

**Finance
Committee
MEETING
MINUTES**

October 28, 2020

Virtually

Paul Flaherty, Rick McGuire, Nick Ensko, Shawn Craig, Stephen Bern
Guests: Derek Brindisi, Kelly McElreath, Deb Teta, David Loeper, Lyn
Hagerty, Dan Lazarz, Maureen Dwinnell, William Taylor

1 The meeting was opened at 7:00 pm virtually.

2
3 The warrant for STM was reviewed.

4 It was noted Town did not want Fall Town Meeting due to COVID but due to appropriation for
5 Town Hall debit, it was determined meeting was needed. Thus, the article to fund the union
6 agreement with Fire was also included.

7
8 Fire Union funding was explained how funds were budgeted but since the contract was never
9 agreed upon the monies fell to free cash.

10 Upon motion of Nick Ensko and seconded by Rick McGuire, it was voted favorable action on
11 article 3 from free cash by unanimous rollcall vote

12
13 Derek Brindisi notified the Committee there was a reissue of bond for Town Hall renovation
14 resulting of savings of \$544,000 over life of the loan.

15
16 Upon motion of Nick Ensko and seconded by Rick McGuire, it was voted favorable action on
17 article 2B to fund Town Hall debt out of CPA by unanimous rollcall vote.

18
19 Article 2A – water for the community garden. Bill Taylor presented the project of building a
20 water line to the community gardens to include a 4” water pipe for future growth. Bill discussed
21 this will make the plots more accessible since bringing water to the land from a tank is difficult
22 and only for able body residents. The water will be locked an only certain people will have
23 access. Water bill will be paid for by the residents. Only Town residents can have access to the
24 plot of lands.

25
26 Upon motion of Nick Ensko, seconded by Steve Bern, it was voted favorable action on article 2B
27 to fund water project for Community Garden out of CPA by unanimous rollcall vote.

28
29 Article 1 to acquire and give authorization to BOS to dispose of the land. Derek Brindisi gave a
30 presentation on the importance of this article for control of this land as key to downtown
31 development. An RFP was developed in the Spring involving land downtown for a mixed-use
32 development. Town had a P&S with the 2 private parcels for ease of the developer. The Town’s
33 P&S expired on 9/30/20. Owner received an offer for the land from the brewery. Thompson is
34 willing to wait until November Town Meeting to give Town one more opportunity to purchase
35 the parcel in order to remain in control. Funding for this article includes anticipated expenses for
36 remediation work if necessary. A LSP is currently doing a soil/water testing to determine the
37 conditions and what can be done with the land if remediation is done. Prime parcel in the Town
38 that should be under control. It was noted this is not a 21E site based on DEP standards. Capital
39 Budget recommended favorable for acquisition not to exceed \$150k and remediation of not to
40 exceed \$65K. Discussion regarding the appraisal of the property and questions ensured.

41

42 Upon motion of Rick McGuire, seconded by Steve Bern, it was voted favorable action to
43 purchase for \$150k and remediate not to exceed \$65k from free cash by unanimous rollcall vote.
44

45 Presentation by Bill Taylor on the purchase of Kelly's property with CPC monies. There was a
46 discussion regarding the Chapter 61 status of the land and value of the land. It was noted there
47 are not offers on the Kelly's property. Bill Taylor noted if Town approves this purchase, it will
48 assist Mentacomet if they receive a grant to purchase other parcels. If town waits until next May,
49 the expenses for the purchased would be doubled. Chairman Flaherty would like to see this
50 article delayed until Annual Town Meeting. Capital Budget Committee supported the article.
51 Committee noted the big picture includes the Town could spend almost \$750,000 on
52 Conservation land when active recreation funds will be needed. Committee members would like
53 clarification of Chapter 61 land.
54

55 Upon motion of Nick Ensko, seconded by Shawn Craig, it was voted unfavorable
56 recommendation of article 2C by majority of rollcall vote.

57 Bill Taylor thanked the Committee for the discussion
58

59 Paul Flaherty discussed the S&P report and how the Financial Policy impacted the report.
60 Standard & Poor stated we only have 9.7% in stabilization. It was noted we could have received
61 a AAA rating if not for COVID. Derek Brindisi showcased some of the report and highlights
62 how budgeting in Upton has been good for overall stability. It was noted this should be
63 publicized the Town saved over \$500k with the new borrowing.
64

65 Paul Flaherty gave an update on the Community Center Building project. Rick McGuire did an
66 update on the DPW Feasibility Committee.
67

68 Next meeting before Town Meeting

69 Meeting adjourned 9:31 pm
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71

72 Respectfully submitted,
73 Kelly A. McElreath