

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
January 9, 2023**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Finance Committee (FinCom) present for the Virtual Meeting were Co-Chair Michael Joachim, Susan Berry, Andrew Bettinelli, Michael Ferrari, and Hank Sorett

**ABSENT:** Co-Chair Eric Poch, Sonny Parente, and Colin Wang

**ITEM 1: Open the Meeting**

- Welcome and member roll call  
Co-Chair Joachim called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and called the roll of FinCom members present for the January 9, 2023, Virtual Meeting. He stated that the FinCom meeting of January 9 is being broadcast live and recorded, and he read the Municipal Remote Meeting Disclaimer.
- Opening remarks (Co-Chairs)  
Co-Chair Joachim noted that this is a meeting to prepare for the upcoming budget hearings and budget review.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**ITEM 3: Discussion of submission to 2022 Annual Town Report**

Co-Chair Joachim led the discussion on this item. He stated that the deadline to submit this report is Friday, January 27, 2023. He summarized the format that was used last year and noted that he is happy to take care of the administrative piece but would like help on the substance. He gave examples of what the report should include. Andrew Bettinelli volunteered to draft FinCom's submission to the 2022 Annual Town Report. Members agreed to review the document at the January 23, 2023, meeting.

**ITEM 4: FY24 Budget Discussion**

- Update on SPS FY24 budget discussions  
Co-Chair Joachim invited Susan Berry as the SPS Liaison to provide an update on SPS budget discussions.  
Ms. Berry summarized the SPS Tier 1 Budget Initiatives. She reported that the SPS FY24 budget request is \$43,976,163 and that this amount is over guidance.  
Co-Chair Joachim added that the SPS FY24 budget request is approximately \$750K higher than guidance. He stated that the guidance numbers are not going to change. Co-Chair Joachim shared that it is his understanding that

more conversations are ongoing about how to address the \$750K and that an override is a possibility.

Hank Sorett mentioned that he was not happy with the response from SPS regarding his energy question. He stated that he would like to see SPS be more energy responsive and actively exploring energy and solar options with solar developers.

Co-Chair Joachim responded to Mr. Sorett's comment and stated that FinCom can send questions to the Cost Centers prior to the Budget Hearings. He added that Mr. Sorett could include his comment in the prepared list of questions that SPS will receive in advance the Budget Hearings. Mr. Sorett stated that he is willing to help draft the questions.

Susan Berry stated that she is meeting with Silvia Nerssessian, Chair of SPS Committee, Brad Cozier, Superintendent of SPS, and Donald Sawyer, Director of Business and Human Resources on Thursday to get more details on the 12.19 FTEs added this year and where this funding is coming from. She added that it is important to know which positions are covered by one-time funds and which positions are within the budget. Members then discussed questions around management of payroll. This item will go on the list of questions for the Town.

- Review policy and process on capital items

Co-Chair Joachim led the discussion on this item. He stated that he and Co-Chair Poch are meeting this week with representatives from the Select Board, the CIAC and the Town to talk about process (not substance) around review of capital requests. He shared a presentation on the process based on an earlier presentation to FinCom. He defined capital assets. He noted that the budgeters of the capital process are the Town Manager, Finance Director, School Superintendents, Business Managers and Committees and the reviewers of the capital budget are the Finance Committee, CIAC and the Select Board. He referred to the role of the CIAC based on the Town of Sudbury By-laws and defined capital spend and sources per the Town's Financial Policies Manual.

Co-Chair Joachim reviewed the capital review process as set forth in the Financial Policies Manual. He noted that the Town Manager establishes criteria to determine capital asset prioritization, the Town Manager requests 5- and 15-year capital plans from department heads, SPS and LS, and that the Town Manager creates a list of capital projects in order of priority with proposed funding sources. He stated that by January 31 the Town Manager submits to CIAC projects over \$100K for 1 year or \$200K for multiple years.

He added that the Town Manager coordinates the distribution of the capital budget and 5-year capital plan to FinCom, CIAC and Select Board. He stated that by February 5 the Select Board reports all capital request to FinCom and by February 15 (this year Monday February 13) the Town Manager organizes a joint meeting of Select Board, CIAC, FinCom, CPC, SPS and LS Superintendents and department heads.

Co-Chair Joachim noted that, per the Financial Policies Manual, the minimum level of capital spending should be equivalent to 6% of prior year's General Fund Budget. He stated that last year's General Fund budget was approximately \$111M and that for FY24 capital spend should be in the \$6.6 to \$6.7M range. He stated that the goal is to draw equally from within levy debt and cash capital sources like free cash. He pointed out that the Town is not there yet. He stated that the DLS report commented that the Town's reliance on debt exclusions is not a financially sound practice. A general discussion followed.

- Discuss other known FY24 Budget and Warrant information (e.g., CPC projects)  
There was no discussion on this item.
- Other preparation for budget hearings  
Susan Berry stated that the SPS FY24 Reconciliation and Multiyear Data Comparison Worksheet is in the meeting materials folder in the shared drive.

#### **ITEM 5: General Business**

- Liaison reports  
Susan Berry reported that SPS is meeting this evening and may finalize their articles for the warrant. She added that she will listen to the meeting and report on it at the next FinCom meeting.
- Calendar  
Co-Chair Joachim reviewed the calendar with members. A general discussion followed on scheduling Budget Hearing meeting with SPS.
- Approve meeting minutes  
The committee reviewed the minutes of December 6, 2022, and December 12, 2022.

#### **Motion and Vote**

Andrew Bettinelli moved, and Mike Ferrari seconded the motion to approve the December 6, 2022, and December 12, 2022, meeting minutes as amended. Co-Chair Joachim called the roll of members in favor of this motion:

Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous 5-0.

- Transfers and other business

There are no transfers or other business to report.

**ITEM 6: Public Comment**

There were no public comments

**ITEM 7: Adjourn**

**Motion and Vote**

Susan Berry moved, and Hank Sorett seconded the motion to adjourn the January 9, 2022, FinCom meeting at approximately 8:15 PM.

Co-Chair Joachim called the roll of members in favor of this motion:

Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

**The motion carried. The vote was unanimous 5-0.**

**Minutes Prepared by**

**Cheryl Gosmon**