

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the FinCom present for the Virtual Meeting were Co-Chair Eric Poch, Co-Chair Jean Nam, Susan Berry, Andrew Bettinelli, Ronald Brumback, Michael Joachim, Sonny Parente (left at 8:56), and Scott Smigler

**ABSENT:** Blair Caple

**ALSO ATTENDING the MEETING**

Bella Wong, Superintendent/Principal Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School; Kristeen Patterson, LRSHS Director of Finance and Operations; Cara Endyke Doran, Chair LSRH School Committee; Heather Cowap, Member LSRH School Committee; Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer; Jennifer Roberts, Chair of the Select Board

**CONVENE:**

Co-Chair Poch called the meeting to order at about 7:04 p.m. and roll-called members of the FinCom present for the February 7, 2022, Virtual Meeting.

**ITEM 1: Open the Meeting**

- Co-Chair Nam stated that the FinCom meeting of February 7, 2022, is being broadcast live and recorded for viewing by the public via [www.sudburytv.org](http://www.sudburytv.org). She read the Municipal Remote Meeting Disclaimer.
- **Opening Remarks (Co-Chairs)**  
There were no opening remarks.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**ITEM 3: FinCom Budget Year FY23**

- **LSRHS Budget Hearing**  
Michael Joachim introduced Bella Wong and Kirsteen Patterson. Superintendent Wong presented the FY23 Proposed Budget, including an edit based on the newly released Governor's budget. Based on that budget, there is an expected decrease of almost \$300K in the original assumption of the assessment for Sudbury. As Superintendent Wong went through her presentation, she also addressed the questions that had been sent ahead of the hearing from FinCom.

There was a question about the enrollment projections which Kirsteen Patterson explained are based on information

received from SPS and Lincoln Public Schools. The projected 8% increase in health insurance is based on the industry standard and the fact that LS is in a new plan. Superintendent Wong walked FinCom through the factors leading to a larger than usual circuit breaker carryover estimate for FY23. There was also a question about how much risk is involved in using the Transportation Revolving Fund to mitigate the large increase FY22 to FY23 in the bus contract. The expectation according to Ms. Wong is that the reimbursement going forward will increase based on the increase in the increased cost.

There was discussion about the replacement of the roof that was planned to happen after the LS building has been paid off. The estimate for the roof was based on MSBA reimbursement funds being available. However, the state has changed the rules for the MSBA reimbursement, making reimbursement available on a 25-year roof instead of a 20 year one. It is not clear at this point if the roof will need to be replaced sooner than the 25-year mark.

Looking at the MultiYear Data Comparison spreadsheet, members of FinCom requested information about how the grant money LS receives is being spent. In answer to Scott Smigler's question about the assumptions in the salary increase FY23 to FY24, Ms. Patterson said that is just what it is, an assumption based on numbers of staff at the top step and the percentage increase in the contract. She acknowledged that it is difficult to project anything other than an estimate this far ahead.

- **Discuss**

- o Questions for SPS budget hearing  
There was no discussion under this item.
- o Questions for Town budget hearing  
Jean Nam mentioned that we have time to come up with questions for the Town budget hearing. Items that came up members would like to see: Updated Free Cash use, 5-year capital plan, where to find the priorities rankings on the capital requests.

Scott Smigler asked the committee to look at what the big things are that we want to be putting our eyes on. Michael Joachim suggested we should be scrutinizing the use of Free Cash, especially this year when there is more than the usual amount available. Jean Nam suggested that we think about what should be funded with money the Town already has available and what to fund with debt. Michael Joachim mentioned that we should have visibility into where all the money - general fund and grants, etc. - is

going. Eric Poch mentioned that we need the 5-year capital plan and the prioritization.

The committee decided which of the capital articles we would like to be the focus of the February 15 joint capital meeting. There was also some discussion that FinCom needs the 5-year capital plan and the prioritization to put requests in context. The committee might also begin making a list of comments/concerns on the process.

- **Discuss ARPA**

Jean Nam reported that there was some discussion with the Town Manager about concern that there are capital items being funded by ARPA that did not go through the typical capital review process.

- **Discuss ways to inform ourselves on Town Department needs**

Susan Berry expressed the opinion that the way to get this information is through the Town Manager. Jean Nam expressed concern that the information in the Budget Book was not comprehensive. Scott Smigler expressed the opinion that we might also need to know if the Town has the staff needed to deliver the services and/or complete projects required. Members of the committee discussed further whether FinCom should ask specific questions or find a way in our process to get information more broadly from the departments.

- **Other items relevant to budget preparations, review, or informing the Finance Committee budget deliberations**

Scott Smigler mentioned that the committee needs to be thinking about the narrative for the FinCom Report in the Warrant. For him, one of the issues is whether the Town should be spending so much of the unusual amount of Free Cash available this year.

#### **ITEM 4: General Business**

- **Liaison reports**

CIAC has voted to start recording their meetings. Mike Joachim mentioned that we have questions for SPS. The committee agreed that FinCom is ready send them to SPS and also request that SPS report on their capital projects at the hearing on the 14th.

- **Calendar and Budget Process**

Eric Poch suggested that for the meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup>, the committee think about questions for the Town budget hearing and also begin to look at last year's FinCom Report in the Warrant.

- **Review Goals/Future Agenda Topics**

There was no discussion on this item.

- **Transfers and Other Business**

There were no transfers.

- **Approve Meeting Minutes**

- Draft minutes from the 12/7/21 and 1/31/22 FinCom meeting were reviewed, and suggested modifications made.

- **Motion and Vote:**

- **Eric Poch moved, and Scott Smigler seconded the motion that the minutes of the December 7, 2021 and January 31, 2022, Finance Committee meetings be approved as amended.**

- **Roll call vote:**

- **Ronald Brumback, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; Jean Nam, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.**
- **The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.**

**ITEM 5: Updates from Town Staff**

Dennis Keohane mentioned that the Town Manager is presenting the financial forecast to the Select Board this week. The forecast has been updated with the most recent state data and will need to be updated again with the information shared by LS at this meeting. Mr. Keohane clarified why the Town is not using the Pool Enterprise Fund for funding the filtration system, given that retained earnings are positive. However, there is still uncertainty about the pool revenue due to Covid.

**ITEM 6: Public Comment**

Co-Chair Poch recognized Select Board Chair Jennifer Roberts who thanked the committee for going through the exercise of prioritizing the capital list for the joint meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**ITEM 7: Adjournment**

**Motion and Vote:**

**Susan Berry moved, and Michael Joachim seconded the motion that the February 7, 2022, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 10:02 p.m.**

**Roll call vote:**

**Ron Bromback, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Michael Joachim, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Scott Smigler, yes; Jean Nam, yes; and Eric Poch, yes.**

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

*The next scheduled meeting of the Finance Committee is Monday, February 14, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.*