

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
September 15, 2025  
7:00PM**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Finance Committee present: Co-Chair Michael Joachim, Andrew Bettinelli, John Baranowsky, Ryan Lynch, Andrew Sousa, Henry Sorett, Eric Poch, Karl Fries and Co-Chair Michael Ferrari

Absent: None

Also in attendance: Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Victor Garofalo and Town Manager Andrew Sheehan

**ITEM 1: Opening Remarks and Member Roll Call**

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 and reviewed the agenda.

**ITEM 2: Public Comment**

There was none.

**ITEM 3: FinCom Reorganization**

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair or Co-Chairs**

Co-Chair Joachim stated that, following the discussion at the last meeting and coordination with Mr. Garofalo, the present Co-Chairs agree to continue to serve in their roles.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Eric Poch and seconded by Mr. Bettinelli, it was unanimously voted to nominate Michael Joachim and Michael Ferrari as Co-Chairs for fiscal year 2026. Both candidates accepted the nomination. Roll call vote: Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Baranowsky-Y. Motion carries 9-0, unanimous.**

**Discuss CPC Appointment**

Co-Chair Joachim stated that Mr. Bettinelli agreed to serve as the CPC appointment for a three-year term at the last meeting, and a formal vote is needed at this meeting.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Eric Poch and seconded by Co-Chair Ferrari, it was unanimously voted to appoint Andrew Bettinelli to the CPC as the appointee to the FinCom. Roll call vote: Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Baranowsky-Y. Motion carries 9-0, unanimous.**

**Finalization of the Liaison Appointments**

Co-Chair Joachim reviewed the draft of liaison assignments. The committee discussed liaison assignments. While there was discussion about appointing a liaison to the Housing Authority, the committee ultimately

decided against it, though Mr. Sorett expressed interest in monitoring Housing Authority matters independently.

#### **ITEM 4: FY25 Budget Discussion**

Co-Chair Joachim invited Mr. Garofalo to review his PowerPoint presentation on the FY25 budget versus actual results. Mr. Garofalo summarized the line items for revenues and expenses.

Mr. Garofalo presented an overview of the town's FY25 financial results, noting that revenues exceeded expectations, particularly in motor vehicle excise taxes and investment income, while expenditures were carefully managed. He explained the town's tax lien and deferral policies, including the 2% interest rate set by Town Meeting vote, and discussed collection strategies. The Board inquired about comparable towns' interest rates and collection practices.

Mr. Garofalo explained that although revenue numbers were higher than expected, projections for the FY27 budget will be more aggressive, and revenue estimates for FY26 have already been increased. He noted that investment income was strong at \$1.9 million but anticipated future decreases due to falling interest rates and emphasized the need for cautious budgeting to avoid potential shortfalls. Mr. Fries inquired about the principal sources of investment income. Mr. Garofalo clarified that it comes from the General Fund and Special Revenue funds and does not include stabilization, capital stabilization, or OPEB funds, with interest earned credited to their respective accounts.

Mr. Garofalo described the town's investment strategy, focusing on safety, liquidity, and yield for general fund balances, special revenue, and stabilization funds. He noted that cash balances fluctuate throughout the year due to tax collections and expenditures, typically ranging from \$20–35 million. He also explained that a more aggressive investment approach compared to prior methods has resulted in higher interest income. Co-Chair Joachim summarized that the town's revenues were 3.25–3.5% higher than budgeted and agreed that current free cash levels appear reasonable, though the Committee acknowledged the need for caution in future budgeting.

Mr. Garofalo provided a detailed analysis of revenues, expenses, and fund balances, highlighting a 5% surplus between budgeted and actual figures, contributing to an undesignated fund balance of \$11.8 million by the end of FY25. He noted that the town plans to reduce the reserve for abatements over the next 3–5 years, starting with a \$50,000–\$75,000 budget in FY27, rather than releasing it as a one-time surplus. He also observed that nearly all staffing vacancies have been filled, with only one remaining, and discussed the impact of staffing levels on insurance and benefits costs.

Mr. Garofalo indicated that the town is expected to have a certified free cash balance exceeding \$9 million, around the DOR-recommended range of 5–7% of the budget. He noted that the town ranks in the bottom four of 16 comparable communities in terms of free cash. Co-Chair Joachim asked about the implications for the upcoming budget and potential overrides. Mr. Garofalo suggested that while free cash cannot be used for recurring expenses, it could support long-term capital needs. Discussion also touched on the town's ambulance service. Mr. Sorett asked about its financial sustainability and potential privatization, which Mr. Garofalo noted has been considered but deemed not viable.

---

#### **FY26 SPS/LS School Roof Projects**

Mr. Garofalo reported that an application, including schematic designs for the Nixon and Haynes school roof projects, had been submitted to the MSBA. The initial project cost rose from \$6.2M to \$11.7M, with 41% of eligible costs reimbursable to the town through progress payments. A meeting with the MSBA is scheduled for October 28, after which the town has 90 days to secure funding if the project is approved.

Mr. Sheehan reported that a special town meeting will be scheduled in early December to approve the full \$11.7M funding, followed by a town-wide ballot vote. The bidding process is expected in early 2026, with construction beginning in June. He also noted that LS anticipates including its \$3M school roof project at the same special town meeting.

Co-Chair Joachim emphasized that FinCom needs to be prepared to address cost decisions made along the way, funding methods (debt (excluded or not) vs. free cash/stabilization funds), and major capital expenditures in future years. Mr. Garofalo noted that a significant LS debt exclusion will expire in FY26. Discussion also considered the urgency of the projects and the benefits of advancing them amid escalating costs and uncertain tariff impacts.

---

#### **Other Updates from the Finance Director/Town Manager**

Mr. Garofalo reported that he requested an updated DLS report, which is expected soon. He also noted that the Atkinson Pool roof is complete, with flashing to be installed, four skimmers to be replaced, and tile work pending. A December 1st opening is anticipated, with Phase 2 scheduled for May.

Mr. Sheehan reported that the first iteration of the fifteen-year capital plan will be issued in October. Co-Chair Joachim suggested presenting it alongside the town's financial status at a joint Select Board and FinCom meeting.

Mr. Sheehan then left the meeting.

---

#### **ITEM 5: Upcoming Agenda Items**

- Presentation by Middlesex County Retirement – September 29 via Zoom. Mr. Garofalo will forward the latest actuary study and historical assessment report prior to the presentation.
- Report from SPS on the use of circuit breaker funds; liaisons to follow up and advise FinCom.
- Additional input from FinCom on the budget guidance process.

#### **ITEM 6: General Business**

- **Transfers and other business**  
There were none.
- **Liaison reports**  
There were none.
- **Calendar**  
Next meeting: September 29

The full-year calendar will be reviewed at the next meeting.

- **Approval of Minutes – July 14, 2025**

**MOTION:** Upon motion duly made by Mr. Fries and seconded by Co-Chair Joachim, it was voted to approve the minutes of July 14th. Roll call vote: Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Bettinelli-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Sorett-P, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y and Mr. Baranowsky-Y. Motion carries 8-0-1.

**ITEM 7: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**ITEM 8: Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:01PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed and updated by Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director Victor Garofalo