

## Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday February 25, 2019 held at Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall

Members Present: Hilario, McNerney, Sullivan, Dorsey, Fletcher, Rosenberg, Titcomb

Members Absent:

Others Present: Mendes (minutes taker & Asst Town Administrator); Debora Newman (main proponent of proposed bylaw on licensing cats.)

Called to order 7:00pm

Acting Chair Dorsey took the discussion on the proposed bylaw on cats out of order since the proponent is at the meeting tonight. He advised the committee that the proponent of the citizen petitioned article to license cats that while the Finance Committee may weigh in on the proposal, often the Finance Committee will not take a position unless it determines that the proposal has a significant financial impact on the Town.

Ms. McNerney asked the proponent if there is a problem with cats in the Town. Ms. Newman indicated that there is a problem with cats at large. There was a discussion about whether this proposal will force cat owners to keep cats inside. Ms. Fletcher indicated that she feels this could be a negative impact on town finances because the Animal Control Officer, who is already over-burdened with enforcing the bylaws on dogs, could further negatively impact town finances. There ensued a discussion about how much of an impact there really is considering the \$65+ million town budget and whether the Finance Committee should even comment.

The discussion then moved to the proposed capital plan. Mr. Mendes distributed a proposed version of the capital plan, which included some changes to the plan. The discussion was then on a review of the specific projects. There was much discussion on the needed improvements to the Middle School. The committee expressed a need for more specific information on the application to the MSBA under the emergency roof repair program.

There was also much discussion on the sea wall repair plan. The committee would like to receive more detailed information on the process for obtaining funding of the \$2 million that was approved in the state bond bill. There was much concern that the funds presented in the plan will not be adequate to cover the real cost of repairing the sea walls.

The discussion then turned to the overall task of planning for the future. Ms. McNerney expressed some concern on the need for fiscal restraint, which engendered discussion on the issue of the need for prioritization of projects.

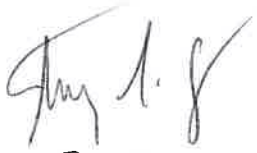
The committee then turned to a discussion about collective bargaining agreements, specifically concerns about the negotiations with the Teacher's Union. The committee would like to support the negotiations in any way that is productive and to that end the sense of the committee was that the Chair approach Mr. Fitzgerald regarding any role the Finance Committee could play in the process.

Before continuing with the discussion, Mr. Dorsey advised that the agenda item regarding the School Budget be deferred to the next meeting. Mr. Mendes advised the committee that the next meeting on March 11<sup>th</sup> was planned to be Mr. Fitzgerald's FY2020 budget presentation. The committee re-iterated the need for the presentation to be less "high level" and that the focus be on more granular detail.

The committee then expressed a desire that the School Department present a budget that is closer in form to the budget presented by the Town Administration for the municipal departments. More specifically, Ms. Fletcher provided an outline of points that she hopes the School Department would present (see attached). Ms. Fletcher will next work with Superintendent to pass along the information.

The committee then turned back to discussion of the capital plan. There were some questions about the re-design of the Community Development and Building Dept. Offices, as well as overall funding plans over the next 5 year since the funds do not appear to be sustainable. Mr. Mendes acknowledged that the outlying years of the capital plan will require further adjustments to fit within spending capacity.

Meeting Adjourned 9:05pm.

  
Tony L. S., Chair