

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
February 9, 2026  
7:00PM**

**ATTENDANCE**

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

Absent: None

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

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

Co-Chair Ferrari 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 no public comment.

**ITEM 3: LS FY27 Budget Hearing**

Co-Chair Ferrari welcomed Lincoln-Subury Regional High School (LSRHS) Superintendent Andrew Stephens, Director of Finance and Operations Susan Bottan, and School Committee Members Maura Carty and Jack Ryan.

Dr. Stephens and Director Bottan outlined the budget process, emphasizing their focus on educational needs and maintaining the school's excellence while balancing financial constraints. The presentation highlighted key priorities including student and staff well-being, curricular engagement, and alignment with the district's goals, with a particular focus on preserving existing programs and identifying areas for improvement. Mr. Stephens and Ms. Bottan reviewed their PowerPoint presentation, including the following highlights:

- Superintendent's Recommended FY27 budget.
- Guiding principles.
- Portrait of an LS graduate.
- Budget context and drivers.
- Recommended FY27 budget summary.
  - Recommended revenues.
  - Recommended expenses.
  - Apportionment ratios.
    - Ten-year appointment ratios.
  - Projected enrollment.
  - Out-of-district enrollment.
- FY27 operating budget timeline.
- Future planning.

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Pro-active contingency planning in the event of unforeseen budget pressures and worst-case scenarios.
- Preliminary budget forecasting for FY28, while tight, the district does not anticipate a significant deficit.
- Insofar as current declining enrollment is expected to go back up, efforts are made to reduce FTEs as little as possible to avoid a “ping-pong” effect.
- Non-personnel expenses like special ed services, transportation, healthcare benefits and contract related services for personnel are entirely out of the district’s control, with healthcare having the highest volatility and lowest predictability.
- Expansion of health insurance advisory committee to consider alternate sources for reduction of costs.
- Use of funds for excluded debt service costs coming off the books this year cannot be used to subsidize this year’s budget.
- Budget line item combined to anticipate need for daily substitutes as well as long-term substitutes.
- Review of fees generated in revolving account to offset operating expenses.

*Mr. Lynch joined the meeting.*

Dr. Stephens explained that the cost estimate for the roof project has shifted from \$3-4 million for a refurbishment to \$8-10 million for reconstruction, with the consultant recommending full reconstruction as the most cost-effective long-term solution. Susan Bottan discussed personnel-related budget increases, particularly for substitute teachers and paraprofessionals, noting that they have budgeted \$150,000 this year to cover substitute teacher costs, which is an attempt to address the historical deficit of several hundred thousand dollars. The group also discussed upcoming capital needs assessments, including a \$10,000 professional development self-evaluation and a more comprehensive 20-year assessment to help prioritize future building maintenance and improvements.

*Co-Chair Ferrari left the meeting and Mr. Poch took over the gavel.*

#### **ITEM 4: Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director**

##### **Updates and Discussion**

Mr. Garofalo reviewed his PowerPoint presentation on the budget to actual summary for FY26 as of the end of January.

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- While overall revenues are trending above projections, particularly investment income, the significant snow and ice overage has created a budget deficit. Mr. Garofalo noted that in prior years the Commonwealth has provided supplemental funding to assist municipalities with snow and ice deficits; however, at this time there is no indication that such relief will be available this year.
- The Town continues to invest in federal government bonds that offer higher interest rates, balancing safety, liquidity, and yield to maximize returns while preserving capital.

##### **Follow up on LS Budget Hearing**

Discussion ensued on the clear, concise and transparent budget presentation by the district and the demonstrated ways to present a balanced budget under considerable challenges.

**Review of FY27 CPC Warrant Articles**

Mr. Bettinelli, liaison to the CPC, reviewed his PowerPoint presentation on the FY27 Sudbury CPC Process and Recommendations, including the following highlights:

- Community Preservation Act – GL. C44B.
- Community Preservation Committee membership.
- FY27 CPC budget – estimated revenue.
- Fixed expenses.
- Available for new projects.
- CPC timeline.
- Regional Housing Services Office (RHSO) membership fee.
  - CPC request \$38,470.
- Hop Brook Water chestnut remediation program.
  - CPC request \$49,800.
- Sudbury Housing Trust allocation
  - CPC request \$600,000.
- Accessible Connections – Mass Central Rail Trail.
  - CPC request \$270,000.
- Public Art – Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.
  - CPC request \$71,000.
- Haskell Field Bathroom improvements.
  - CPC request \$66,000.
- Davis Field improvements – proposed design layout funding.
  - CPC request \$122,000.
- Broadacres Farm an Featherland Park – proposed design option funding.
  - CPC request \$214,000.
- Dr. Bill Adelson Haskell SMILE Playground improvements.
  - CPC request \$337,000.
- Parkinson Field Driveway and Parking improvements.
  - CPC request \$1,398,000 (not to recommend).
- Additional resources.

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Percentage of funds are required by statute to be appropriated to certain categories, and if not appropriated in any given year are rolled over to next year.
- Finance reports on allocations and history of spending and remaining funds and reversions.
- Internal discussion on process to change policy to add automatic sunsets to appropriated and unspent funds to better ensure proponent's reason to keep project moving.
- Requests come from town departments and not citizen petitioners.

**Prepare for Joint Capital Night**

Mr. Garofalo reported that the proposed Annual Town Meeting warrant shows that capital requests will be presented at town meeting as one article by department, similar to the consent agenda. This is not final, but it is being presented to the Select Board for their consideration. Mr. Garofalo will provide the warrant article summary spreadsheet of all articles and recommendations at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

*Mr. Joachim joined the meeting and took over the gavel from Mr. Poch.*

**Prepare for Town Budget Hearing**

Co-Chair Joachim asked that specific questions be submitted to him and Mr. Ferrari by February 25<sup>th</sup> to be submitted to Mr. Garofalo.

**Consider Additional March Meetings with Warrant Proponents**

The two citizen petitioners will be asked to present their warrant articles at a meeting in March. There will be further FinCom discussion on the article that Mr. Sorett assisted the petitioner in writing and whether he needs to exclude himself from discussion. Mr. Garofalo will reach out to the petitioners for scheduling the meeting.

**Discuss Schedule for FinCom review of FY27 Budget and Warrant Articles**

Mr. Garofalo reviewed the warrant articles and those on which the FinCom may need presentations.

**ITEM 5: General Business**

- **Transfers and other business**  
No transfers.
- **Liaison reports**  
No reports.
- **Calendar**  
Next regular meeting: February 23-Capital  
March 2-Town and Joint Meeting with the Select Board
- **Approval of Minutes – January 26 and February 2, 2026**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Baranowsky and seconded by Mr. Poch, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of January 26, 2026, and February 2, 2026. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 8-0, unanimous.**

**ITEM 6: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**ITEM 7: Adjournment**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Baranowsky, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-Y, Mr. Sorett-Y, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 8-0, unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9:24PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford  
Recording Secretary

Reviewed by Victor Garofalo, Assistant Town Manager, Finance Director