

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 2, 2019**

**Members of the Finance Committee present were:** Chairman, Bryan Semple, Jeff Barker, Vice-Chairman, Jeff Atwater, Susan Berry, Adrian Davies, Jean Nam, Lisa Gutch

**Absent:** Glenn Migliozi, Eric Poch

**Also Present:** Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector, members of the Sudbury Board of Selectmen, and members of the Park and Recreation Commission

**CONVENE:**

Chairman Bryan Semple called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting convened at the Police Station Conference Room, 75 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA 01776.

**ITEM 1: Public Comment**

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

**ITEM 2: General Business**

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

There were no Meeting Minutes to approve.

- **Transfers**

There were no Budget Transfers to approve.

- **Liaison Reports**

Chairman Semple stated that the Town of Sudbury is requesting a member of the Finance Committee to participate in the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Plan. Susan Berry stated that if no one from the Finance Committee wants to participate, she would be willing to serve on this committee.

- **Review Calendar**

Chairman Semple stated that he put a meeting on the schedule for Monday at 7:00 pm as a placeholder in the likely hood that the Committee would need to deliberate before the start of the Annual Town Meeting.

**ITEM 3: Town Meeting Article Review and Votes**

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He led the discussion on the Sewataro Land Acquisition, Town Meeting

Warrant Article 25. Chairman Semple referred to his financial analysis and stated that there are two scenarios: Option A - Buy the property and rent it out; and Option B - Buy it and lease it. The Committee discussed Option B and looked at the Financial Analysis on revenue, expenses, net to taxpayers, and cost per household. The conversation continued with a discussion on Option A. Chairman Semple noted that the Town of Sudbury currently does not have a plan on the use of the land. The Committee discussed revenue, expenses, net to taxpayers, and cost per household.

Chairman Semple introduced Jim Marotta from Park and Recreation Commission to talk about their position on the Sewataro Warrant Article. Mr. Marotta read aloud a statement on the position from the Park and Recreation Commission. He noted that the bullet points are outlined in the Park and Recreation Commission minutes. He also noted that the Park and Recreation Commission voted against the land acquisition for Sewataro, 4 to 1. A brief discussion followed.

The conversation continued with a discussion on leasing the land to a long-term lease operator: revenue, net to the town, expenses, net to taxpayers, and cost per household.

Chairman Semple opened this portion of the meeting to Public Comment for guidance on the options.

Chairman Semple recognized Kirsten Reopenian. Kirsten Reopenian noted that the word preservation would be taken out of the description of the Sewataro property because the property is not available for preservation. She cautioned the town to be required to ensure that the property is ADA compliant even if it is leasing. She expressed concerns about the impact of borrowing to the Town's triple-A credit rating and the correct number of lots for sale. She also expressed that the Finance Committee should not criticize other boards for the reports that they bring before the Finance Committee.

Chairman Semple recognized Sarah Liberman. Sarah Liberman had a question about the debt terms. She stated that this is an unusual purchase for the Town of Sudbury, adding that it is twice the amount that has been done for any other land purchase. She also stated that even though the purchase might cost a lot of money over thirty years it might be more palpable on a per year bases. She also stated that the school costs are low because it does not account for additional classrooms being added.

Chairman Semple recognized Jeff Levine. Jeff Levine stated that he is a member of the Council on Aging but that he is

representing himself. He stated that he has a lot of concerns about the assumptions that the Town Manager has made and that the Finance Committee has accepted, which he believes goes to the ongoing cost of the project. He expressed concerns on estimates relating to the number of students in the system and the appraised property costs.

Chairman Semple recognized Stacey Monroe. Stacey Monroe stated that she lives on Greystone Lane and that the number of projected children is correct and that the cost based on the number of children per household is incredibly low for this development. She referred to the financial modeling that she sent to the Finance Committee and noted that if nothing is done with the camp, the Town loses money on educating these kids compared to what would be made on taxes. She added that the town loses money if the property gets developed.

Chairman Semple recognized Bill Schineller. Bill Schineller asked if the Town Manager included out-of-district costs.

Jean Nam suggested that the Town considers the option, buy it as Open Space and Recreation Space, and use it for the Senior Center and other office space. She stated that the Town of Sudbury could solve a huge piece of the Community Center problem with the Sewataro land acquisition. A brief discussion followed.

Chairman Semple reviewed the options: Option A - Buy it, Open Space and Rec Space; Option B - Buy it, lease it; and Option C - Develop. He stated that one of the advantages of Option A is that it provides future use for the Town. He added that this is true of Option B as well. He stated that Option C has no debt and that the Committee is divided as to whether the incremental operating costs will impact taxes but will impact services. A general discussion followed on the range of confidence for each option and changes were made to the spreadsheet.

Chairman Semple opened this portion of the meeting for additional public comment. Chairman Semple recognized Scott Monroe. Scott Monroe cautioned that the Finance Committee keep their comments on the Sewataro land acquisition as simple as possible and minimize the options.

Chairman Semple recognized Jen Stone. Jen Stone expressed that she was in favor of Option A and Option B. She stated that it is worth it to her and her family to have access to that space and to have her tax bill increase because of it.

Chairman Semple recognized Selectmen elect, Bill Schineller. Mr. Schineller pointed out that the duration is just as important as the range confidence and there is a difference between 20 years

and in perpetuity which should not be buried in the remarks. He stated that the potential to use existing funds for the purchase of the land is there in the Melone Stabilization fund.

Chairman Semple recognized Jeff Levine. Jeff Levine stated that you cannot use the four houses which are not adjacent to a senior center. He added that you cannot have seniors go from one building to another building in the wintertime.

The Finance Committee continued their discussion with a conversation on capital. Susan Berry pointed out that it is important to include in the presentation a list of pending capital items as referenced in the Five-Year Capital Plan.

#### **Motion and Vote**

Jeff Barker moved and Jeff Atwater seconded the motion to approve Article 25: Camp Sewataro Acquisition.

#### **Discussion:**

Lisa Gutch noted that the Board of Selectmen voted 3 out of 5 to purchase Sewataro, Park and Recreation voted 4 against and 1 in favor and yesterday the Land Acquisition Review Committee voted 6 against and 1 abstaining. She stated that this is important information on where Town Committees stand on this.

Susan Berry stated that Sewataro is a beautiful property but as a member of the Finance Committee, she cannot vote in favor of Article 25 given the pending capital projects that are desperately needed.

Jean Nam stated that Sewataro is a piece of land that Sudbury would like to preserve. She added that it has the potential to be a better community center than what we have now. She stated that \$33M was denied by the Town in the winter for a Community Center. She added that if we can get 1/3 of that, that is \$10M or 1/6 of that, that is \$5M. She stated that \$5M for part of a Community Center or \$5M to preserve the land is a no brainer.

**The motion failed; the vote was 2 in favor, 5 opposed.**

The Finance Committee continued its discussion and moved onto the remaining Town Meeting Warrant Articles. Chairman Semple stated that the Committee has a few more Warrant Articles to vote on.

#### **Motion and Vote**

Jeff Atwater moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve Article 8 Snow and Ice Transfer.

**The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.**

#### **Motion and Vote**

Jeff Barker moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to approve Article 17 FY20 Revolving Fund Spend Limits.

**The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.**

**ITEM 4: Finance Committee Warrant Submission and Comments**

- Warrant

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He stated that Susan Berry reviewed and revised the document. Chairman Semple stated that the document is organized based on the funding source. He summarized the Warrant Articles. He stated that copies will be made for Town Meeting members and he will post electronically.

**ITEM 5: Talk Through Town Meeting Procedures**

Chairman Semple opened this item for discussion. He stated that he spoke with the Moderator about procedures that will keep the discussion and debate centered. Chairman Semple also stated that if Finance Committee members want to speak on an article, that they should join meeting members on the floor of the hall and be called on by the Moderator. A general discussion followed.

**ITEM 6: Public Comment**

Chairman Semple opened the meeting to public comment. Chairman Semple recognized Pat Brown, Sudbury Board of Selectmen. Ms. Brown stated that she would like the Finance Committee to post their documents on the Town website so they can be backed up should there ever be a public records request.

**ITEM 7: Possible Future Agenda Topics**

- **Calendar Review** - Chairman Semple stated that the Committee would not need to meet on Monday.
- **Liaison Reports** - Jeff Barker stated that Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School holds a Spend the Day at LS every year. He stated that this year it will be on May 7th. He also stated that Sherry is leaving her position at the end of this fiscal year.

**ITEM 8: Adjournment**

**Motion and Vote:**

**Jeff Barker moved, and Jeff Atwater seconded the motion that the May 2, 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, June 3, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.*

*Respectfully Submitted: Cheryl Gosmon, Recording Secretary*

