

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
April 8, 2024  
7:00PM**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Finance Committee present: Co-Chair Joachim, Maura Carty, Mike Ferrari, Andrew Bettinelli, Henry Sorett, Susan Berry and Ryan Lynch. Colin Wang and Co-Chair Poch arrived late.

Absent: None.

Also in attendance: Finance Director Dennis Keohane

**ITEM 1: Open the Meeting**

Co-Chair Joachim called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00PM, roll-called the members, and declared a quorum present. He read the Municipal Remote Meeting Disclaimer. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to vote on the remaining warrant articles and prepare for Town Meeting.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**ITEM 3: FY25 Budget Discussion**

Co-Chair Joachim stated that FinCom had originally voted not to recommend Article 40: Parkinson Field Design, but that it voted to reconsider at the request of the Select Board.

Marcia Rasmussen of the Planning Board was accompanied by John Dobrinski and Glen Pransky, Co-Chairs of the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. They presented details of the proposed \$100K design engineering study of access to Parkinson Field requested in the article.

Select Board Member Janie Dretler commented that tractor trailer trucks exiting the Ti-Sales property create a safety hazard. She urged support of the article, noting that the area is a major access point for users of the walking paths and bike trails.

Some members who initially voted against the article noted that they did not have the information about the impact to rail trail access originally and were now in support.

Concern was expressed about wetlands in the area and the ultimate unknown cost of construction. Concern was also expressed that project costs would increase if the study was delayed.

Ms. Rasmussen stated that if the Town does not go forward with the driveway, negotiations with Ti-Sales to create a safer loop driveway would be considered. The scope of the study does not include using TI sales access to the Parkinson Field parking lot, as improvements have been made to the driveway as part of the Bruce Freeman construction location.

**Vote on Warrant Articles**

**Article 40: Community Preservation Act Fund: Parkinson Field Driveway Design**

Upon motion duly made by Ms. Berry and seconded by Co-Chair Poch, it was voted to recommend approval of Article 40 for the Parkinson Field Driveway Design in the amount of \$100,000.

Roll call vote: Ms. Berry-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Ferrari-Y, Ms. Carty-N, Mr. Wang-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Co-Chair Joachim-Y and Co-Chair Poch-Y. Motion carries 8-1.

**Article 16: Firearms Safety**

Discussion included the following highlights:

- Concern for potential cost of litigation against the Town.
- Given town counsel's opinion of mitigated risk of lawsuit, FinCom should take no position.
- Insofar as Association of Town Finance Committees advise FinCom's ability to weigh in on non-budgetary matters and its obligation to advise town meeting, FinCom should take a position.
- FinCom's past practice has been not to weigh in on zoning matters.
- The Select Board and Planning Board's advice on this zoning article carries more weight than the FinCom's position.

Ms. Dretler clarified that while the planning staff assisted in looking at the zones in town, Article 16 is sponsored by the Select Board and not by the Planning Board. The Planning Board is holding its first public hearing on April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Select Board Liaison Jen Roberts confirmed that the Select Board had worked extensively with the planning director on analyzing setback and sensitive use and potential locations seeking to have this bylaw limited to industrial zones in order to be proactive and maintain local control and oversight as the fundamental goal. The Board worked extensively with town counsel and outside counsel to replicate what other communities had done to avoid litigation. If the town was to receive an application to site a firearms business in an industrial zone under the current zoning code, it would be difficult to say no without triggering a lawsuit. There is a risk of increased legal costs from inaction.

**Vote on Article 16**

Upon motion duly made by Co-Chair Poch and seconded by Mr. Bettinelli, it was voted not to take a position on Article 16. Roll call vote: Ms. Berry-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Ferrari-N, Ms. Carty-Y, Mr. Wang-N, Mr. Sorett-N, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Co-Chair Joachim-Y and Co-Chair Poch-Y. Motion carries 6-3.

**Article 33: Amend Zoning Bylaw Art IX Insert Section 4700C Multi-Family Overlay District (MBTA Zoning)**

**Article 34: Amend Zoning Bylaw Art IX Insert Section 5600 Inclusion of Affordable Housing**

Ms. Carty reported that, upon seeking the advice of the Chair of the Planning Board, the FinCom has been asked to take a position, as there is a clear financial implication if the article does not pass.

Discussion ensued about the Town of Milton's challenge to the MBTA Communities Act. Some suggested waiting for that case to be decided before considering the proposed zoning change. The potential loss of state grant funding for failing to comply with the new law was noted and estimated to be about \$500K.

Some suggested FinCom take no position on the article but present a statement at town meeting that the Committee deferred to the Planning Board and consultants for their expertise in drafting a zoning bylaw that complies with the law. Other suggested making a statement at town meeting that a vote of "no" comes with a risk of loss of funding to the town.

Mr. Bettinelli stated that insofar as there are unknowns around the financial impact on either side of the issue, FinCom should not weigh-in on the article.

**Vote on Articles 33 and 34**

Upon motion duly made by Co-Chair Poch and seconded by Ms. Berry, it was voted not to take a position on Articles 33 and 34. FinCom's statement at town meeting would involve why the vote was not to take a position, and not on the fundamentals of the articles themselves.

Roll call vote: Ms. Berry-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Ferrari-N, Ms. Carty-N, Mr. Wang-N, Mr. Sorett-N, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Co-Chair Joachim-Y and Co-Chair Poch-Y. Motion carries 5-4.

Co-Chair Joachim began the discussion on preparing presentations to town meeting. In his absence, Co-Chair Poch will give the initial presentation, and members were assigned to the various articles. Drafts will be reviewed at the next meeting.

**ITEM 4: General Business**

- **Transfers and other business**  
There were none.
- **Liaison reports**  
There were none.
- **Calendar**  
April 29 – regular meeting.
- **Approval of Minutes**  
There were none.

**ITEM 5: Public comment****ITEM 8: Adjournment**

**Upon motion duly made by Co-Chair Poch and seconded by Mr. Sorett, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Roll call vote: Ms. Berry-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Ferrari-Y, Ms. Carty-Y, Mr. Wang-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Poch-Y. Motion carries 9-0, unanimous.**

**The meeting adjourned at 9:16PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford  
Recording Secretary