

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 16, 2019**

ATTENDANCE

Finance Committee Members Present: Chairman, Jeff Atwater, Vice-Chairman, Eric Poch (arrived at 7:17 pm), Susan Berry, Ronald Brumback (arrived at 7:15 pm), Christopher Carmody, Jean Nam, Bryan Semple, Scott Smigler

ABSENT

Lisa Guth

ALSO, PRESENT

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector. Members of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen Pat Brown, Vice-Chair, and Jennifer Roberts

CONVENE:

Chairman Jeff Atwater called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The meeting convened at Flynn Building, in the Silva Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 278 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA 01776.

ITEM 1: Public Comment

Chairman Atwater opened this portion of the meeting for Public Comment. There were no public comments.

ITEM 2: General Business

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

Motion and Vote

Bryan Semple moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 5, 2018, meeting as submitted. **The motion carried. The vote was 4 yes, 2 abstentions.**

Motion and Vote

Bryan Semple moved, and Christopher Carmody seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2018, meeting as submitted. **The motion carried. The vote was 5 yes, 1 abstentions.**

Motion and Vote

Christopher Carmody moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 26, 2018, meeting as submitted. **The motion carried. The vote was 5 yes, 1 abstentions.**

Motion and Vote

Christopher Carmody moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 4, 2019, meeting as submitted. **The motion carried. The vote was 5 yes, 1 abstentions.**

Motion and Vote

Christopher Carmody moved, and Bryan Semple seconded the motion to approve the minutes of February 11, 2019, meeting as submitted.

The motion carried. The vote was 4 yes, 2 abstentions.

● Budget Transfers

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector submitted a budget transfer request in the amount of \$82,120.00 from the Reserve Account to the General Fund Facilities Contracted Services Account for the demolition of the Frost Farmhouse, 148 North Road. This is a Town-owned property. The Town Manager, Deputy Fire Chief, Building Inspector, Police Chief, Health Director, and the previous Chairman of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen inspected the property and deemed it to be uninhabitable land or unsafe. The Town Manager Melissa Murphy-Rodrigues recommended demolition of the property, the Board of Selectmen subsequently approved demolition of the property. The requested transfer is to pay for the demolition, which involves wrecking and excavation. The company that has been awarded the contract is Bourgeois Wrecking and Excavation, Inc.

At Christopher Carmody's request, Mr. Keohane spoke about the rules for procurement. Mr. Keohane stated that this was an emergency procurement and three bids were solicited. A lengthy discussion followed on the details that led to the property being determined unsafe as well as on the agreement between the town and the caretaker of the property.

Chairman Atwater stated that there are potentially two options for the Finance Committee to take on this request, one to vote on the transfer and trust that the Town will explore the possibility of legal options or for the Finance Committee to meet again in a week to give the Town the time to evaluate the legal options and report back.

Jennifer Roberts added that if the Finance Committee could provide the Board of Selectmen with specific questions that would like answered that would be helpful.

Motion and Vote

Susan Berry moved, and Ronald Brumback seconded the motion to approve the Budget Transfer as submitted, with the consensus that additional answers and information will be forthcoming from the Board of Selectmen regarding parameters and guidance on preventing this type of financial transaction from occurring again.

The motion carried. The vote was 5 in favor, 3 opposed.

Chairman Atwater stated that the committee should send their questions to him and he would prepare them for the Board of Selectmen's consideration.

● **Liaison Report**

Scott Smigler, Finance Committee Liaison to the Master Plan Steering Committee (MPSC), stated that the MPSC starts their meetings with baseline reporting, which is broken up into chapters that are followed by specific plans and goals. He also stated that in the fall there will be five topic-based meetings, which will be used for specific planning and goal setting. He stated that the five topic-based areas are, Historic and Cultural, Transportation, Mobility and Connectivity, Health, Housing and Equity, Town Infrastructure, Natural Resources, Space and Recreation. Mr. Smigler stated that the next meeting is Friday morning, September 20, 2019.

Susan Berry, Finance Committee Liaison to Sudbury Public Schools (SPS), stated that SPS is interested in knowing what the Finance Committee's budget calendar is as soon as possible.

● **Review Calendar**

The review of the calendar included a discussion on the budget guidance letter. Chairman Atwater referred to the draft budget guidance letter in the shared drive. Chairman Atwater reviewed the budget guidance letter, budget calendar and Exhibit I as described in the draft letter. A general discussion followed.

ITEM 3: Update on LS Academy Renovations

Chairman Atwater opened this item for discussion and yielded the floor to Ronald Brumback to present an update on LS Academy Renovations.

Mr. Brumback began his comments with background information on the LS proposal to use Excess and Deficiency (E&D) funds for the purpose of reusing the property at 420 Lincoln Road, the former White House/Preschool. Mr. Brumback summarized the process that proceeded with the approval of using E&D funds, which included a requirement by the Historical Commission for partial demolition plans. Mr. Brumback stated that LS and their architect submitted

the plans and detailed drawings for the partial demolition and rehabilitation of the structure, which was approved by the Historical Commission on August 29, 2019. He added that the project will go out to bid and bids will be opened mid to late October. Mr. Brumback stated that there will be some additional costs, but the total project cost will not be realized until the contractor/contract has been negotiated. Mr. Brumback summarized additional information on projected student enrollment. He stated that the approved E&D funds, as well as cost savings from out-of-district tuition, would cover the cost of the project.

ITEM 4: Discuss Approach to FY21 Budget

Chairman Atwater led the discussion on an approach to the FY21 budgeting process starting with capital items, how to summarize and review. Chairman Atwater would like the Finance Committee to meet with the Board of Selectmen to talk about capital items. He added that the Board of Selectmen is anticipating findings on the review of capital funding from the Department of Local Services. Chairman Atwater also stated that he would like the Finance Committee to consider some type of framework in terms of its review of capital warrant articles in thinking about appropriate funding sources and how to report expectations to the Board of Selectmen. Chairman Atwater added that in the long term the Finance Committee should consider the Levy, debt inclusions, overrides and the capital stabilization fund in terms of usage and long-range planning. Chairman Atwater stated that in the short term the Finance Committee should consider a framework on how to analyze articles that come up in terms of funding source and priority and in the long term develop a methodology that would reduce the reliance on Free Cash, as well as figure out how to use the levy to provide some predictable funds for capital.

Chairman Atwater continued the discussion with a conversation on Free Cash and the \$250K in the Stabilization Fund. A lengthy conversation followed.

Chairman Atwater shifted the discussion to a conversation on budgeting for the Sewataro Agreement. He stated that \$120K would be a payment to the town in the FY21 operating budget. Dennis stated that the payment wouldn't be factored into the growth of the other departments and would not impact the tax levy. A discussion followed on the Sewataro Agreement in terms of capital.

ITEM 5: Public Comment

Chairman Atwater opened this portion of the meeting for public comment. Chairman Atwater recognized Pat Brown, Sudbury Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Brown noted that the Budget Strategies Task Force may want to reorganize and if the members are willing to serve on the BSTF the committee could reconstitute.

Ms. Brown expressed concern about the use of E&D Funds as it relates to the LS and the timely certification of those funds.

ITEM 6: Possible Future Agenda Topics**ITEM 7: Adjournment****Motion and Vote:**

Bryan Semple moved, and Christopher Carmody seconded the motion that the September 16, 2019, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 10:05 p.m. The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Monday, November 4, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Cheryl Gosmon, Recording Secretary