



**Town of Swampscott**  
**Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**  
Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022 - 4:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Tim Dorsey (Chair), Mary Ellen Fletcher (Vice-chair), Naomi Dreeben, Eric Hartmann, Joan Hilario, Matthew Kirschner, Cinder McNerney, Erik Schneider.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

Suraj Krishnamurthi,

**OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Michael McClung, Town Moderator; Peter Spellios, Select Board member, Amy Sarro, Director of Admin. & Finance; Patrick Luddy, Treasurer/Collector; Trang Vu, Assistant Town Accountant.

The meeting was called to order at 4:05 PM

**Public Comments**

Joe Douillette was recognized as an attendee. He urged the Finance Committee to approve the budget proposed by School Committee to support the unprecedented needs that Swampscott school system faces right now such as mental health issues after pandemic, staff, and services retention.

**Approval of Minutes**

None.

**Discussion of FY2023 Budget and other meeting Warrant articles**

Amy Sarro mentioned that the Town Administrator and School Superintendent agreed in an earlier meeting that the state aid net increase of \$96,247, plus \$6,826 cut from Town operating budget, would be added to School budget. This would bring the school's total budget to \$30,222,917, which is a 2.53% increase in the town contribution to the school budget. (Not include Nahant tuition and Special Education revolving).

Naomi Dreeben, Joan Hilario, and Eric Hartmann commented that this was a good progress when the town and school came together on the final budget number which Superintendent felt confident that they will be able to meet the needs of the school.

Tim Dorsey and Amy Sarro referenced a new budget model that the Finance team is working on and will have discussions with Finance committee after Town meeting.

Matthew Kirschner asked if the town would evaluate \$425,000 new growth for future budget process, in terms of increased needs in Technology and school social emotional learning.

Amy Sarro commented that when we do our tax rate recap and anticipate additional new growth, this number might be modified at the actual level. \$425,000 is currently recognized in town financial policy and there is no plan to recognize a different number right now.

Joan Hilario mentioned the potential creation of a special education stabilization fund that could be used by the school department.

The Committee then agreed to vote on the budget opening line items and warrant articles.

### Article #3: Appropriation for FY2023 operating budget

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Eric Hartmann), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve line item #5 – Finance Committee Reserve fund.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Cinder McNerney (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Cinder McNerney), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve line item #60 – Employee Benefits expense.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Eric Hartmann (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Cinder McNerney), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve line item #61 – Regional Voc – Tech school.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Eric Hartmann (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Joan Hilario), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve line item #62 – Public School.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Eric Hartmann (YES), Cinder McNerney (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Joan Hilario), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve total general fund budget of \$68,010,257.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Eric Hartmann (YES), Cinder McNerney (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

On **MOTION** (MaryEllen Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Cinder McNerney), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to approve total Enterprise fund budget of \$9,844,890.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Eric Hartmann (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

### Article #12: Appropriation for recommended capital projects

Patrick Luddy summarized major changes made by Capital Improvement Committee on proposed Capital projects for FY2023:

- “Cemetery surplus filth removal” of \$500,000 is split into 2 phases, \$250,000 is shifted on the plan of FY2024.
- Due to an immediate need, “Street paving (chapter 90)” was boosted by \$250,000, increases the project estimate to \$465,000.
- “Town hall basement build-out” was not moved forward
- “Police workspace redesign” was not approved this year, wait for more information and the new Chief thoughts.

Erik Schneider asked if we could get funds from MWRA 0% interest for “Cemetery surplus filth removal” project. Patrick Luddy confirmed that it does not apply for this project but “Water main replacement” in this year project list qualifies for that 0% interest loan.

On **MOTION** (Naomi Dreeben) and **SECONDED** (Eric Hartmann), it was **VOTED** to approve Article 12, as recommended by Capital Improvement Committee by **ROLL CALL**.

**ROLL CALL:** Cinder McNerney (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), MaryEllen Fletcher (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

Article #15: Citizens Petition- Amend the method of appointment of the Finance Committee

On **MOTION** (Eric Hartmann) and **SECONDED** (Cinder McNerney), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to indefinitely postpone Article 15.

**ROLL CALL:** Naomi Dreeben (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES). (MaryEllen Fletcher abstained from voting this article).

Article #14: Citizens Petition Article -Repair and/or replace middle school windows.

On **MOTION** (Naomi Dreeben) and **SECONDED** (Eric Hartmann), it was **VOTED** by **ROLL CALL** to indefinitely postpone **ARTICLE 14** – Citizens Petition Article -Repair and/or replace middle school windows.

**ROLL CALL:** Cinder McNerney (YES), Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), MaryEllen Fletcher (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

There was a discussion whether or not to encourage Retirement Board to extend Pension schedule. Matthew Kirschner, Cinder McNerney, Naomi Dreeben and MaryEllen Fletcher all agreed that we need more detail conversation to decide on what to do with Town’s pension.

Finance Committee letter to Town meeting

Tim Dorsey led a discussion with the committee regarding the content of the committee’s annual letter to town meeting that he will be compiling on the committee’s behalf. Topics to address include:

- Emphasize fiscal policy
- Comment on Swampscott strong financial position
- Revenue Challenges/Impact for FY 2023
- Financial Reserves/Forecasting
- Sewer Cost-Drivers/LWSC Agreement, O&M, Capital Investment
- Pension Costs
- Challenges (Sewer, Solid Waste, Healthcare, OPEB, Hiring & Retention, new school construction, Special Education costs)
- Financial Impact of Change/Development/Growth in Town

The Committee decided on Representatives to report at Town meeting as follow:

- Tim Dorsey: Article 2, 3 &4
- Eric Hartmann: Article 5, 6, 7 & 8
- Naomi Dreeben: Article 9, 10 & 11
- Cinder McNerney: Article 12, 13 & 15
- Erik Schneider: Article 14

Tim Dorsey proposed some possible meetings between now and before Town meeting, which are on May 11<sup>th</sup> and May 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Old and new business**

None.

On **MOTION** (Eric Hartmann) and **SECONDED** (Naomi Dreeben), it was **VOTED** to adjourn the meeting at 5:30 PM. **ROLL CALL**: Erik Schneider (YES), Matthew Kirschner (YES), Joan Hilario (YES), Tim Dorsey (YES).

True Attest,

Trang Vu

Assistant Town Accountant

*Approved by vote of the finance committee 06/06/2022.*