

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Virtual Meeting Minutes
September 29, 2020**

ATTENDANCE

Members of the Finance Committee present for the Virtual Meeting were: Chairman, Eric Poch, Vice-Chairman, Susan Berry, Ronald Brumback, Howard Feng, Michael Joachim, Saji Johnson, Sonny Parente, Scott Smigler

ABSENT: Jean Nam

ALSO PRESENT

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector, Henry Hayes, Town Manager, Chris Hagger, Chairman of the Historical Commission, Jen Roberts, and Bill Schineller, Sudbury Select Board members

CONVENE:

Chairman Eric Poch called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. Chairman Poch roll called members of the Finance Committee present at the September 29, 2020, Virtual Meeting.

ITEM 1: Welcome and Introduction of New Members

Chairman Poch welcomed new members and offered them an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Howard Feng stated that he is a Director of Risk Management at Santander Bank. He stated that he has been in banking for more than twenty years. He added that he looks forward to working with the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Sonny Parente stated that he is excited to be a member of the Sudbury Finance Committee. He stated that he and his wife moved to Sudbury about a year and a half ago and have two young boys, 4 and 2. Mr. Parente stated that he served as a member of the Hudson Selectmen before moving to Sudbury. He stated that he is looking forward to working with the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Michael Joachim stated that he is a health care regulatory lawyer, and he serves as a Compliance Officer for Sanofi a pharmaceutical company. He stated that he has lived in Sudbury since 2001. He also stated that he met his wife working as a counselor at Camp Sewataro and that his wife is the Chairperson of the Lincoln-Sudbury School Committee.

Saji Johnson stated that he is a new resident of Sudbury. He stated that he has lived in California and New York for the last 13 years. He stated that he grew up in the Boston area. He also

stated that he is a venture capitalist working with startup companies. He stated that he is looking forward to working with the Finance Committee.

ITEM 2: Public Comment

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

ITEM 3: General Business

Chairman Poch conferred with Finance Committee members who agreed to move the discussion on Budget Transfers ahead of approving meeting minutes.

- **Budget Transfers**

Dennis Keohane stated that there is one Reserve Fund Transfer request. It is a \$3,000 request to be transferred from the Reserve Fund into the Board of Selectmen Expense Account. He stated that the Reserve Fund Budget balance for FY21 is \$300,000 and if this transfer is approved that balance would be \$297,000. He stated that he defers any questions and comments on this request to Henry Hayes, Town Manager.

Mr. Hayes stated that over the past few weeks the Select Board has been in discussion regarding a request by the Sudbury Historical Commission. He stated that this is a request to contract with a Historical Preservationist that would help the Sudbury Historical Commission satisfy its section 106 requirements. He added that the Historical Commission has provided him with enough contractual information so that he can enter into an agreement with the Historical Preservationist to get this work done. He stated that the total amount that the Select Board has authorized is \$3,000. Mr. Hayes stated that Chris Hagger, Chairman of the Historical Commission would provide additional information on this request.

Mr. Hagger stated that under the National Historic Preservation Act, section 106, the Historical Commission is required to provide comments to the Federal Agency, in this case, the US Army Corp of Engineers, who will be developing the permitting for the Eversource project. Mr. Hagger added that the Historical Commission will need to determine what historical or archaeological artifacts are eligible under the National Register and a preservation consultant would help determine this and provide comments on the potential impacts of the Eversource project to historical artifacts along the right of way. He stated that the Sudbury Historical Commission does not issue permits, and does not have the ability to charge Eversource for peer review and

comments. He also stated that Eversource has started furnishing the Sudbury Historical Commission with engineering and technology reports for which expertise is needed to help decipher and make informed comments to the Army Corp of Engineers. He added that these comments must be made within the next two months. He also added that the preservation consultant would help the Commission with its duties under section 106 review.

Ron Brumback asked if this can be done for \$3,000. Mr. Hagger stated that the Historical Commission will make good use of the \$3,000 and if more is needed the Historical Commission would go back to the Select Board and request additional funding.

Scott Smigler referred to guidelines on Reserve Fund Transfer requests. He read aloud the guidelines as they relate to this matter. He asked Mr. Hagger to walk the Finance Committee through the requirement and help the Finance Committee understand why the request meets the unforeseen emergency criteria and why it is in the best interest of the Town. Mr. Hayes responded that in terms of the timing, the Select Board did not have the information and the costs in time for Town Meeting nor was it available at the time the FY21 Budget was being developed. Michael Joachim questioned why this expense was not foreseen and not included in the Town's FY21 budget. Mr. Hayes responded that this type of request is not something that the Historical Commission typically deals with. He added that projects of this magnitude are new for the Historical Commission and requests for information from Eversource to the Historical Commission are coming very late. He also added that until the Historical Commission gets the information it is difficult to determine how much information must be reviewed to submit comments to the Army Corp of Engineers. Michael Joachim asked if there was another source of funding for this request. Dennis Keohane stated that this request is not an increase to the budget but rather is a transfer within the General Fund Budget from one line item to another.

Select Board member Jen Roberts stated that the Select Board voted to approve the \$3,000 for the preservationist. She stated that she sympathizes with the Historical Commission because they do not typically have projects like this and have an extremely limited budget. She added that once the Historical Commission started receiving information from Eversource they realized that some outside expertise was needed. She also added that by the time the FY21 budget was set there was not a lot known about what

this workstream would require for it to be built into the budget. She stated that other commissions involved in the Eversource project are benefiting from the help of outside consultants and it seems appropriate to afford this commission the same help.

Scott Smigler stated that he would like to see the invoices to get a better estimate of the full cost and that the Finance Committee could debate whether this request meets the guidelines for transfers from the Reserve Fund. Mr. Hagger responded that the Historical Commission has a tight timeframe and has reached out to the Army Corp of Engineers in terms of their deadline to provide comments and that timeframe is fast approaching. Mr. Hagger referred to what the Historical Commission is tasked with per its bylaws in preserving Sudbury's historical resources. He added that what the Historical Commission is trying to do is offer comments to the Army Corp of Engineers that if certain of these resources are going to be completely demolished, the Historic Commission wants to be able to comment so that Eversource will take that into consideration and find a way to preserve the resources as part of the overall project. A general discussion followed.

Motion and Vote

Ronald Brumback moved, and Howard Feng seconded the motion to approve the \$3,000 request to be transferred from the Reserve Fund into the Board of Selectmen Expense Account.

Roll call vote:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; Saji Johnson, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.

The motion carried. The vote unanimous.

• Approve Meeting Minutes

Motion and Vote

Scott Smigler moved, and Sonny Parente seconded the motion to approve the minutes of May 2, 2019, April 22, 2019, July 30, 2020, and August 24, 2020 meetings as amended.

Roll call vote:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; Saji Johnson, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

• Liaison Reports

Susan Berry reported on grant and relief funding that the Sudbury Public Schools (SPS) has received. She stated that SPS has received funding from the Elementary and Secondary

School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Grant, which is part of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that provides funds to help schools respond to changes in student needs due to COVID-19. Ms. Berry stated that the grants are close to what has been estimated by SPS except for the IDEA Grant, which is approximately \$28K more than expected. Ms. Berry stated that SPS will use \$28k from the ESSER grant to fund a technology platform for remote learners and will use \$38,590K for Math Learning Centers Home Connections for Bridges. She also stated that SPS received funding from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CvRF) and will use \$401,940K to fund contract services to sanitize and disinfect district facilities and will use \$201,735 to increase HVAC mechanical operations to provide air quality protections to students and staff.

Scott Smigler reported that the Planning Board has started discussing the current draft of the Master Plan Steering Committee's goals and recommended actions. He stated that the Planning Board will continue their discussions at a future meeting.

Susan Berry added to Other Business. She stated that she would like the Chair to post the Finance Committee Final Report and slides on the Finance Committee website.

ITEM 4: Committee Reorganization

- **Discuss and elect Chair and Vice-Chair**

Chairman Poch led the discussion on this item and shared with the Committee the idea of having a Co-Chair structure to the Finance Committee as opposed to a Chair and Vice-Chair structure. He stated that he spoke with the Town Moderator, Elizabeth Quirk, and Town Counsel, Jonathan Silverstein to inquire about the Finance Committee moving to this type of structure. He stated that there have been a lot of thoughtful discussions about the role of the Finance Committee and how moving forward it can be a stronger resource to the Town, the Select Board, and other structures within the Town. He stated that he would like the Finance Committee to consider a Co-Chair Structure for the coming year. He added that the Co-Chairs would take on roles that are parallel but have roles and responsibilities that help push forward the agenda, as well as actions and activities that the Committee pursues. He stated that going forward this Committee can talk about its goals, projects to look at this year, areas of guidance to the Town, or policies to inform the Town on concerning financial matters that can be approved upon or enhanced. He stated that a Co-Chair structure has been approved by the Moderator and Town Counsel as an option.

Susan Berry stated that having been a Chair for many years she thinks the Co-Chair option is a good one. She stated that it is a lot of work being Chair of the Committee and that the prework can be extremely time-consuming. She added that leading the discussions are not always skills that people have, or they are better at the administrative aspects and vice versa. She stated that the Co-Chair concept is worth trying. A general discussion followed.

Motion and Vote

Ronald Brumback moved, and Sonny Parente seconded the motion to move the Finance Committee organization structure to Co-Chair as oppose to Chair and Vice-Chair.

Roll call vote:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; Saji Johnson, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

Motion and Vote

Sonny Parente moved, and Michael Joachim seconded the motion to nominate Eric Poch and Scott Smigler as Co-Chairs of the Sudbury Finance Committee.

Roll call vote:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; Saji Johnson, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

- **Liaison Assignments**

Co-Chairman Eric Poch opened this item for discussion. Susan Berry suggested adding a Liaison to the Board of Health. Susan Berry also spoke about the Budget Strategies Task Force and the role a Finance Committee member would have on this committee. Eric Poch reviewed the list of assignments with members. A general discussion followed on the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee (CIAC). Susan Berry provided background information on the inception of this Committee. She stated that one member is appointed by the Finance Committee. Eric Poch provided detailed information on the role of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC). Eric Poch stated that the Finance Committee would continue its discussion on Liaison Assignment at its next meeting.

- **Possible Future Agenda Items**

- **Calendar Review**

Eric Poch reviewed the Finance Committee Calendar that he has created. He encouraged members to review the calendar and submit questions to him. Members have tentatively agreed to meet on the second and fourth Mondays.

ITEM 5: Town Meeting and Year in Review - What Worked/Didn't Work
There was no discussion on this item.

ITEM 6: Public Comment
There were no public comments.

ITEM 7: Adjournment

Motion and Vote:

Howard Feng moved, and Michael Joachim seconded the motion that the September 29, 2020, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Roll call vote:

Ronald Brumback, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; Saji Johnson, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Monday, October 5, 2020, at 7:00 p.m. Submitted by Cheryl Gosmon