

Finance Committee MEETING MINUTES

April 9, 2025

Upton Community Center, Classroom

Paul Flaherty, Stephen Bern, Shawn Craig, Nick Ensko and Rick McGuire
Joe Laydon, Lyn Haggerty, Matthew Bachtold, David Connors

The Finance Committee meeting was opened at 7:02pm by Paul Flaherty.

Review and approving meeting minutes:

Rick McGuire made the motion to approve the previously distributed Finance Committee meeting minutes for April 2, 2025, seconded by Nick Ensko. Unanimous approval.

Review, discuss and vote on current budget line items, warrant articles and recommendation letter:

Steve Bern provided an overview of where the line item budget stands. The combination of the FC recommended line items and revised local receipts, paired with the Town Manager and Finance Director comments leaves a variance of \$3,521. The FD requested that the budget be balanced. In discussions with the TM, the FC proposed a couple of adjustment options: local receipts, Norfolk Aggie (transportation portion), Human Resources and Town Buildings - Cleaning Services. After a brief discussion that includes input from Mr. Laydon, the FC agrees to reduce operating expenses for Human Resources by \$1,500 and Town Buildings – Cleaning Services by \$2,021. David Connors arrives and the FC puts the budget discussion on hold to discuss Article 37.

Meet with Lakes, Ponds and Streams Committee to discuss Article 37 funding request:

Mr. Connors (Lakes, Ponds and Streams Committee Chair) provides an overview of the LPS mission and what the Article is intended to accomplish. In the past, the LPS has come forward with requests for testing and reviews for certain bodies of water. The FC inquired about the past funding articles. After some discussion, the group confirms that things are progressing. The article funding is intended to allow the Committee to test the (18) bodies of water in Town, with a focus on the main ones. The FC and TM also point out that they may want to revise the article to exclude “spending limit”. Based on the discussion, it seems like the LPS Committee would like the ability to roll over the article funding to be able to spend different amount, if necessary, to do more activity in one year vs the other.

Continue to review, discuss and vote on current budget line items, warrant articles and recommendation letter:

The discussion of the budget line items resumes with confirmation that a vote is appropriate. Similar to prior years, the Raise & Appropriate budget line items are separated to allow for the Town Clerk and Police budgets to be voted separately.

Mr. Flaherty made the motion to approve the line-item budget in the amount of \$27,581,576, seconded by Mr. Ensko. This represents the value of the total line items (\$29,947,027) less the sum of the R&A warrant article and the Town Clerk (161) and Police (210) Budgets (\$10,000 + \$127,309 + \$2,228,142). Unanimous approval.

Mr. Flaherty made the motion to approve the line-item budgets for the Town Clerk and Police Budgets in the amount of \$2,355,451 (\$127,309 + \$2,228,142), seconded by Mr. Ensko. Majority approval - Mr. Bern abstained.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve the following warrant articles to be funded from Free Cash in the amount of \$2,155,765.99, seconded by Mr. McGuire. Article #'s: 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 21, 26, 27 (partial), 28, 30, 31, 36, 37 and 41. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve the following warrant articles to be funded from Other Available Funds in the amount of \$1,149,368.15, seconded by Mr. McGuire. Article #'s: 3, 8, 27 (partial), 33 and 36. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve the following warrant articles to be offset from Enterprise Funds or CPA in the amount of \$2,397,014, seconded by Mr. McGuire. Article #'s: 5, 6, 17B, 17C, 18 and 29. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve Article 17A to be offset to CPA in the amount of \$921,960, seconded by Mr. McGuire. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve the following warrant articles for Borrowing Authorization in the amount of \$34,219,634, seconded by Shawn Craig. Article #'s: 23, 24 and 25. Unanimous approval.

Mr. Ensko made the motion to approve Article 38 to be funded through Raise & Appropriate in the amount of \$10,000, seconded by Mr. McGuire. Unanimous approval.

The Finance Committee discussed and does not believe that Article 22 requires a FC recommendation because the article does not seek any fiscal appropriation.

Discuss remaining budget process and meetings:

The next meeting is scheduled to take place prior to the Annual Town Meeting on Thursday, May 1. The meeting will take place at the Nipmuc Regional High School. The expected agenda will be to review and discuss any relevant changes to what has been recommended. Mr. Laydon reminded the Committee that the Select Board will be hosting the MURSD team at their next meeting on April 15 to discuss their Debt Authorization capital articles. Members are welcome to attend, but the Committee will not be posting a meeting as no group activities are expected to be needed (i.e. no official discussion or vote).

Motion to adjourn is made by Paul Flaherty at 9:12pm, seconded by Nick Ensko. Unanimous approval.

Respectfully submitted,
Stephen M. Bern, co-chair of the Finance Committee