



Town Of Webster

Massachusetts

Est. 1832

Finance Committee

350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

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

Michael Finamore
Jennifer Findlay
Scott Dziedzic
Joshua Sterczala

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 16, 2021

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 6:01 p.m. via Zoom Conference Call.

Present: Sarah Sansom (via conference call), Michael Finamore (via conference call), Joseph Ralph (via conference call), Jennifer Findley (via conference call), Scott Dziedzic (via conference call), Joshua Sterczala (via conference call), Matt Fitton (via conference call), Town Accountant Timothy Bell (via conference call), Interim Town Administrator Greg Balukonis (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.

Town Administrator's Report

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Thanked the Finance Committee for the warm welcome as he began his tenure as Interim Town Administrator.
1. General- Considerable time has been spent meeting with department heads and learning about more municipal operations. A department head meeting was held last Friday with all in attendance. In addition, a financial planning team meeting was held with the

Finance Director, Treasurer/Collector and Assessing Manager. The FPT is meeting every other week.

- a. Coronavirus
 - i. There are 56 new cases in the past 10 days and 179 from August 1st to present. 40% of these are so-called breakthrough cases.
 - ii. The Town's Covid policy needs to be reviewed and updated, including the requirement for masks in all public buildings. This is high priority.
 - b. Health
 - i. The new Health Director begins work on September 20th.
 - ii. Staffing in the Health office is problematic in the short term with the temporary clerk being released last Friday by the past administrator.
2. Financial Issues
- a. The Finance Committee is meeting on Thursday and I will be in attendance.
 - b. Reviewing Recap Sheet and bond prospectus to get a better handle on financials.
3. Economic Development
- a. Creating draft ARPA grant program for local businesses and non-profit organizations.
 - b. The EDC Work Group is meeting on Friday to review/discuss ARPA fund uses.
4. Maintain Infrastructure
- a. Town Hall roof. Administration previously agreed to extend the contract until early December, per recommendation of the project engineer. The general contractor has been contacted about recommending work, and this needs to be watched carefully.
 - b. There is a kick-off conference call on the MVP grant program next Monday.
 - c. Senator Fattman is trying to arrange a Meeting with Dudley officials and MassDOT on interim plans for the Brandon Road bridge replacement.
5. Other
- a. Assisting Town Administrator Search Committee with Request for Proposals related to recruitment of an executive search consultant.
 - b. Mr. Balikonis in the office Mondays and Wednesdays from 8 Am to 4 Pm and Fridays from 8 Am to 12 Noon. Please don't hesitate to contact the Acting Town Administrator or stop by the office If you have questions or need assistance.

Town Accountant Report:

Mr. Bell stated there is nothing concerning to report. He has been working part time due to an injury.

OLD BUSINESS

Audit Committee

Mr. Bell stated the Auditors were supposed to come in for field work earlier this month but since he was out they have postponed until the end of the month. Ms. Sansom asked if the Audit Committee could be part of the discussions before the final report is presented.

School Building Committee

There is no update at this time.

Capital Planning

There is no update at this time.

Town Administrator Selectmen Committee

Motion by Matt Fitton, seconded by Scott Dziedzic to Sarah Sansom and Jennifer Findlay to the Town Administrator Screening Committee. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Review and Recommend October Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Balukonis stated this is a standard article. He said bills come in past the time in which the town closed out the fiscal year.

Motion by Jennifer Findley, seconded by Sarah Sansom to approve and recommend Article one on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

Motion by Sarah Sansom, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, recommend passing over Article two on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

Motion by Sarah Sansom, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, recommend passing over Article three on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

Mr. Balukonis stated article four was to rescind prior borrowing articles. He said this was recommended by the Town's Auditors. This is to clean-up some of the accounts that have been dormant. He stated no money is involved. It was to clean-up old debt services.

Motion by Jennifer Findlay, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, to approve and recommend Article four on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

Mr. Balukonis stated the new Water and Sewer Superintendent has been going through and dividing responsibilities. He stated an additional position is needed in the Water Department.

Motion by Jennifer Findlay, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, to approve and recommend Article five on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes.

Mr. Balukonis described the proposed French River TIF district and the objectives. He said they are looking to convert the old mill into a 156 unit of housing, with at least 10% of which will be affordable housing.

Motion by Scott Dziedzic, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, to approve and recommend Article six on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Motion by Jennifer Findlay, seconded by Joseph Ralph, to approve and recommend Article seven on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Motion by Sarah Sansom, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, to approve and recommend Article eight on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Motion by Jennifer Findlay, seconded by Sarah Sansom, to approve and recommend Article nine on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Mr. Balukonis stated article ten was sponsored by the Webster Historical Commission. He stated they are looking for \$25,000.00 in funding to fund a Municipal Preservation Plan. He said in order to received grant funding the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the town needs to have some funding commitment. He suggested funding this through the stabilization fund.

Motion by Sarah Sansom, seconded by Michael Finamore, to approve and recommend Article ten on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Motion by Jennifer Findlay, seconded by Joshua Sterczala, to approve and recommend Article eleven on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, and Matt Fitton – yes

Next Finance Committee Meeting

The Finance Committee will meet on October 18, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.

Adjournment

Motion by Michael Finamore, seconded by Sarah Sansom to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Vote: Jennifer Findlay – yes, Joshua Sterczala – yes, Joseph Ralph – yes, Scott Dziedzic – yes, Michael Finamore – yes, Sarah Sansom – yes, Matt Fitton.

Respectfully submitted,
Courtney Friedland