

**Sudbury Finance Committee  
Virtual Meeting Minutes  
March 16, 2026  
7:00PM**

**ATTENDANCE**

Members of the Finance Committee present: Co-Chair Michael Ferrari, Andrew Sousa, Karl Fries (arrived late), Andrew Bettinelli, Henry Sorett, Ryan Lynch, Co-Chair Michael Joachim, Eric Poch (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 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 no public comment.

**ITEM 3: Replace with name of item on Agenda**

Co-Chair Joachim noted that that the committee delayed the article votes at the previous meeting due to the absence of Co-Chair Ferrari, and that the Committee would vote at this meeting.

**Item 4: Town FY27 Budget and Warrant Discussion  
Deliberate and Vote on Warrant Articles**

**Article 3: FY27 Operating Budget**

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Mr. Ferrari expressed concerns regarding the Town's structural deficit and the sustainability of budget increases exceeding 3%.
- Members expressed appreciation that the budget was presented without the need for an override.
- Concerns were raised that the Recreation budget had been reduced by 35% and that a position had been eliminated. Mr. Garofalo clarified that no position was eliminated and that the budget was not reduced; rather, certain costs were shifted to the Enterprise and Revolving Funds.
- The Committee expressed concern regarding the projected structural deficit of approximately \$3 million in FY28.
- The Committee discussed the SEA contract, noting a provision for a 2% increase effective July 1, 2028 (FY29), which could contribute to the need for an override.
- Additional concerns included SPS paraprofessional staffing, non-special education expenses, and the use of circuit breaker transfers, as well as out-of-district costs for Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School.
- Mr. Sorett raised concerns about what he described as a "black box budget," noting that the current format does not allow voters to amend individual line items from the Town Meeting floor and suggesting that greater budget austerity should be applied

- Mr. Garofalo reiterated that the Recreation Department budget was not cut, explaining that certain funds and programming revenues were reallocated to the Enterprise and Revolving Funds, and that staffing levels remain unchanged.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Baranowsky, it was voted to recommend approval of Article 3 in the amount of \$131,763,603. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-A, Mr. Sorett-N, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 7-1-1.**

**Article 32: DPW Garage Concrete Floor Replacement**

Combined Facilities Director Sandra Duran appeared before the Committee to review the recommendation of the structural engineer and designer of record regarding the DPW concrete floor. She explained that, following extensive testing—including pit borings and hammer testing—the professionals concluded that the most appropriate solution is a full replacement of the concrete floor, though it is the most costly option.

Ms. Duran noted that during the testing process it was discovered that the original contract specification for an eight-inch concrete slab had not been followed, and that the installed slab measured approximately six inches.

Mr. Sorett expressed concern that the floor was not constructed to the required eight-inch specification and suggested that the Town explore potential legal recourse. Committee members raised concerns regarding the discrepancy between the specified and installed slab thickness; however, the discussion returned to the merits of Article 32.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Co-Chair Ferrari, it was voted to recommend approval of Article 32 in the amount of \$2.2M. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-Y, Mr. Sorett-A, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 8-0-1.**

**Article 4: FY27 Capital Budget**

The Finance Committee reviewed Article 4, the Town Manager’s Capital Budget. Mr. Sorett moved to reduce the Information Technology line item from \$210,000 to \$100,000, but the motion was not seconded.

The Committee noted that total capital expenditures for the year are approximately \$8.1 million, representing 6.2% of the operating budget, which members indicated is below the level that should be targeted. Members suggested that the purpose of Capital Night be enhanced to include a broader discussion about the process for supporting the Town’s capital needs on an annual basis.

Members expressed concern about the process for balancing capital requests among departments to ensure that each department receives some allocation for capital needs. Mr. Garofalo clarified that there is no specific allocation assigned to departments, and that capital requests are evaluated based on priority and need.

Mr. Sorett reiterated concerns regarding what he described as a “black box budget,” noting that the current format does not allow voters at Town Meeting to amend individual line items within the budget.

**Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Sousa, it was voted to recommend approval of Article 4 in the amount of \$1,195,600. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr.**

**Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-Y, Mr. Sorett-N, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 8-1.**

**Article 27: Public Works Consolidated Capital Articles**

Mr. Garofalo explained that the six separate items may be voted in total or separated for individual vote on town meeting floor.

**Mr. Poch made a motion seconded by Mr. Sousa to recommend approval of Article 27 lump sum in the amount of \$2.170M.**

Discussion ensued. Mr. Baranowsky questioned the breakdown of costs for culverts and roads. Mr. Garofalo responded that culverts are considered roads. Over \$2M is needed over five years and to bridge the gap with Chapter 90 funds \$950K is needed applied with an inflationary factor.

**Following discussion, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 27 in the amount of \$2.170M. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-Y, Mr. Sousa-Y, Mr. Poch-Y, Mr. Baranowsky-Y, Mr. Sorett-N, Mr. Lynch-Y, Mr. Fries-Y and Mr. Bettinelli-Y. Motion carries 9-0.**

**Article 28: Combined Facilities Town and School Consolidated Capital Articles**

Members noted that capital purchases should generally have an estimated life longer than fifteen years.

The Committee discussed the importance of preventative maintenance to extend the life of building systems, noting that such investments are financially prudent and an appropriate use of capital funds.

Ongoing maintenance of the Flynn Building was discussed, including preserving the character of the building, with no plans for major construction or renovation at this time .

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Lynch and seconded by Mr. Poch, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 28 in the amount of \$1,821,700. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 29: Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Replacement**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Co-Chair Ferrari and seconded by Mr. Poch, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 29 in the amount of \$550,000. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 30: LS Wastewater Facility Control Panel**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Baranowsky, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 30 in the amount of \$147,679. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 31: School Classroom Instructional Equipment Replacement**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Lynch, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 31 in the amount of \$100,000. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-**

**Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 36: Combined Community Preservation Act Project Funding**

The committee discussed the status of a proposed project at Parkinson Field, which included lighting and parking lot improvements estimated at \$1 million. The Committee noted that the CPC voted not to recommend approval due to concerns about limited ingress and egress access. The group also reviewed the Regional Housing Services Office membership fee, with Mr. Sorett opposing it as unnecessary bureaucracy while others defended its value as a shared service across multiple communities.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Co-Chair Ferrari and seconded by Mr. Bettinelli, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 31 in the amount of \$2,854,773. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 37: Community Preservation Act Fund Reversion of Unspent Funds**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Bettinelli, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 37. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 5: FY27 Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Budget**

**Article 6: FY27 Pool Enterprise Fund Budget**

**Article 7: FY27 Recreation Field Maintenance Enterprise Fund Budget**

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Question were asked regarding recreation fees, and Mr. Garofalo indicated that these are being looked at and increases will be necessary. Recently, fees were increased in the Fields.
- Mr. Sorett asked if there was consideration given for those families with low to moderate incomes, consideration for waiving fees in the recreation programs must be given in order to ensure equal participation. Mr. Garofalo indicated that is something they could look into.

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Mr. Lynch, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Articles 5, 6 and 7. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Articles 8 and 9 – hold to vote on Town Meeting floor**

**Article 10: Chapter 90 funding**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Poch and seconded by Co-Chair Ferrari, it was unanimously voted to recommend approval of Article 10. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0.**

**Article 11: FY27 Stabilization Fund and Article 12: Capital Stabilization Fund**

Discussion ensued on the financial policies addressing the purpose and use of the stabilization fund. Concern was expressed that transferring additional funds into the Stabilization Fund beyond the 5% limit established in the Town's Financial Policies could distort the amount of Free Cash available and make it less clear to residents how much Free Cash the Town has on hand.

Mr. Garofalo noted that the Financial Policy requires a minimum of 5% be maintained in the Stabilization Fund, rather than a fixed cap. He further explained that there were two primary reasons for recommending an amount above the minimum this year:

1. This year the Town has the available funds to appropriate to the Stabilization fund, while those funds might not be available next year, which could cause the balance to fall below the 5% minimum; and
2. The Town is scheduled for its next bond rating call this year and showing that the Town made a contribution certainly shows its commitment to building this fund.

The Committee also discussed how funds are invested. It was noted that investment earnings from Free Cash become part of the operating budget, while earnings from the Stabilization Fund are returned to the Stabilization Fund. Appropriations from Free Cash require a majority vote at Town Meeting, while appropriations from the Stabilization Fund require a two-thirds vote.

Following discussion, the Committee agreed to delay voting on these articles until a later meeting.

#### **Discuss FinCom Budget Report**

Co-Chair Ferrari reviewed the first draft of the FinCom Budget Report. Co-Chair Joachim asked members to send their suggestions for edits to Mr. Garofalo in time for redrafting for discussion at the next meeting.

#### **ITEM 4: Replace with agenda title**

No updates.

#### **ITEM 5: General Business**

- **Transfers and other business**  
None
- **Liaison reports**  
None
- **Calendar**  
Next regular meeting: March 23 and March 30  
March 17 – Select Board Meeting – Co-Chairs will make a presentation
- **Approval of Minutes**  
There are no minutes.

#### **ITEM 6: Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

**ITEM 7: Adjournment**

**MOTION: Upon motion duly made by Mr. Bettinelli and seconded by Mr. Sorett, it was unanimously voted to adjourn. Co-Chair Joachim-Y, Co-Chair Ferrari-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 9-0, unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9:42PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Martin Barraford  
Recording Secretary

Updated and reviewed by Victor Garofalo, Assistant Town Manager, Finance Director