

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
DOWNSTAIRS MEETING ROOM  
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2019  
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The Chair opens the meeting

- Meeting was opened at 6:02 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Finance Committee members present:** Fred Bowman, Jen Audley, Greg Garrison, Richard Widmer, and Michael Naughton. John Hanold and Chris Menegoni were absent.
- **Selectboard members present:** Chris Boutwell and Michael Nelson. Richard Kuklewicz was absent.
- **Others present:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis and Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen
- The Finance Committee Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCCI and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting.

### Minutes

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of December 12, 2018.

Vote:   5   In Favor            0   Opposed            0   Abstained

### Review Budget Requests

Due to requested wage or staff changes, it was decided to meet with the Board of Health, Libraries and the Treasurer/Tax Collector. It was additionally decided to meet with Parks & Recreation, Airport, Board of Assessors, IT, and the Selectboard. Specific items of interest are supporting Parks & Recreation, the Board of Assessors' article for appraisals, the amount of the IT Consultant's time spent on permit software implementation, how much the Code Red system is used, and allowing for the purchase of food for meetings.

Questions for the Police/Dispatch/Animal Control budget should be sent to Ms. Olsen by noon on Monday, January 14<sup>th</sup>. Questions for all other departments should be sent to Ms. Olsen by noon on Thursday, January 17<sup>th</sup>.

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**Finance Committee Report**

Ms. Audley reviewed the attached handout as a guideline for preparation of the Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting for the Fiscal Year 2020 budget.

**Executive Session**

This will be postponed until next week, when a majority of both the Selectboard and Finance Committee will be available

**Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements None**

**Next Meeting Date:** – January 16<sup>th</sup> to meet with Police/Dispatch, CIC, and Treasurer and hold an executive session to discuss strategy with respect to litigation.

**Meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM**

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- Minutes of December 12
- Audley handout (see below)
- Updated budget calendar
- Updated Schedules I and II for future discussion/vote

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**Proposal for Developing the FinCom's FY20 Report to Town Meeting**

**Goals:**

- Incorporate time for discussion of dept budget requests into FinCom budget review process.
- Decide together what to emphasize in report; draft sections of report as we go.
- Work towards a format that consolidates information related to Articles on ATM warrant.
- Produce a report that is easier for Town Meeting to use.
- Reduce amount of time and individual effort required to draft report in April.

**Process:** In the FY20 report, we will most likely address the same topics as in past years. What might change this year (in addition to content), is that we may try a different way of organizing the report. We are also trying to distribute the effort involved in compiling the report across the budget season, instead of having it all concentrated at the end.

During the budget season, as we review the dept budgets and hear from depts, we designate time on meeting agendas for discussion focused on these questions:

- Do we have any suggestions or unresolved concerns related to the FY20 request?
- In our report to Town Meeting, what should we highlight or explain about this request?

We can use what's captured in the meeting minutes as a source for the corresponding section of the report.

Example:

- On Jan 16 we are scheduled to hear from Police/Dispatch.
- At the following meeting (Jan 23), we are scheduled to hear from the DPW. Following that presentation, we will have an item called something like "Discussion of Police/Dispatch FY20 request" on the agenda.
- The minutes of the Jan 23 meeting will record our thoughts on the content of the FinCom's message about the Police/Dispatch FY20 request.
- At the following meeting (Jan 30), we are scheduled to hear from the GMRSD. Following that presentation, we will have an item called something like "Discussion of DPW FY20 request" on the agenda.
- The minutes of the Jan 30 meeting will record our thoughts on the content of the FinCom's message about the DPW FY20 request.

**?s for the committee:**

- What is a realistic amount of time to designate for these discussions? 15 minutes? 30 minutes?

How/when will we get from what's in the meeting minutes to drafting the corresponding sections of the report?