

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2020  
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The Chair opened the meeting

**#1** Meeting was opened at 6:30 PM by virtual attendance via Zoom meeting.

- **Finance Committee members participating remotely:** Jen Audley, Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison, John Hanold, Chris Menegoni and Francina Wisnewski
- **Others participating remotely:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen, Finance Committee candidate Jennifer Waryas.
- The Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by the Town of Montague via Zoom. Remote participation for both members and the public was provided by Zoom. The link to the Zoom recording is <https://vimeo.com/463804731>.

**#2 Introduction of Candidate**

- The committee has advertised in the *Montague Reporter* and on the Town website for candidates to fill a vacant position, and Jennifer Waryas is one of two people to express interest. She described briefly her history in Montague, and her desire to use her business experience to serve the town. She is a homeowner in Precinct 4.
- Committee members introduced themselves and offered a few words about their history in town and activities in town government and asked questions of Ms. Waryas.

**#3 Approve Meeting Minutes**

- The revised minutes for meetings on August 24, September 2 and September 16 2020 were distributed in advance and accepted.

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve revised minutes for meetings on August 24, September 2 and 16, 2020.

Vote: Menegoni–Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

**#4 Town Accountant and Town Administrator Updates**

- Carolyn Olsen has been occupied preparing reimbursement requests for unusual town expenses under CARES Act funding.

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- Steve Ellis reported that \$150 K or so, of the \$733 K of funds allocated Montague under the CARES Act, has been requested by the Gill-Montague school district for ventilation upgrades. We expect the total allocation to be disbursed by December 31, 2020.
- The Capital Improvements Committee has set November 2 (December 2 for GMRSD) and January 11 (January 18 for GMRDS) as preliminary and final submittal dates for capital projects for FY2022 budgeting
- The collection deadline for property tax bills was extended but collections appear normal. Real estate transactions are very strong, indicating that property valuations for the five-year valuation cycle in FY2022 should not suffer from a COVID-19 impact.

**#5 Special Town Meeting October 13, 2020**

- The Warrant, Motions and Background Information were sent out yesterday by Wendy Bogusz. Mr. Ellis and Ms. Olsen provided an overview of the two new articles. There were no issues.
- At our next meeting Jen Audley will assign responsibility for initial explanation of the Finance articles on the Warrant.

**#6 Discuss Draft Financial Management Policies**

- Ms. Audley deferred this topic to our next meeting. The five draft policies prepared by the consultant Rob Addelman are the most complex ones, and are intended to reflect our current practices in a more organized manner.
- Ms. Audley asked members of the committee to offer specific questions and issues related to these policies that they would like the Finance Committee to explore, and specific questions and topic they would like the Policy Update working group to investigate and report on. This topic will be revisited in future meetings.
- Ms. Audley noted that the Capital Improvements Committee had reviewed the Capital Planning policy and that she and the CIC chair had discussed the benefits and challenges of developing a more comprehensive, multi-year capital plan for the town. Mr. Garrison indicated that the CIC had discussed this at their September, 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**#7 Topics Not Anticipated, or Proposed for Next Meeting**

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- Ms. Audley will raise a matter involving the annual tax classification hearing, expected about the third week in October. She may invite Karen Tonelli, Montague's Assessor, to give an overview of that process, particularly the five-year reappraisal cycle which occurs in FY2022.
- The next meeting will be October 7, 2020

**#8 Motion to Adjourn**

Finance Committee Moved:

To adjourn at 8:15 PM.

Vote: Menegoni-Aye, Bowman-Aye, Wisnewski-Aye, Garrison-Aye, Hanold-Aye, Audley – Aye

Respectfully submitted by John Hanold

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- Warrant, Motions and Background Information for October 13, 2020 Special Town Meeting
- Draft policies by R Addelson:
  - Annual Budget Process
  - Capital Planning
  - Enterprise Fund Policy
  - Debt Management
  - Financial Reserves.