



# Town Of Webster

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## Massachusetts

Est. 1832

## Finance Committee

350 Main Street  
Webster, MA 01570

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**Sarah Sansom, Acting Chairman**  
**Courtney Friedland, Recording Secretary**

**Laura Backus**  
**Matt Fitton**  
**Michael Finamore**  
**Jennifer Findlay**  
**Christopher Markiewicz**

### FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

May 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 Vice-Chairman Sarah Sansom at 6:08 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room in the Town Hall

**Present:** Laura Backus (via conference call), Matt Fitton (via conference call), Sarah Sansom, and Michael Finamore (via conference call), Jennifer Findlay (via conference call), Town Administrator Doug Willardson, Town Accountant Timothy Bell, 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 Michel Fitton, seconded by Matt Finamore, to approve the meeting minutes of March 12, 2020.**

**Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Matt Fitton – yes; Michael Finamore – yes; Laura Backus – yes and Sarah Sansom – yes**

## **Town Administrator's Update**

The Year to Date Budget Report was sent out to the Finance Committee. There are not any deficiencies in the report. The town is keeping an eye on unemployment claims. The Federal Government has reduced the amount of unemployment towns have to pay due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This will need to be continually monitored with the situation that is going on with COVID-19. The Legislature is looking at all avenues of need within communities in Massachusetts. The Town is waiting to hear from them on the next steps to available aid and new regulations. The town's revenues have been reviewed for the past four years. Meals tax is a little below the regular threshold. The last quarter of meals tax will likely be low. There are some revenues the town plans to pull back on.

## **School Building Feasibility Update**

The Feasibility Study is moving forward. The School Feasibility Committee submitted the information to MSBA. They are in the process of going out to bid for the OPM. It is very important to have a good working relationship with the OPM. The Board of Selectmen are going to approve the Feasibility Study Agreement for the Bartlett High School Project at their meeting on May 11, 2020.

## **Audit Committee**

Mr. Willardson will send the member of the Finance Committee a copy of the completed Audit. They will be presenting to the Board of Selectmen at their next meeting. He stated the Audit Committee can attend or call in.

## **Financial Policy Review - Recommendations**

Mr. Willardson has reviewed the policies and did make one change. The capital improvement allocation is high and he would like to lower it. Mr. Willardson provided a draft rewrite of that section for the Finance Committee to review.

## **FY 2021 Town Budget Review**

The FY21 might require budget cuts. There are a couple of options that they are looking at. They are currently prioritizing the budget. The Local Revenues will be down. He said the Town & Schools would split the difference 70% schools/30% town after adjusting for shared costs. The State has created a State Re-opening Committee. A Real Estate & Personal Property Analysis being done by Treasurer/Collector. Guidelines were released Friday that 1/12th budgets must be approved by Board of Selectmen if annual budget is not approved at Town Meeting prior to July 1st. A 1/12th budgets must be voted by the Selectmen and approved by DOR. The preferred option is to approve budget at Town Meeting, but DOR may not accept if there is too much uncertainty in State budget. The State has not given updated state aid numbers and they probably won't know until August or September.

## **FY 2021 School Budget Review/Update**

The FY21 School Budget is up in the air until the State Aid numbers are released.

## **FY21 Impact of COVID-19**

Most hourly employees have been furloughed a portion of their hours they worked. Furlough saves approximately \$20,000 per week for all hourly employees. Employees are estimated to take home \$15,000 more than regular wages. Other towns have reached out and are looking at furloughs. The duration of the furlough depends on the department. Senior Center and Library will probably open up last. The DPW will probably be restored to full-time the soonest. The CARES Act in will last until the end of July. The Economic Development Committee have been making calls to local businesses and have put out a questionnaire of their needs. Free Cash can be used to supplement the budget for next year but it is a very bad practice.

## **Finance Report**

The timeline on the finance report is hazy. Tow Meeting will be held June 22, 2020.

## **Capital Projects Planning**

The Capital Project Requests are up in the air until budget numbers are known.

## **Schedule Next Meeting**

The Finance Committee will meet on June 3, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. for their regularly scheduled meeting and to approve the Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

## **Adjournment**

**Motion:** made by Michael Finamore, seconded by Matt Fitton to adjourn the meeting at 6:54 p.m.

**Vote:** Jennifer Findlay – yes, Matt Fitton – yes; Michael Finamore – yes; Laura Backus – yes and Sarah Sansom – yes.

Respectfully submitted,  
Courtney Friedland