

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 3, 2019**

ATTENDANCE:

Chairman, Bryan Semple, Jeff Atwater (joined the meeting remotely at 8:12 pm), Susan Berry (arrived at 7:20 pm), Ronald Brumback, Christopher Carmody, Lisa Gutch, Jean Nam, Eric Poch, Scott Smigler

Also Present: Pat Brown member of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen

CONVENE:

Chairman Bryan Semple called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting convened in the Flynn Building, Silva Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, 278 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA 01776.

ITEM 1: Public Comment

Chairman Semple opened this portion of the meeting for Public Comment. There was no public comment.

ITEM 2: General Business

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

There were no Meeting Minutes to approve.

- **Transfers**

There were no Transfers to approve. Chairman Semple spoke briefly about the Reserve Fund Account and how it works.

- **Liaison Reports**

There were no Liaison Reports.

- **Review Calendar**

Chairman Semple reviewed the sequence of Finance Committee meetings during the calendar year

ITEM 3: Sewataro Discussion

- Discuss the long-term debt impact of Sewataro and other projects.

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He commented on the presentation of Article 25: Camp Sewataro Acquisition at the Annual Town Meeting noting that the long-term debt impact of Sewataro was not fully explained to Town Meeting members. He explained that of the approximately \$2M, that is coming off in 2022, \$1.6M are payments that are reimbursed by the state. At the request of new members, Chairman Semple explained taxpayer

impact, tax bill impact, and the impact on the operating budget. He stated that as a Committee we need to have a better read on what the long term debt retirement is and what is going to be the long-term increase based on the budget increase of 2.5%. A general discussion followed.

ITEM 4: Town Meeting Discussion - What Went Well, What to Change

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. Chairman Semple commented on the Annual Town Meeting in terms of what went well and what to change. He stated that the Finance Committee should do a better job of explaining the tax bill impact and retiring debt. Chairman Semple added that Town Meeting members expressed an appreciation for the Finance Committee Guide and that he would like to get that information out sooner.

Scott Smigler stated that he would like to see more insight on issues impacting the budget and to be thoughtful about benchmarking in terms of capital items.

Susan Berry stated that she thought the presentation of the Financial Review was helpful and that the recommendations were clear. Ms. Berry stated that she would like the Finance Committee to review comments on the articles and to get information into the warrant promptly.

Lisa Gutch asked about the Wastewater Study. Chairman Semple explained why this article was put into the operating budget and would be expended from the levy. Ms. Gutch noted that for the first time some of the capital needs were included within the levy. She added that the reason for this is that the Town Manager wanted to create some savings and not to rely always on debt exclusion for a capital override. A general discussion on capital requests followed.

ITEM 5: FinCom Year in Review - What Went Well, What to Change

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. Chairman Semple referred to former Finance Committee Vice Chairman Jeff Barker's letter to the Finance Committee. He summarized Mr. Barker's comments on the number of meetings as well as the average meeting duration and meeting start time. Chairman Semple also summarized comments from Mr. Barker on outcomes and guidance as well as Sewataro and the Regional School District Agreement.

Susan Berry offered comments and suggestions on the past year. She stated that the discussions were respectful of differences in opinion, all voices were heard, and the Finance Committee worked well together. She also stated that Chairman Semple did a good job of letting the discussion take its course and bringing everyone back to the main topic when needed on contentious articles. Ms. Berry stated that the Finance Committee needs to

clarify what to do about guidance earlier in the year. Ms. Berry stated that minutes need to be reviewed and posted closer to the time of the meetings. She also stated that she would like to hear from the owners of the articles as soon as possible. She added that the more time there is to ask questions and contemplate the issues the better the Finance Committee's decisions will be. Ms. Berry stated that it would be great if the budget presentations included history as well as projections. She added that she would like the Cost Centers to resume using the Multiyear Budget Comparison Worksheet so that the Finance Committee would be able to see the trends from year to year. A general discussion followed.

Lisa Gutch expressed that she would like the Finance Committee to have more instruction on the use of the shared drive as well as the role of the Finance Committee.

Scott Smigler shared his discussions with members of the Sudbury community across Sudbury's political spectrum on what has been working or not working. He noted that the opinions are more long-term trends rather than what has happened in the past year. Mr. Smigler stated that Town Meeting discussions have gotten better and that the quality of discussions has gotten better. He stated members of the community rely on the credibility of the Finance Committee and making sure regular order items are addressed such as meeting minutes and posting official documents on the website instead of Google Docs, understanding from the Cost Centers what they view as problems and what their solutions might be to solve those problems. Mr. Smigler also shared comments from citizens on field maintenance, and Park and Recreation user fees as well as discussions on the LS Regional Agreement. Mr. Smigler stated that residents value keeping Finance Committee Multiyear and reconciliation documents up to date. Mr. Smigler also stated that citizens would like to see better forecasting of big money capital items, crowdsourcing fiscal analysis, participating with the Board of Selectmen, and refereeing contentious Town Meeting Articles in terms of being an objective source of truth. A general discussion followed.

Chairman Semple stated that Jeff Atwater has joined the meeting remotely and that all votes going forward will be taken on roll call.

ITEM 6: Finance Committee Operating Procedures, Open Meeting Law (OML), etc.

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He referred to the Finance Committee Operating Procedures folder on Google Drive. He suggested that new members review the information in the folder. He stated that it is information on the role of the Finance Committee, the terms of the Finance Committee, bylaws,

information on the Open Meeting Law. Chairman Semple stated that new members will receive an invitation to attend OML training. Chairman Semple explained the appropriate use of email and social media regarding the non-public discussion. Chairman Semple provided additional pointers and encouraged new members to review the contents of the Operating Procedures folder. A general discussion followed on the classification of documents on Google Drive.

ITEM 7: Reorganization of Committee Chair and Vote

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He reminded the Committee that Jeff Barker is no longer Vice Chair and he will be stepping down as Chair.

Chairman Semple called for the nomination of Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Lisa Gutch made a motion to nominate Jeff Atwater as Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Ronald Brumback.

Chairman Semple called for the nomination of Vice Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Eric Poch made a motion to nominate himself as Vice Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Christopher Carmody.

Chairman Semple asked for any additional nominations.

Jean Nam made a motion to nominate herself as Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Christopher Carmody.

Discussion - Susan Berry asked that the Finance Committee member who accepts the position of Chair that they honor their commitment to speak for the majority of the Committee. Jeff Atwater and Jean Nam expressed their commitment to speak for the majority of the Committee.

On roll call vote for Chair of the Sudbury Finance Committee:

For Jean Nam as Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee;
Christopher Carmody, yes and Jean Nam, yes.

For Jeff Atwater as Chairman of the Sudbury Finance Committee;
Bryan Semple, yes; Jeff Atwater, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ronald Brumback, yes; Lisa Gutch, yes; Eric Poch, yes; and Scott Smigler, yes.

By a vote of 7 for Jeff Atwater and a vote of 2 for Jean Nam, Jeff Atwater was elected Chair of the Finance Committee for FY2020.

On roll call vote for Vice-Chair of the Sudbury Finance Committee:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Christopher Carmody, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; Lisa Gutch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Bryan Semple, yes; and Jeff Atwater, yes.

The motion carried; the vote 9-0-0.

ITEM 8: Public Comment

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

Pat Brown stated that the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional School District School Committee met on Wednesday, May 29, and discussed their Audited Financials and Management letter. She noted that the Finance Committee might be interested in that. Ms. Brown asked Finance Committee member Susan Berry if the Budget Strategies Task Force will be meeting. Ms. Berry stated that this is a Board of Selectmen appointed committee who voted annually on whether to continue with the BSTF. She added that she is waiting to hear from the Board of Selectmen on this. Ms. Brown asked that the Finance Committee date documents that are stored in the Finance Committee Google Drive. Ms. Brown explained why the arguments against the purchase of Sewataro that appeared in the Warrant were written by Town Council.

ITEM 9: Possible Future Agenda Topics

- **Calendar Review**
A brief discussion on whether to hold a July meeting to do a budget review/training.
- **Liaison Reports** - there was no discussion of this item.

ITEM 10: Adjournment**Motion and Vote:**

Eric Poch moved, and Ronald Brumback seconded the motion that the June 3, 2019, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 8:37 p.m.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is TBD.

Respectfully Submitted: Cheryl Gosmon, Recording Secretary