

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Virtual Meeting Minutes
September 2, 2020**

ATTENDANCE

Finance Committee Members Present: Chairman, Eric Poch, Susan Berry (joined at 7:28 due to technical difficulty), Ron Brumback, Howard Feng, Lisa Gutch, Michael Joachim, Jean Nam, and Scott Smigler

ABSENT: Bryan Semple

CONVENE:

Chair Eric Poch called the virtual meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. The new members, Howard Feng and Michael Joachim, were welcomed to the committee.

ITEM 1: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 2: General Business

- Approve meeting minutes
Held until next meeting
- Transfers and other business
There were no transfers or other business.

- Liaison reports
LS - Ron reported no change from LS. Jean Nam mentioned that there has been a change in what will be reimbursed by FEMA, and she wondered if this changes what the town and schools are expecting to be covered.

SPS - Susan Berry reported that SPS has received the Covid items they ordered: masks, gowns, Plexiglas, etc. SPS received a \$38K supplemental tech grant for district hot spots and 100 chrome books as loaners for K-1. There is HVAC modifications that may need to be done, but no dollar amounts at this point.

Scott Smigler reported that at the last meeting of the Master Plan Committee the focus was on the action plan that would be implemented after the Master Plan is adopted, possibly later this year. The featured Big Idea Projects include Redevelopment and Revitalization of Route 20 with major investments to increase housing diversity with an eye to increased density and a much

more diverse housing stock, commercial tax base, transformation of under-utilized commercial land. The second was coordinate town-wide land preservation, featuring high priority to Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and Mass Central Rail Trail.

Scott Smigler also reported on the CIAC meeting at which the CSX Corridor article was presented and voted. They also reviewed all the articles they had taken a position on and did not change their votes on any of these. One member of the CIAC expressed concern that the Finance Committee did not recommend approval of the rolling stock articles given Dan Nason's plan.

ITEM 3: FY21 Budget

The Chair stated and members agreed that no further discussion was needed on this item.

ITEM 4: Town meeting

- **Articles - Discussion and vote**

- **Article 17 CSX Corridor**

This was deferred until Beth Suedmeyer, Environmental Planner, could join the meeting.

Jennifer Roberts kicked off the presentation with a bit of background on the corridor and Sudbury's negotiations with CSX that have been on-going for 19 years.

Beth Suedmeyer went through the presentation on the article: defining the section for acquisition, the location of this section, what makes this an attractive acquisition, the history of negotiations over the last 19 years, the term of the acquisition, and why there might be some urgency to acquire the corridor. The total cost would be \$1,220,500; \$1,145,500 for the purchase and \$75,00 due diligence costs. The Town has received \$400,000 in grants toward this purchase, making the final cost for the Town \$820,500. The Finance Director has provided an estimate of the tax cost for the average home depending on whether the project is bonded for 5, 10, or 20 years. The Select Board has not yet voted on this article or the length of the bond. The recent appraised value of the property is \$1,145,000. Ms. Suedmeyer stated

that the Town has estimated closing cost, done a title search, a survey update is underway, and an environmental study is underway. She explained the rail banking process.

In answer to a question from Jean Nam, Beth Suedmeyer stated that the reimbursement should be received by the Town 30 days after DCR receives proof of payment and that the expectation is that the purchase, if approved, would happen sometime in November. There was some discussion about timing and possibility of extending the Rail Trail on this corridor.

In answer to a question from Scott Smigler about whether it is possible to use the CPA funds voted at the 2008 Town Meeting toward this purchase, Ms. Suedmeyer reviewed the history of the possible use of these funds. Although there is legislation in the works, it is unlikely that the legislation will pass in time for this purchase. Exploring whether these funds could be used to help pay off the bond at a later point is still on the table.

Jennifer Roberts stated that the Select Board unanimously voted to advance the purchase and sale agreement, but they have not taken a position on the Article 17. The Finance Committee will hold off voting on this article until after the Select Board deliberation and there is additional information about the funding. Scott Smigler reported that CIAC's vote on this article was 1 in favor, 1 abstention, and 3 opposed, and he went over the reasons given for the vote.

- **Presentation**

The Finance Committee reviewed the current draft of the presentation slides that will be added to the Town website and a subset of which will be used at Town Meeting. The current draft included modifications that members of the committee had made since the last Finance Committee meeting. Committee members made suggestions to clarify the information in the slides and updates were made as agreed to by the committee members.

At this point Beth Suedmeyer was available, the committee paused its review of the Town Meeting presentation and took up the **Articles** section.

Upon returning to the presentation, the committee began with a discussion of the slide on the Article 18 Fairbank Community Center vote. Modifications were made to the pro and con items to cover the key arguments and fit them on one slide.

Jean Nam volunteered to update/edit the areas that the committee felt still needed to be modified in the draft.

Eric Poch went over the draft of slides that would be part of the Town Meeting presentation for Article 3 FY21 Budget. Modifications were made by the committee, and Eric and Jean will meld these slides into the overall slide presentation draft.

- **Communications**

The committee again discussed getting the report on the Town website and copies made for Town Meeting. Susan Berry agreed to check with the Town about logistics for the committee at Town Meeting.

ITEM 5: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 6: Possible Future agenda topics and Calendar Review

Finance Committee will meet again on Wednesday, September 9 at 7:00pm.

ITEM 7: Adjourn

Ron Bromback moved, and Scott Smigler seconded the motion to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting at 11:00 p.m. The motion passed unanimously on a roll call vote.