

**Sudbury Finance Committee
Virtual Meeting Minutes
September 30, 2024
7:00PM**

ATTENDANCE

Members of the Finance Committee present: Co-Chair Michael Joachim, Andrew Bettinelli, John Baranowsky, Andrew Sousa, Karl Fries, and Henry Sorett. Eric Poch and Ryan Lynch arrived late. Absent: Co-Chair Michael Ferrari
Also in attendance: Town Manager Andrew Sheehan and Finance Director Victor Garofalo

ITEM 1: Opening Remarks and Member Roll Call

Co-Chair Joachim called the meeting to order at approximately 7:04PM, roll-called the members, and declared a quorum present. He read the Municipal Remote Meeting Disclaimer and welcomed Town Manager Sheehan.

ITEM 2: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 3: Current Budget Landscape and Outlook

Town Manager Sheehan reviewed his PowerPoint presentation made to the Select Board in August including the following highlights:

- 2024 Goal 1 update
 - Develop a long-term comprehensive plan to fund and manage the operating and capital budgets
- Context
 - Revenue
 - Expenditures
- Challenges
 - State-wide challenge
 - What can we do
 - Where to start
- Recommendations

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Feedback from community on importance of funding police, fire, Park & Recreation.
- Cost savings in regionalization of services, currently veterans service agent, regional dispatch, and public health services around addiction counseling. Some regionalization of services do not come at a cost savings but broaden capacity and provide a more robust service. Regionalization of services evolve as opportunities present themselves.
- Town meeting authorization of a comprehensive study on the financial benefits of privatization of services, i.e. ambulance, civilian flaggers for traffic monitoring, payroll, jail services, etc.
- Improvements in the use of technology to become more efficient.

- “Tell the story of the operating budget” by providing proactive digestible information to residents on what is going on in Town and addressing how the planning, budgeting and execution is in alignment with stated goals over a five-year plan.
- Use of technology to promote and enable better understanding of the average resident of the budget before town meeting in a variety of forums, including FinCom meetings and posts on other social media forums of upcoming budget discussions.
- Take advantage at this time of a critical inflection point of new members on FinCom, School Committee and administration to provide new perspectives and new set of eyes that challenge “the way things have always been done.”
- Status of school and town collective bargaining negotiations in the budget cycle; plan to fill unfilled positions.
- Working group discussion ongoing on Combined Facilities Director position; if disbanded, implication on town side of \$140K/year in FY26 and absorbed into school budget at \$160-170K.
- Positions added to build capacity into facilities in FY24: IT, land management conservation commission and sustainability coordinator and continue into present and future budgets.
- Importance of verbalizing the priorities and values of the community and ensuring that efforts to address them are intentional and focused.
- Network of communities facing similar challenges offers insight into best practices for addressing and solving financial issues.
- Quantification of specific needs to address by either finding more revenue, cutting other expenses or elimination is critical for considering the possibility of an override.
- The results of a facilities inventory study provides the information needed to build a fifteen-year capital plan.
- Clarification of the definition and use of free cash and more accurate process of budgeting.

Town Manager Sheehan will be presenting the financial position of the Town in November.

ITEM 4: Planning

Continuing discussion of FY25 goals and priorities

No further discussion at this time.

Finalize Budget Pressures Communications and Meetings

Tabled to next meeting.

Finalize Multi-year Data and Reconciliation Sheets

Tabled to next meeting.

ITEM 5: General business

- **Transfers and other business**
There were none.
- **Liaison reports**
The following reports were made:
Mr. Lynch – SPS
Mr. Fries – Parks and Recreation
Mr. Baranowsky – Permanent Building Committee

- **Calendar**
Next meetings: October 21
- **Approval of Minutes – September 16, 2024**
Upon motion duly made by Mr. Sorett and seconded by Mr. Baranowsky, it was unanimously voted to approve. Roll call vote: Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Fries-Y, and Mr. Baranowsky-Y. Motion carried 8-0, unanimous.

ITEM 6: Public Comment

There was no public comment.

ITEM 8: Adjournment

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Lynch and seconded by Mr. Poch, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Roll call vote: Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Fries-Y, and Mr. Baranowsky-Y. Motion carried 8-0, unanimous.

The meeting adjourned at 9:11PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford
Recording Secretary