



Town Of Webster

Massachusetts

Est. 1832

Finance Committee

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Sarah Sansom, Acting Chairman
Courtney Friedland, Recording Secretary

Laura Backus
Matt Fitton
Michael Finamore
Jennifer Findlay
Christopher Markiewicz

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

June 15, 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 6:00 p.m. in the Selectmen Meeting Room in the Town Hall

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

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 Michael Finamore, seconded by Laura Backus, to approve the meeting minutes of May 2, 2020.

Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Christopher Markiewicz – 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. Meals tax is expected to be \$60,000.00 short of what was expected. The town is keeping an eye on unemployment claims. The Town has not received a recent bill, but they are working with a consultant to make sure there is no fraudulent activities occurring.

FY21 Budget Hearing – Town

Motion by Michael Finamore, seconded by Laura Backus, to open the Public Hearing for the FY 2021 Town Budget including Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds

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

Mr. Willardson stated Mr. Bell put in an enormous amount of time into creating the budget and the 1/12 budget scenarios. The Board of Selectmen approved a 1/12 budget for July, August, and September as a backup plan, in case Town Meeting does not occur. The town is proposing a FY21 budget at Town Meeting that is \$1.5 million less than the originally proposed FY21 budget proposal for June 22nd Town Meeting. If the Town Meeting is cancelled or postponed the town will rely on the 1/12 budget. State Aid might be reduced up to 20% but the revised budget is their best estimate. The best-case rumors are return to FY20 State Aid Numbers—\$1 M to \$1.2 M cut. The worst-case rumors return to FY09 State Aid Numbers—\$5 M cut. Local Revenues will be down as well. Town & Schools would split the difference 70% schools/30% town after adjusting for shared costs. The bulk of the cuts will be on the school side. The budget is very fluid and is changing. The town is headed in the right direction and are following the same plan as many other communities. All discretionary spending will be limited.

FY21 Budget Hearing – School

There will be no reduction in staffing if school returns full-time in the fall. The school busing company is working with the town to figure out the schedule of what will be required. The State required the town to bus students who live more than two miles away from school. The town actually buses students 1.5 miles away from the school. Enrollment remains steady with 1,900 enrollees for this coming school year. The School Department is just waiting to get the guidelines from the State.

Motion by Matt Fitton, seconded by Jennifer Findlay, to approve the FY 2021 Town Budget including Water & Sewer Enterprise Funds as presented.

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

Town Meeting Warrant Articles

Articles 1, 2, & 3 on the Special Town Meeting Warrant were placeholders for prior year bills. Article 4 is for snow and ice. The town was hoping to find funding within the budget to fund the deficit. Article 5 is to fund capital projects. Article 6 is for water improvement projects. Article 7 is the last step in the infiltration study. Lastly, article 8 is to transfer money from cable/PEG access account to fund a salary line item.

Articles 2, 3 & 4 on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant were budget items. Article 5 is standard borrowing language. Article 6 is adding funds to the stabilization fund. Article 7 is to approve the departmental revolving accounts. Article 8 was to create a budget for cable access. Article 9 is to declare 26 Park Road surplus property. Article 10 is to accept a parcel donated to conservation. Article 11 is to put a conservation restriction on a parcel on lower Gore Road. Article 12 is to accept a donation of land on High Street Article 13 is requesting a special act of legislation to grant two additional all alcohol license to the downtown area. Article 14 is requesting a special act of legislation to remove the Webster Police Department from Civil Service. Article 15 is to adopt the Mullin Rule. Article 16 is to amend the noncriminal disposition wetland protection by-law.

Motion by Matt Fitton, seconded by Michael Finamore, to approve articles 1-8 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

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

Motion by Michael Finamore, seconded by Christopher Markiewicz, to approve articles 1-16 the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

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

School Building Feasibility Update

Jennifer Findlay stated she has not been able to attend the meetings due to the COVID situation. She does plan to start attending them again.

Audit Committee

The Audit was presented at the May Board of Selectmen's Meeting. Members of the Finance Committee attending the meeting via Zoom.

Schedule Next Meeting

The Finance Committee will meet on June 22, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. to meet before Town Meeting regarding any updates or changes to the Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

Adjournment

Motion: made by Michael Finamore, seconded by Christopher Markiewicz to adjourn the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Friedland