

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
November 30, 2020**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Finance Committee present for the Virtual Meeting were: Co-Chair, Eric Poch, Co-Chair Scott Smigler, Susan Berry, Ronald Brumback, Howard Feng, Michael Joachim, Jean Nam, and Sonny Parente

**ABSENT:** Saji Johnson

**ALSO PRESENT**

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer-Collector, Bill Murphy, Board of Health

**CONVENE:**

Co-Chair Scott Smigler called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Co-Chair Smigler roll called members of the Finance Committee present at the November 30, 2020, Virtual Meeting.

**ITEM 1: Open the Meeting**

- Welcome and Member Roll Call
- Opening Remarks (Co-Chairs)  
Co-Chairman Smigler stated that this meeting may end up being shorter than expected because the budget transfers that are listed on the agenda will not be acted on tonight. Co-Chairman Smigler also stated that the 3-year projection and Budget Guidance Letter is not available for review at this time.
- Updates from Town Manager and Finance Director
  - a. The budget process, Capital Plan process, Cares Act (submission status and total request amount), testing and vaccination cost, and other timely updates.
  - b. State Guidance Numbers Validated (State Aid, E&D, etc), Quarterly financial reporting, other relevant updates.

Co-Chairman Smigler stated that there will be no update from the Town Manager. He added that the Town Manager will join the Finance Committee at the December 9 meeting.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**ITEM 3: General Business**

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**  
There were no meeting minutes to approve.

- **Budget Transfers and Other Business**

- a. Health Department

Co-Chairman Smigler welcomed Bill Murphy, Director of Sudbury Public Health, and invited him to share information on the pending Reserve Fund Transfer Request for the Public Health Department.

Mr. Murphy stated that at the beginning of the COVID-19 Health Emergency, the Public Health Department onboarded an additional full-time Public Health Nurse. He added that over the summer the school nurses were on board to do contact tracing and the expense was paid for through the SPS budget. He stated that in September when the nurses went back to school the Public Health Department onboarded four part-time nurses. He stated that the cost to maintain the current staffing level through FY21 is approximately \$110K and that the Finance Director will submit the transfer request for this item. He stated that the CARES Act is paying for the nurses up until December 31. Mr. Murphy stated that there is a State program that would do the contact tracing if Sudbury could not handle the overflow. A general discussion followed.

Co-Chairman Smigler stated that one of the Finance Committee's criteria for a Reserve Fund Transfer is to provide for an urgent or unforeseen expenditure that could not have been anticipated before Town Meeting. Co-Chairman Smigler asked if this expense could have been anticipated before the prior Town Meeting. Mr. Murphy replied that it could not.

There was no further information on the remaining transfers listed on the agenda.

- **Liaison Reports**

Jean Nam reported on the CPC meeting she attended. She reported that the CPC held its first set of Public Hearings this past week for CPC Funding Request. She stated that the Sudbury Housing Trust did a type of pandemic rental assistance program and that they are looking to set up a permanent Rental Assistance Program. She stated that this Wednesday is the second Public Hearing that would include Smile Playground renovation and Feeley Field, which is a large project. Ms. Nam stated that the CPC will make decisions on the request in mid-December. She stated that this information is in the Finance Committee shared drive under CPC FY22.

Howard Feng reported on the Park and Recreation Commission meetings he attended. He reported that the Park and

Recreation Commission discussed the Feeley Field improvements and that a funding request has gone to CPC. He stated that the number one pressure of the Park and Recreation Department is staff and salaries. He added that due to the COVID-19 Health Emergency the summer and spring programs did not generate enough revenue to cover staffing and salaries. He stated that the Park and Recreation Department would like to maintain their staffing level and would like to know more about how the Pool and Field Enterprise Fund would help them with costs related to staff and salaries.

Mr. Feng stated that he suggested that Park and Recreation reach out to the Finance Director who can help them sort out funding that is available to them.

Ronald Brumback provided a brief update on L-S. He stated that L-S will stay within their budget and that they will not need to use E&D funds.

Co-Chairman Smilger reported on the recent Select Board meeting. He stated that he heard from Select Board member William Schineller that the new project tracking policy and template was approved at a recent Select Board meeting. Co-Chairman Smilger stated that updating financial policies was ranked as the Select Board's number one goal. He also stated that he has reached out to the Select Board Liaisons to relay our offer of collaboration with them on their Financial policies if it would be useful.

Co-Chairman Poch added that the Select Board voted forward the BRFT purchase for the CSX property. Co-Chairman Poch also stated that there was some discussion on the municipal agreement with Lincoln, acknowledging that this needs to be put back on their agenda for discussion. He stated that the Select Board discussed Vocational Education. Co-Chairman Poch stated that the Town Manager gave an update and expressed concerns with space utilization and emergency management, which led to a discussion about temporary housing, which is being left to the discretion of the Town Manager. He also stated that there was a discussion on revenue from Camp Sewataro.

Jean Nam reminded the community that the Master Plan Virtual Open House sponsored by the Planning Board is open and she encouraged members of the community to attend this event.

- **Calendar Review**

Co-Chairman Smigler provided a review of the Finance Committee Calendar. He stated that he and Co-Chairman Poch discussed how to streamline the budget meetings and to get committees into one room instead of having the departments present the same thing to multiple committees. He suggested a February 23 joint meeting where the Town presents its budget, the departments present their capital articles and the CIAC join to provide their recommendation on articles. He added that on March 16 there would be a joint meeting with the Select Board to discuss capital articles. Co-Chairman Smigler noted that the Finance Committee would still meet with L-S and SPS one on one.

Co-Chairman Smigler stated that SPS will attend the December 9 Finance Committee meeting to present their budget pressures. A discussion followed on how to best prepare for a productive meeting on budget pressures with SPS and subsequently with L-S. In preparation for those meetings, members will prepare their questions ahead of time and forward them to Susan Berry for SPS and Ronald Brumback for L-S who will send these on to the respective Cost Center on the information the Finance Committee.

- **Future Agenda Items**

There was no discussion on this item.

#### **ITEM 4: Committee Organization**

- **Membership**

Co-Chairman Poch led the discussion on this item. He stated that there has been one member who has not attended the meetings and that the Finance Committee will look for another member to fill the position. He stated that there will be an internal discussion as well as interviews with potential candidates. He added that this will be an interim appointment until the end of FY21 and the Finance Committee will decide on the final candidate. A general discussion followed.

#### **Update FinCom Operating Procedures and Policies**

Co-Chairman Smigler opened this item for discussion. He expressed his appreciation to Sonny Parante and Jean Nam for their work on this. He stated that this is the first draft for the Finance Committee's consideration. He also stated that members would have an opportunity to provide feedback. He added that Sonny Parante and Jean Nam would condense the feedback into a second draft for review at a future meeting.

Michael Joachim stated that his preference would be to restructure the document to make it rules and procedures rather than a statement of the nature of the committee and its role in the Town.

Susan Berry stated that the draft document is a great document for new members, but that Finance Committee needs a stand-alone document for rules and procedures.

Co-Chairman Smigler presented a detailed description of suggested edits. His comments included adding to the document the enabling legislation that governs the Finance Committee. He stated that he liked the idea of having the roles and responsibilities and made some suggested edits. He stated that the budget process overview was helpful. He added that the statement on the nature of the committee is a good idea and he made some suggested edits. He stated that it is important to document and be clear on what the Finance Committee's values are.

Co-Chairman Poch suggested that the document be reviewed by the Town Moderator and Select Board.

Howard Feng stated that he agrees with Co-Smigler's comments. He added that the Operating Procedures are light, particularly for new members.

Co-Chairman Smigler stated that the plan is to see an updated version of the document and plan to take a vote on it at that meeting.

Co-Chairman Smigler recognized Jennifer Roberts from the Select Board. Ms. Roberts stated that the Select Board does not have a Social Media Policy.

**ITEM 5: FY22 Budget Update and Discussion**

- [Overview from Dennis] 3-year revenue/expenditure projections, updated general fund balances, and Town Manager's budget guidance letter - This discussion was postponed

- [Susan] MultiYear and Reconciliation Worksheet Templates for Town

Susan Berry led the discussion on this item. She provided a review of the MultiYear and Reconciliation Worksheet templates and described the configuration of each. The Finance Committee engaged in a lengthy discussion of questions, comments, and suggestions. Ms. Berry noted that the MultiYear and Reconciliation Worksheets will be

distributed to the Cost Centers and are due back to the Finance Committee on December 31.

**ITEM 6: Committee Discussion**

- **Capital Management Including Sub-Committee Update if Available** - There was no discussion on this item.
  
- **Reserve Fund Transfer Policy**  
Co-Chairman Smigler stated that the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) suggests that Finance Committees set up their own Reserve Fund Transfer Policy. He added that the purpose is to help Town Officials get a better understanding of appropriate uses and to be proactive with their request. He stated that the question for the Finance Committee do we want to create Reserve Fund Guidelines. The consensus of the Finance Committee was that they would like to have Reserve Fund Guidelines. Co-Chairman Smigler stated that he would be happy to investigate this and report back to the committee.
  
- **Update Recommended Free Cash Use Guidelines: FinCom -2018; Reference Free Cash Policy; Select Board -2015 (active)/2019 (draft)**  
Co-Chairman Smigler led the discussion on this item. He stated that in 2016 the Finance Committee adopted recommendations for the use of Free Cash and amended them in 2018. He presented two options for the Finance Committee consideration: 1) Update Free Cash Guidelines and share with the Select Board, and 2) Wait until the Select Board acts on this and determine if the Finance Committee would want to adopt their recommendations. A general discussion followed on the existing guidelines.
  
- **Insights from Association of Town Finance Committee Webinars**  
Members shared their thoughts on the webinars that they had attended.

**ITEM 7: Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**ITEM 8: Adjournment**

**Motion and Vote:**

**Michael Joachim** moved, and **Susan Berry** seconded the motion that the November 30, 2020, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 10:00 p.m.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Ronald Brumback, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Sonny Parente, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.**

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

*The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Wednesday, December 9, 2020, at 7:00 p.m.*

*Submitted by Cheryl Gosmon*