

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Virtual Meeting Minutes
March 13, 2023**

ATTENDANCE

Members of the Finance Committee (FinCom) present for the Virtual Meeting were Co-Chair Michael Joachim, Co-Chair Eric Poch, Susan Berry, Andrew Bettinelli, Michael Ferrari, Hank Sorett, and Colin Wang (left at 9:40).

ABSENT: Sonny Parente

ALSO ATTENDING the MEETING

Dennis Keohane, Finance Director/Treasurer

ITEM 1: Open the Meeting

● **Welcome and member roll call**

Co-Chair Joachim called the meeting to order at approximately 7:05 p.m. and roll-called members of the FinCom present for the March 13, 2023, Virtual Meeting. He stated that the FinCom meeting of March 13 is being broadcast live and recorded for viewing by the public . He read the Municipal Remote Meeting Disclaimer.

● **Opening remarks (Co-Chairs)**

Co-Chair Joachim reviewed the agenda.

ITEM 2: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 3: Budget Discussion

- Deliberate on Warrant Articles and Vote as Possible
Article 4 FY24 Capital Budget - Co-Chair Joachim shared the details on the items in the budget. There was discussion about the Snow Management Building Renovation Design.

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Andrew Bettinelli seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Article 4 in the amount of \$728,525.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, abstain; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried 6 in favor and 1 abstention.

Articles 5, 6, and 7 the Enterprise Fund articles - Co-Chair Joachim suggested that the committee could vote on the three articles together. After brief discussion on the FY24 Recreation Field Maintenance Enterprise Fund, the committee was ready for a vote.

Motion and Vote:

Hank Sorett moved, and Mike Ferrari seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Articles 5, 6, 7.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 9 Unpaid Bills

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Article 9 Unpaid Bills in the amount of \$14,932 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 10 Chapter 90 Highway Funding

Motion and Vote:

Eric Poch moved, and Hank Sorett seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Article 10 Chapter 90 Highway Funding.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Co-Chair Joachim suggested voting on Articles 11, 12, and 13. Mike Ferrari asked about the Bus Revolving Funds and the \$450,000 limit given that the non-override budget included cutting some bus service. Mike Ferrari asked that the committee defer the vote on Article 13 FY24 Revolving Spending Limits. There were also questions about the Solar Energy Revolving Fund. At the request of the committee, Susan Berry will ask SPS why they decided not to change the spending limit so that more of the balance in the Bus Revolving Fund could be used to avoid cuts to bus service if the override fails.

Article 11 Stabilization Fund

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Article 11 Stabilization Fund in the amount of \$144,274 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 13 Capital Stabilization Fund - In answer to a question Finance Director Keohane reported that to date there is \$1,250,100 in the fund.

Motion and Vote:

Mike Ferrari moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion that the FinCom recommend approval of Article 13 Capital Stabilization Fund in the amount of \$250,000 from the levy.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

To correct the source of the funding of Article 11:

Motion and Vote:

Hank Sorett moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to amend the prior Article 11 vote and recommend approval of Article 11 Stabilization Fund in the amount of \$144,274 from the levy.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 14 Funding of GO Sudbury! Taxi and Uber Transportation Programs for FY24 - Members of the FinCom expressed support for these programs and the belief that this program should be funded as part of the operating budget in the future.

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 14 Funding of GO Sudbury! Taxi and Uber Transportation Programs for FY24 in the amount of \$150,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 15 Fairbank Community Center Audio-Visual Equipment and Associated Funding - Hank Sorett reviewed the information he received on this article from the Council on Aging Chair Jeff Levine. Susan Berry requested that the committee hear from the Permanent Building Committee on the additional cost and potential disruption if this equipment is added later. There was also some discussion about why this article did not go through the typical capital process. The committee agreed to wait on this to get

additional information.

There was some discussion about whether FinCom needs to take a position on Article 16.

Article 17 Medicaid Reimbursement and Additional Chapter 70 Funding Transfer to Fund ELS Curriculum Update - There was some clarification about how the Medicaid expenses and reimbursements work, whether this is sufficient for the ELA curriculum update, and how the money is intended to be used. Co-Chair Joachim also stated his concern with thinking that increases in Chapter 70 Funds over the revenue estimates should go to SPS and that the FinCom should clarify that this article is a Free Cash article. If final Chapter 70 Funds are greater than estimates, the difference does not flow to Free Cash; it lowers the amount needed to be raised from taxes.

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 17 Medicaid Reimbursement and Additional Chapter 70 Funding Transfer to Fund ELA Curriculum Update in the amount of \$279,574 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 18 Schools HVAC Repairs and Replacements

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 18 Schools HVAC Repairs and Replacements in the amount of \$450,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 19 Curtis Middle School A/V System Replacement

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 19 Curtis Middle School A/V System Replacement in the amount of \$160,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 20 SPS Surveillance Cameras - Hank Sorett proposed a motion to disapprove this article with reasoning for the disapproval. There was no second to the motion. Co-Chair Poch offered a counter to the motion with reasons. A discussion ensued.

Motion and Vote:

Andrew Bettinelli moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 20 SPS Surveillance Cameras in the amount of \$310,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, no; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; 6 in favor and 1 opposed.

Article 21 LS Camera System Replacement - Members of the committee acknowledged that the arguments for and against this article are the same as for Article 20.

Motion and Vote:

Eric Poch moved, and Andrew Bettinelli seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 21 LS Camera System Replacement in the amount of \$206,652 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, no; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; 6 in favor and 1 opposed.

Article 22 Purchase of Storage Building - There was discussion of the type of building and the final cost.

Motion and Vote:

Eric Poch moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 22 Purchase of Storage Building in the amount of \$200,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 23 Purchase of Fire Engine - Co-Chair Joachim reviewed the reasons this article has been submitted and reminded the committee that this equipment will be funded with a capital exclusion. The tax increase will be \$.12/\$1,000 or \$155 for the owner of a home with an average assessed value (\$956,957). The committee discussed the reasons for voting for this despite the fact that a vote in favor will increase taxes for one year. It is the hope that in the future the Capital Stabilization Fund will replace the use of Capital Exclusion as a funding mechanism for large items such as this one.

Motion and Vote:

Eric Poch moved, and Susan Berry seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 23 Purchase of Fire Engine in the amount of \$1,020,000, funded with a capital exclusion.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 24 ADA Act Transition Plan Recommendations - There was a question about why this article was not in the rankings. Finance Director Keohane answered that this is an ongoing project.

Motion and Vote:

Mike Ferrari moved, and Andrew Bettinelli seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 24 ADA Act Transition Plan Recommendation in the amount of \$200,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 25 DPW Roofing Project Funding - There was a discussion about whether this project is coordinating with those developing the solar project for this roof. Finance Director Keohane reminded the committee that last year's Town Meeting voted to support the solar project and the DPW roof needs to be replaced to move ahead with the solar project.

Motion and Vote:

Susan Berry moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 25 DPW Roofing Project Funding in the amount of \$400,000 from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Colin Wang, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes.

The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 26 DPW Building Office Renovation - There were questions about why this project is separate from the \$50,000 project in the FY24 Capital Fund for the Snow Management Building Renovation Design. The committee members agreed to defer the vote on this article until FinCom receives answers to questions that were raised. Mike Ferrari volunteered to write up questions to be sent to the Facilities Director and DPW Director.

At this point, Co-Chair Joachim realized Select Board liaison Jennifer Roberts had been requesting to speak, and she was recognized. She reviewed the reasons that Article 15 Fairbank Community Center Audio-Visual Equipment and Additional Funding did not go through the capital review process. She also mentioned that there may need to be an addition to the Financial Policies clarifying how ongoing capital projects are handled.

The committee agreed to take up the DPW equipment articles, Article 33 through Articles 37 the planned periodic replacement of DPW equipment, as a group.

Motion and Vote:

Mike Joachim moved, and Hank Sorett seconded the motion to recommend approval of Article 33 through Article 37 in the amount of \$1,115,000 in total from Free Cash.

Roll Call Vote:

Eric Poch, yes; Susan Berry, yes; Andrew Bettinelli, yes; Mike Ferrari, yes; Hank Sorett, yes; and Mike Joachim, yes. The motion carried; the vote was unanimous.

Article 3 FY24 Budget

Hank Sorett proposed a revision to how the budget is presented in the Warrant, and he also would like to eliminate some of the proposed additional positions, in particular the Land Manager position. There was discussion about whether this can be done and whether other members are interested in revising the presentation of the budget in the Warrant. The remainder of the committee was not in favor of changing the presentation of the budget, at least this year. There was agreement that in the FinCom report, we should point voters to where there is additional information.

Hank Sorett had drafted a "support" and "oppose" version for the override budget which Co-Chair Joachim shared and will put in the Meeting Materials.

At the meeting next week, the Committee will continue a discussion of Article 3 and plan to vote on it

- Discuss FinCom Warrant Report
Co-Chair Joachim initiated this discussion by showing last year's report and requested that everyone take a section to draft, send their draft to Mike and Eric who will put the pieces together for review at our next meeting. The Co-Chairs confirmed with Dennis Keohane that he will have the data needed for the charts at the end of the FinCom section.
- Discuss other items relevant to FinCom review of Budgets and Warrant Articles
There was no further discussion on this item.

ITEM 4: General Business**● Liaison reports**

Susan Berry reported that the SPS was voting on fees, including Bus Fees, at their meeting which is being held at the same time as this meeting. She will confirm the vote and let the committee know the final decision.

● Calendar

Co-Chair Joachim mentioned that the joint meeting with the Select Board is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 21. He also reviewed what will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

● Approve Meeting Minutes

There were no meeting minutes to approve.

● Transfers and other business

There were no transfers or other business.

ITEM 5: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 6: Adjourn**Motion and Vote:**

Hank Sorett moved, and Eric Poch seconded the motion that the March 13, 2023, Finance Committee meeting be adjourned at approximately 10:35 p.m.

Roll call vote:

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

The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.

The next scheduled virtual meeting of the Finance Committee is Monday, March 20, 2023, at 7:00 p.m.