Ladley-Y and Robert Ciavarras-Y. Absent was Jack Moylan and Brian Gardiner. Also attending: Town Administrator Robert Whritenour and Assistant Town Administrator William Scott.*

William Scott, Assistant Town Administrator, read the advisory as required by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30, Section 18-25, and pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, an Act relative to extending certain COVID-19 measures adopted during the State of Emergency, consistent with Governor Baker's March 12, 2021 executive order and as amended and signed into law on June 16, 2021 extending Open Meeting Law provisions to April 1, 2022, and the public was welcome to attend the meeting either in person or via the alternative public access. The notice was posted and the Zoom link was provided as well.

### **1. Review of Draft Warrant Articles**

Assistant Town Administrator reviewed the twenty-nine articles of the warrant.

Discussion ensued on the following articles.

The quote given for leasing cruisers this far in advance in the month of April may not be honored when the vehicle is actually purchased in July of the new fiscal year. Leasing of police vehicles is favorable to purchasing as long as the lessor is willing to recognize certain advantages and pass on those savings to the Town. The value of the residual at the end of the contract needs to be evaluated in order to weigh the benefits of leasing over purchasing.

Chair Coxe stated the importance of what is being presented at Town Meeting is reflective of the totality of the project and assurance to the taxpayer that additional funding will not be requested at a future date. As far as the cost of the shooting trailer is concerned, Town Administrator Scott stated that despite supply chain issues, the prefab design of the trailer will come in at cost. Any overruns may be covered by donations from the police foundation.

The article on Long Pond is a result of a study that was previously completed that indicated the need for water quality checking on a regular basis.

Town Administrator Whritenour confirmed that the Free Cash contribution to the OPEB trust fund was in addition to the OPEB line item reflected in departmental budgets. With the uncertainty of the pandemic, the full contribution to the fund was not made last year.

Revenues from short-term rentals and room taxes are deposited in one fund for room taxes. In order to separate out the short-term rentals, a formula has been designed to indicate that 75% of all monies will be designated as short-term rental revenue. This will provide certainty of funds to enable town departments and others to plan for future wastewater needs. The deposit of funds into the stabilization fund is recurring and does not need a Town Meeting vote, but monies taken out of the account require a Town Meeting vote.

With regard to tourism revenue being deposited in the Community Preservation Fund, Chair Coxe asked for the opinion of the Chamber of Commerce. Assistant Town Administrator Scott will check and get back to the Committee.

Assistant Town Administrator Scott reviewed the District Improvement Financing Investment Revenue and Development District article that designates the area and properties that will specifically be included in Phase One development of a project that enables the Town to work with developers in estimating values of infrastructure improvements. Chair Coxe asked that background materials be provided to taxpayers ahead of Town Meeting that explains the DIF program and how it works to the benefit of the Town. Mr. Scott will have this presentation available for Town Meeting.

Discussion ensued on the article that asks hotels and motels to support the tourism economy by helping to address the temporary housing needs of seasonal employees and dedicate a certain portion of their rooms for such housing. This has become a common problem across the Cape and may have economic implications for businesses unable to sustain services. Housing is critical to our economy and ability to fund Town services. Mr. Scott noted that many seasonal employees come under the management of a corporation, and this presents an opportunity to deal with a single entity in accessing housing.

Chair Coxe noted that the article on fines to businesses for not properly disposing of plastic containers may present another hardship on businesses recovering from the pandemic. She asked for the Chamber of Commerce's position on this article. Mr. Scott will follow up on the matter and report back to the Committee.

With regard to the schools, Assistant Town Administrator Scott reported that approval is obtained for the capital items and the town reimburses them. There is a proportionate share for the DY issues. Whatever is funded in capital will blend with the reimbursement program from prior years. If one pickup truck is purchased and not two they are reimbursed \$50K instead of \$100K. Chair Coxe asked that when the school is making its presentation on the budget that the capital items are also included. An updated packet will be provided to the Committee.

Discussion ensued on the joint meeting of the Capital Budget, Finance and the Board of Selectmen. To avoid the confusion of the prior year, Chair Coxe asked for clarity of the Finance Committee's role at this meeting, i.e. what are the expectations and what should the Committee be reporting on at that meeting. Mr. Scott reviewed the template he has used for the CIP presentation and he will duplicate a similar template for the Committee that will cover all relevant topics. He suggested that inherent in the presentation is the Committee's message that was given at Fall Town Meeting with regard to wastewater and economic development and the importance of commercial and economic development in reducing the taxpayer burden.

Chair Coxe stated that the thematic message of the Committee's recommendations throughout the budget process and previous Town Meetings has been to make sure the Town grows its commercial tax base to offset costs and the residential tax base. She added that identifying revenue sources and areas of investment to grow revenue is important, but also the savings to be realized by consolidation of services and economies of scale. She suggested that post Town Meeting that the Committee meet to chart out the big picture and tackle some of the relevant long-term broader-based goals over the next several years.

Discussion ensued on identifying outside sources of monies and targeting land use for mixed use to sustain the tax base year round and also to serve the residents in partnering with medical consortiums and other service-related industries. These efforts will decrease the need to rely on the overbuilt tourism industry and focus on the needs of year-round families and seniors.

Chair Coxe noted the potential for development of the existing town hall, the school across the street and State Police station into a mixed use development. She noted that the Town does not currently have a town center, which has affected the community identity, and this development could be considered as the Village Center.

**2. Approval of Minutes of Meeting of January 27, February 3, February 10, February 17, March 17, March 24, April 7, April 14, April 22 and April 28, 2021**

Chair Coxe reviewed the above minutes with suggestions for revision. Mr. Scott will amend the minutes as suggested and bring them back to the Committee for approval at its next meeting.

**3. Old Business**

Chair Coxe asked for any old business items for discussion. There were none.

**4. New Business**

Chair Coxe asked for any new business items for discussion. There were none.

**5. Adjournment.**

**MOTION: To adjourn.**

**Motion by: George Perkins**

**Seconded by: Nathan Ladley**

**Roll Call Vote: Stefanie Coxe-Y, Robert Ciavarra-Y, George Perkins-Y and Nathan Ladley-Y. 4 ayes; 0 nays. The motion passed unanimously.**

**Meeting adjourned at 7:51PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford

*Attachments:*

Annual Town Meeting Draft Warrant Articles