

**Finance
Committee
MEETING
MINUTES**

October 25, 2023

Upton Town Hall – Ground Floor Conference Room (Rm G07)

Paul Flaherty, Stephen Bern, Shawn Craig, Nick Ensko and Rick McGuire;
Joe Laydon and Dennis Westgate

- 1 The Finance Committee meeting was opened at 7:00 pm by Paul Flaherty.
2
- 3 **Approve minutes:** Finance Committee meeting minutes for May 4, 2023 were distributed to the
4 members for review. Motion to approve the meeting minutes as written was made by Nick Ensko
5 and seconded by Rick McGuire. Motion was unanimous approval.
6
- 7 **Discuss and vote on Finance Committee structure:** Mr. Flaherty opened the discussion by
8 explaining the structure and offering to maintain the same as the prior year. Motion to maintain
9 the same structure was made by Shawn Craig and seconded by Nick Ensko. Motion was majority
10 approval – one abstain.
11
- 12 Aside from maintaining the committee structure, discussion about the FC members to be
13 involved with Capital Budget Committee as well as the MURSD Budget and MURSD Capital
14 committees. After brief discussion and explanation of where things are currently stand, the
15 following motions were made:
16
- 17 Motion for Nick Ensko to be the FC representative on the Capital Budget Committee was made
18 by Paul Flaherty and seconded by Rick McGuire. Motion was majority approval – one abstain.
19
- 20 Motion for Shawn Craig to the FC representative on the MURSD Budget sub-committee was
21 made by Nick Enso and seconded by Rick McGuire. Motion was majority approval – one
22 abstain.
23
- 24 Motion for Paul Flaherty to the FC representative on the MURSD Capital sub-committee was
25 made by Nick Enso and seconded by Rick McGuire. Motion was majority approval – one
26 abstain.
27
- 28 Mr. Flaherty provided updates for a variety of topics including the community center, Hopedale /
29 BVT meeting as well as covering the Free Cash Certification memo that was distributed. Mr
30 Laydon also provided an update for the Mass Works grant awards.
31
- 32 **Discuss/vote recommendation for November 7 STM warrant articles:** Mr. Laydon opened
33 the discussion by providing a summary for the memo that was sent to support the details of the
34 articles.
35
- 36 *Article 1* – This was intended to include two invoices totaling \$712.17. However, additional
37 invoice(s) that total ~\$1,300 were recently discovered as they were being sent solely to former
38 Town Manager relative to copier leases. This article may be for ~\$2,000.
39
- 40 *Article 2* – Mr. Flaherty discussed how the MURSD funding resulted in more than expected state
41 funding. MURSD issued a memo outlining that there was a reduction for the Town of Upton.

42 This will end up being a transfer from MURSD to other department (expected to be DPW and
43 Town Manager) to cover staffing deficiencies.

44

45 *Articles 3 & 4* – Mr. Laydon and Mr. Westgate explained each article along with the process
46 underway to get appraisals for each easement location. Article 3 is expected to have a value
47 associated with it, while Article 4 is expected to be gifted to the Town. Appraisal values to be
48 shared when available.

49

50 *Article 5* – Mr. Westgate went into the details for the Cemetery Services request. There have
51 been several issues that have taken place at the cemetery involving the plots and the record
52 keeping. Mr. Westgate is still compiling and reviewing various options and will have a value
53 prior to the meeting. The estimate provided is based on previous bids received, while also taking
54 into account inflation. The \$200k should be considered a maximum.

55

56 *Article 6* – Mr. Laydon explained the history of the Speed Sign installation. The Police Chief
57 obtained the signs via a grant. The \$26,440 is for the installation of the four signs.

58

59 *Article 7* – Mr. Laydon explained the history behind the Road Speed Studies. Discussion
60 included the current efforts on Christian Hill Road and traffic calming. Concern was raised about
61 Police Chief support of the article and how the road speed studies would be initiated.

62

63 *Article 8* – This article will provide exterior cleaning and painting for the former Holy Angels
64 building and Risteen Building. Holy Angels will be pressure washed, scraped, primed and
65 painted, while Risteen will be pressure washed and painted (siding, not wood). Concerns were
66 raised about the cost vs benefit and what the future use of either building would be.

67

68 *Article 9* – Mr. Laydon explained the intent of this Article. It was explained as a “short term”
69 option while the future of the building is decided. However, there is not specific language in the
70 article to confirm that there are limits for the lease. ADA compliance was also discussed as a
71 concern for the building and any tenants.

72

73 *Article 10* – Mr. Laydon explained the Affordable Housing Trust and how other CPA
74 communities utilize this – by transferring the Community Housing portion directly to the AHT.
75 The AHT can then spend as they wish without warrant article approval, but they are still required
76 to report on the account balance, which includes spending.

77

78 *Article 11* – Mr. Laydon provided the intent of the article. Are there details to support the value?
79 Consulting with someone is not the same as providing a document showing the estimated value
80 and services.

81

82 *Article 12* – Mr. Laydon provided the intent of the article. Are there details to support the value?
83 Staff conducting similar plans is not the same as providing a document showing the estimated
84 value and services.

85

86 *Article 13, 14 and 15* – Limited details provided to support these articles.

87

88 Committee discusses voting or delaying the recommendations until the next meeting when we
89 expect to have more information or details to support the proposed spending. Mr Bern will reach
90 out to Mike P to see if he or members of the L&PC can attend the next meeting to provide details
91 and supporting documentation for Articles 13, 14 and 15.

92

93 Next meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 2 at 7pm at the Town Hall.

94

95 **Motion to adjourn** made by Paul Flaherty at 9:45pm, seconded by Nick Ensko. Unanimous
96 approval.

97

98 Respectfully submitted,

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