

Town of Swampscott
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Monday, November 2, 2020 – 7:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Tim Dorsey (Chair), Jill Sullivan, Joan Hilario, Eric Hartmann, Cinder McNerney, Mary Ellen Fletcher; Gail Rosenberg; James Goldman

ABSENT:

Matt Kirschner

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT

Sean Fitzgerald, Town Administrator; Ron Mendes, Assistant Town Administrator – Administration and Finance

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM

On **MOTION** (Fletcher) and **SECONDED** (Rosenberg) it was **VOTED** by roll call to approve meeting minutes from September 30, 2020; October 5, 2020; October 8, 2020; and October 15, 2020. Roll call: Sullivan (YES) Hilario (YES) Hartmann (YES) McNerney (YES) Fletcher (YES) Rosenberg (YES) Goldman (YES) Dorsey (YES)

TOWN MEETING WARRANT

ARTICLE 2

The Chair of the Finance Committee Tim Dorsey began by reviewing some of the questions that needed follow-up from the October 29 meeting. There was a discussion about the importance of communicating questions for staff in advance of the meetings so staff can be fully prepared.

The Committee discussed reducing the amount of funding allocated to the schools from \$98,000 to \$30,000 because of the question of whether or not the Occupational Health Nurse and IT specialist could be covered by CARES Act funding in 2021.

There was a conversation regarding the proposed security cameras which are budgeted to be \$36,070. Town Administrator Fitzgerald discussed the importance of having camera at the two locations (Dog Park and Phillips Park) for the purpose of trash dumping and public safety. The

Finance Committee discussed potentially removing this and reviewing it again at the Spring Town Meeting.

There was a discussion about the Senior Center maintenance vehicle line item for \$1,500. It was noted that the Senior Center has underspent their budget and that the end of the year shuffle will likely be able to cover maintenance costs as needed.

There was a discussion about the Fire Union line item and why it doubled from the Spring Town Meeting to the current budget. This is likely due to the 1% or 2% Fire Union raise. Assistant Town Administrator Ron Mendes will look into the numbers to determine where a miscalculation occurred.

On **MOTION** (Sullivan) and **SECONDED** (Fletcher) it was **VOTED** by roll call to recommend favorable action on Article 2 with the following adjustments:

- Reduce Line Item 15 to \$0
- Reduce Line Item 52 to \$0
- Reduce Line Item 60 to \$30,000
- Take \$105,570 and put it in the Finance Committee Reserve

Roll call: Rosenberg (YES) Sullivan (YES) Hilario (YES) McNerney (YES) Hartmann (YES) Goldman (YES)

ARTICLE 15 - CITIZEN'S PETITION

Article 15 is a Citizen's Petition. The impetus is the School site selection process. The Article intends to raise \$3,000,000 via the tax levy and direct the Department of Facilities Management to make improvements to the three Elementary Schools. Resident Terry Lorber was in attendance to speak about the article.

The Finance Committee asked why it would be paid for by the tax levy and not a bond. The Finance Committee encouraged the petitioner to discuss further the implications of a tax levy as opposed to a bond.

ARTICLE 6

Finance Committee Member Jill Sullivan questioned why the COLA Article is on the November Town Meeting Warrant. There is concern about the financial consequences of the pandemic and the timing of this request. The Finance Committee requested information regarding the unfunded liability, obligation, and projected impact of the COLA change. Vice Chair Mary Ellen Fletcher stated that she would look into possible financial relief for retirees. Ms. Sullivan will reach out to Bob Powell to obtain a cheat sheet to better inform a decision on this article.

ARTICLE 3

On **MOTION** (Fletcher) **SECONDED** (Hilario) it was **VOTED** by roll call to recommend favorable action on Article 3. Roll call: Sullivan (YES) Hilario (YES) Hartmann (YES) McNerney (YES) Fletcher (YES) Rosenberg (YES) Goldman (YES) Dorsey (YES)

ARTICLE 4

No update at the moment. There will be a request to have an Executive Session when ready sometime before Town Meeting

ARTICLE 5

This article is not ready for review at the moment. The Board of Assessors did not vote on the values so there is a delay on the Tax Rate Recap. They will be meeting again on Wednesday.

ARTICLE 7

It has been confirmed that there is no financial impact resulting from Article 7 that requires the Finance Committee's recommendation.

ARTICLE 8

There was a conversation about the Article related to the Former Police Station. The intention of this article is to provide flexibility to the Town to potentially make investments in the building to support the group that ends up occupying the building at the result of an RFP process.

ARTICLE 11

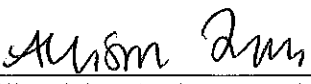
On **MOTION** (Sullivan) and **SECONDED** (Fletcher) it was **VOTED** by roll call to recommend favorable action on Article 11. Roll call: Sullivan (YES) Hilario (YES) Hartmann (YES) McNerney (YES) Fletcher (YES) Rosenberg (YES) Goldman (YES) Dorsey (YES)

Next meeting: Proposed November 9 meeting for Joint CIC. May need one other meeting to get through. Meeting on November 12.

On **MOTION** (Jill) and **SECONDED** (Cinder) it was **VOTED** by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll call: Sullivan (YES) Hilario (YES) Hartmann (YES) McNerney (YES) Fletcher (YES) Rosenberg (YES) Goldman (YES) Dorsey (YES)

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 PM

True Attest,



Allie Fiske, Assistant to the Town Administrator

Minutes APPROVED by vote of the Finance Committee 2/8/2021