

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
March 8, 2021**

**ATTENDANCE**

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

**Absent:** Sonny Parente

**Other Attendees:** Dennis Keohane, Finance Director

**ITEM 1: Open Meeting and Remarks**

Co-Chair Poch opened the meeting at 7:04 with a roll call.

**Roll call:**

**Scott Smigler, present; Michael Joachim, present; Susan Berry, present; Ronald Brumback, present; Blair Caple, present; Howard Feng, present; Jean Nam, present; and Eric Poch, present**

Co-Chair Smigler read the recently received statement about public meeting and information about being recognized and shared the new guideline about use of a shared drive.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**ITEM 3: Updates from and discussion with Town Manager / Finance Director / Department Heads**

Dennis Keohane shared that Free Cash has been certified at \$4,249,754 and reviewed all the Town Meeting articles proposed to use Free Cash. If these all pass, there will be \$681,446 unappropriated Free Cash at the end of Town Meeting. He mentioned other articles that could impact this: Snow and Ice currently about \$230K in the deficit, not including the last storm.

**ITEM 4: General Business**

This item was taken up after Item 5.

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

Deferred vote on the January 20<sup>th</sup> minutes until 3/15 meeting.

- **Membership** - none

- **Transfers and Other Business**

There were no transfers. Dennis Keohane confirmed that he will get a draft of the Finance Committee section of the Warrant back to the committee by the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- **Liaison Reports**

Jean Nam reported that CPC was grateful for the questions ahead of time. CPC suggested that the FinCom consider only inviting the proponents of the articles. There was some discussion about the need for the CPC Chair to be present.

Susan Berry reported that there may be some cost for SPS as they prepare to bring the K-8 students back in person full time. Also, Susan Berry and Michael Joachim will meet with Silvia Nersessian, Chair of the SPS Committee, Brad Crozier, and Don Sawyer to discuss SPS' approach to accounting for circuit breaker funds in its budget.

- **Calendar and budget process**

Nothing on calendar. Content for the FinCom section of the Warrant will go to Dennis tomorrow.

**ITEM 5: Deliberate and vote to take positions on Town Meeting articles and FinCom Report to Warrant**

In answer to a question about the certified Retained Earnings in the Enterprise Funds, Dennis Keohane confirmed that these are where he expected them to be at this point. In answer to questions about the COVID expenses and reimbursements, Mr. Keohane replied that he will update this information and will need to update it again after the final payout.

Dennis Keohane explained that the certified Free Cash was less than might have been expected because the FEMA reimbursement had not arrived, and two items were not bonded by June 30<sup>th</sup>. Assuming all things stay the same, the town would have about a \$2M starting point for Free Cash that is certified as of June 30, 2021.

The FinCom continued to review the positives and negatives in terms of each Cost Centers' budget, adding this information for the Town budget.

Co-Chair Smigler asked if members were ready to vote on the budget, Article 3.

**Motion and Vote:**

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 3 FY22 Budget** for a total of \$107,093,804. Scott Smigler seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 4 FY22 Capital Budget**

Jean Nam mentioned that she is voting no on this article and gave her reasons for her vote. She believes the Loring path request is rushed and that the Loring community will be disappointed. She is also not convinced that the \$75K for various building improvements is needed given that there is money left in this category from previous Capital Budgets. She would also like to see long-term planning from the facilities department similar to LS and DPW. Scott Smigler also had a question about the prioritization codes. Dennis Keohane mentioned that different departments may fill out the forms somewhat differently. He also mentioned that it is likely that the Town Manager will be changing the prioritization system for the future.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 4 FY22 Capital Budget**. Mike Joachim seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, no; Eric Poch, yes.**

**The motion carried. The vote was 7 in favor, 1 opposed.**

**Article 12 FY22 Revolving Fund Spending Limits**

Dennis Keohane gave a quick overview of this article, mentioning that the FY22 limit has increased on two funds: Public Health Vaccinations & Tobacco Control (from \$30K to \$40K) and Council on Aging Van Transportation (from \$150K to \$175K).

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 12 FY22 Revolving Fund Spending Limits**. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 13: Capital Stabilization Fund**

In answer to FinCom questions, Dennis Keohane confirmed there are no plans at this time to use money from this fund and that there is currently no policy about which projects would be funded through this fund. He expects that the Select Board's revised policies and procedures will address this question. Some FinCom members stated that they would vote against putting money in this stabilization fund until there are policies addressing its use. Others agreed that spending policies are important, but in the meantime they were willing to continue to build this fund.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 13 Capital Stabilization Fund**. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, no; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, no; Eric Poch, yes.**

**The motion carried. The vote was 6 in favor and 2 opposed.**

**Article 14: Fund Litigation Costs - Eversource**

Several of the FinCom members expressed the desire for more information before voting on this article. Scott Smigler indicated that he believed that in a multiyear litigation, stopping when close to the end seems like a poor strategy. The committee will hold off voting on this article until it gets information from the Town Manager about how much has been spent, what still remains, an estimate of how much more money may be needed, and information about what possible appeals are still possible.

**Article 15: Repurpose Melone Stabilization Fund**

This article requests moving the money in the Melone Stabilization Fund into the Capital Stabilization Fund once the land swap of the Melone property and the Sudbury Center property is finalized.

There was discussion among the committee about whether to leave the funds where they are, move them somewhere else, or move them to the Capital Stabilization Fund. The committee decided to defer the vote on this article until it has additional information on the pros and cons.

**Article 16: Construction of Housing/Living Addition - Fire Station No. 2**

Co-Chair Smigler suggested that the Committee wait to hear what comes out of the Select Board discussion at their meeting the following night. There was discussion by the committee about their current concerns that it would be premature to take a vote prior to a funding source being proposed, on splitting the project, whether there is consensus on the Select Board and the town staff on the article, and the need for the plan as it stands. Members will watch the discussion at the Select Board meeting and revisit this article at the next meeting.

**Article 17: Marlboro Road Culvert Replacement**

Co-Chair Smigler noted that the CIAC recommended approval 7-0.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 17 Marlboro Road Culvert Replacement**. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 18 Front End Loader with Plow**

CIAC recommended approval 7-0. Susan Berry made a general comment, agreed to by other members, that the DPW Director has a well-thought-out plan for replacing pieces of equipment, and she would like to support his requests.

Blair Caple moved to recommend approval of **Article 18 Front End Loader with Plow**, \$230K from Free Cash. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 19: Multi-purpose Sidewalk Tractor**

CIAC recommended approval 7-0.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 19 Multi-purpose Sidewalk Tractor**. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 20 Six-wheel Combo Dump Truck with Plow and Wing**

CIAC recommended approval 7-0.

Ron Bromback moved to recommend approval of **Article 20 Six-wheel Combo Dump Truck with Plow and Wing**. Michael Joachim seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 22 Means Tested Senior Tax Exemption Extension**

Dennis Keohane confirmed that this is a vote needed every three years in order to extend the exemption granted.

Howard Feng moved to recommend approval of **Article 22 Means Tested Senior Tax Exemption Extension**. Susan Berry seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

**Article 23 Sudbury Public Schools COVID-19 Student Academic Program**

There was general agreement on the need and a hope for more of this type of program expressed by some members.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 23 Sudbury Public Schools COVID-19 Student Academic Program**. Howard Feng seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

**Article 24 Noyes Elementary School Fire Alarm System Replacement**  
CIAC recommended approval 7-0.

Blair Caple moved to recommend approval of **Article 24 Noyes Elementary School Fire Alarm System Replacement**. Scott Smigler seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

**Article 25 LSRHS Stadium Field and Community Turf Replacement**  
CIAC recommend approval 6-0 with 1 abstention. There was a comment that in the future CPC funds should be pursued.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 25 LSRHS Stadium Field and Community Turf Replacement**. Ron Bromback seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

**Article 29 Community Preservation Fund - Dr. Bill Adelson  
Playground Improvements**

CIAC recommended approval 7-0

Michael Joachim moved to recommend approval of **Article 29 Community Preservation Fund - Dr. Bill Adelson Playground Improvements**. Howard Feng seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, no; Eric Poch, yes.**

**The motion carried. The vote passed 7-1.**

**Article 30 Community Preservation Fund - Frank Feeley Fields  
Improvements**

CIAC recommended approval 7-0. There was a discussion that this piece includes safety issues and cost of a design for phase 2. A vote in favor is not a commitment to phase 2.

Michael Joachim moved to recommend approval of **Article 30 Community Preservation Fund - Frank Feeley Fields Improvements**. Susan Berry seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**Article 36 Community Preservation Fund - General Budget and  
Appropriations**

There was a quick review of the purpose of this CPC article which is on the Warrant every year.

Susan Berry moved to recommend approval of **Article 36 Community Preservation Fund - General Budget and Appropriations**. Michael Joachim seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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



**ITEM 6: Vote to Update Finance Committee Roles and Operating Procedures**

A few additional edits to the 3/8/21 draft were discussed before the committee was ready to take a vote.

Scott Smigler moved to adopt the 3/8/21 draft of the **Finance Committee Roles and Operating Procedures** as amended. Jean Nam seconded the motion.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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

**ITEM 7: Public Comment**

Jennifer Roberts, Select Board member stated she would look into the problem with the link to the Select Board agenda and supporting materials.

**ITEM 8: Adjourn**

Susan Berry moved and Ron Bromback seconded the motion to adjourn the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting at approximately 10:30.

**Roll call vote:**

**Scott Smigler, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Ron Brumback, yes; Blair Caple, yes; Howard Feng, yes; Jean Nam, yes; Eric Poch, yes.**

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