



Town Of Webster

Massachusetts

Est. 1832

Finance Committee

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Sarah Sansom, Chairman
Laura Backus, Vice-Chairman
Matt Fitton, Secretary
Courtney Friedland, Recording Secretary

Michael Finamore
Jennifer Findlay
Christopher Markiewicz
Joshua Sterczala

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

January 7, 2020

Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA
via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's
emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the
Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20
6:00 p.m.

The Finance Committee meeting was called to order by Chairman Sarah Sansom at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Conference Call.

Present: Sarah Sansom (via conference call), Laura Backus (via conference call), Jennifer Findlay (via conference call), Joshua Sterczala (via conference call), Christopher Markiewicz (via conference call), Matt Fitton (via conference call) Town Administrator Doug Willardson (via conference call), Town Accountant Timothy Bell (via conference call), and Finance Committee Secretary Courtney Friedland (via conference call).

Governor Baker issued an Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law, to enable public bodies to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations regarding social distancing. The Executive Order relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body through adequate, alternative means.

Meeting Minutes

Motion by Joshua Sterczala, seconded by Christopher Markiewicz, to approve the meeting minutes of December 10, 2020.

Vote: Joshua Sterczala – yes, Christopher Markiewicz - yes, Matt Fitton – yes, Laura Backus – yes, Laura Backus – yes, and Sarah Sansom – yes.

Town Administrator's Report

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Closed on January 18th Martin Luther King Day
- 1. Public Health and Safety
 - a. Police Staffing:
 - i. Lateral transfer from Framingham started earlier this month
 - ii. New candidates: group of 9
 - 1. Interviewing Friday
 - 2. Academy in April
 - b. Fire new hires filling in roles well; one full-time firefighter injured during a fire incident in December
 - c. Coronavirus—separate presentation
 - d. Recreation:
 - i. Contractor starting on dog park near walking track
- 2. Financially Responsible
 - a. Bidding out general liability insurance
 - b. Free Cash certification later this week or next
 - c. 2022 Budget process underway; Governor to release state aid numbers at the end of the month
- 3. Economic Development
 - a. EDC meeting held last week.
 - b. Released developer solicitation for 0 Sutton Road
 - c. Wine Bar currently looking to open in old “Hot Costumes” location
 - d. Received \$36,600 for “Winter Shared Streets” grant. To be used for more downtown lighting; crosswalks flashing signals and landscaping
 - e. KMART plaza sale likely to go through
 - f. GOYA TIF approved and finalized
 - g. Urban Agenda grant program—used to assist entrepreneurs, local business owners
- 4. Maintain Infrastructure
 - a. Lake Parkway/Klebart Ave: binder coat down for a portion of the project. Project completion date June 2021.
 - b. Ray Street athletic field bleachers. Bleachers are down.
 - c. South Main. NGrid finished gas lines on East Main and South Main; now doing repairs on side streets. Repave trenches in the spring. Portion of Lake Street to be done.
 - d. Town Hall roof. Project cost of \$537,000. \$100,000 less than engineer’s estimate.
 - e. Sutton Road Bridge. Engineering underway. Awaiting next grant for construction funds.
 - f. Water Main Improvements. Bidding in February.
- 5. Effective Delivery of Services/Operations
 - a. Finalized collective bargaining agreement with firefighters
 - b. Hired Highway Laborer; started this week
 - c. Senior Center clerk resigned to take another job in Millbury. Will not immediately fill the position
 - d. Library Director position has closed; trustees and I are reviewing applications. Panel interviews next week
 - e. Owners of 124 High and 168 Chase Ave are making progress
- 6. Transparent, Open and Friendly Government
 - a. Town hall open Monday through Thursday 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM via a kiosk and the Treasurer/Collector’s Office due to COVID 19 concerns

There will be speed control put into place when Lake Parkway is completed. The town is currently in the process of hiring a new Library Director.

Town Accountant Budget Reports

Town Accountant Timothy Bell stated budget request will be sent out to Department Heads tomorrow. He said budget meeting have been set up for February 4th and February 5th. Everything is line for the budget process. The School department is starting their budget process and they are going on the assumption that they will be back in school full time. The auditors were in the Town Hall this week and they have already left; which is a good sign. There might be some follow-up questions but everything is going good right now.

School Building Committee – Update

The School Building Committee awarded the Designer Contract. They went with the State’s recommendation.

Personnel Advisory Board – Update

The Personnel Advisory Board is currently meeting with Department Heads.

Capital Project Planning

The Capital Project group is meeting at the end of January. There is no pressing projects at this time.

Next Finance Committee Meeting

The next Finance Committee meeting would be on February 4th. Mr. Bell stated he would not have a preliminary budget for the Finance Committee to review by that date. It was suggested that the Finance Committee meet on February 24th to review the budget. Mr. Willardson stated he would send the draft budget to the Finance Committee by March 1st and they Finance Committee can meet on March 4th. Mr. Fitton stated that was not enough time for the Finance Committee to review it. Mr. Willardson stated there wasn’t going to be major changes. He said there would probably be some cuts.

The Finance Committee will meet on February 4 2021, at 6:00 p.m., March 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., and March 22nd as a joint meeting at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will take place via Zoom.

Adjournment

Motion by Matt Fitton, seconded by Laura Backus, to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Matt Fitton – yes, Christopher Markiewicz – yes, Laura Backus – yes, and Sarah Sansom – yes.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Friedland