

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTBOARD  
MEETING MINUTES  
REMOTE VIA ZOOM, 1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 2021

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Meeting was opened at 6:01 PM by virtual attendance in the in Upstairs Meeting Room

- **Finance Committee members participating remotely:** Jen Audley, Fred Bowman, Greg Garrison, Chris Menegoni, Franca Wisnewski, and John Hanold, Jennifer Waryas
- **Selectboard members participating remotely:** Rich Kuklewicz, Chris Boutwell, and Michael Nelson
- **Others participating remotely:** Town Administrator Steve Ellis, Town Accountant Carolyn Olsen, Director of Planning and Community Development Walter Ramsey, WPCF Superintendent Chelsey Little, and Airport Manager Bryan Camden
- The Chair announced that the meeting is being streamed and recorded by the MCTV and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. No one else was recording the meeting. Remote participation for both members and the public was provided by Zoom. The link to the recording is <https://vimeo.com/508248754>.

### **Approve Meeting Minutes**

#### **January 27, 2021**

Finance Committee moved: To accept the minutes of January 27, 2021 as submitted with correction of Mr. Nelson's arrival time.

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

Selectboard moved: To accept the minutes of January 27, 2021 as revised.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

### **Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Development**

**Review of budget requests:** (175) Planning, (182) MEDIC, (176) Zoning Board of Appeals, (241) Building Inspector, and (292) Animal Control

Planning (Department 175) Mr. Ramsey was available to answer questions; there were none.

Finance Committee moved: To approve the Planning Department's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$123,121.

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

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Selectboard moved: To approve the Planning Department's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$123,121.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

Montague Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (Department 182)

Mr. Ramsey reported that The MEDIC Board now meets quarterly, and has four main projects in work:

1. Sale of 38 Avenue A
2. Sale of property in Industrial Park to cannabis operation
3. Development of Turnpike Road property for a solar field
4. Development of Canal District property

There was an error on the budget worksheet; the total approved budget for FY21 was \$5000. The stipend for the MEDIC coordinator is paid annually, at the end of the fiscal year.

Finance Committee moved: To approve the MEDIC's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$5,000.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve the MEDIC's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$5,000.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

Zoning Board of Appeals (Department 176) Ms. Olsen confirmed that the reduction from Fiscal Year 2021 is due to the applicants now paying for advertising costs.

Finance Committee moved: To approve the ZBA's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$700.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve the ZBA's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$700.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

Building Inspector (Department 241) There were no questions.

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Finance Committee moved: To approve the Building Inspector's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$143,080.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve the Building Inspector's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$143,080.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

Animal Control Officer (Department 292) No questions were raised on this budget.

Finance Committee moved: To approve the Animal Control Officer's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$21,527.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve the Animal Control Officer's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget of \$21,527.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

### **February 25, 2021 Special Town Meeting Articles**

Mr. Ellis summarized the planning for trial runs of the Special Town Meeting, which will be held February 18 and 20, with particular attention to members who don't have email or may have difficulty connecting. Special Town Meeting will be held at 6:30 PM Thursday February 25; members are urged to begin sign-in from 6:00 on.

The Finance Committee and Selectboard reviewed all articles on the draft warrant.

1. The first article is to allow the meeting to occur remotely using Zoom Webinar and Options Technology Inc.'s virtual voting technology. This is not a financial article.

Finance Committee moved: To approve Article 1.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve Article 1.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

2. The Parks and Recreation Director asks to expand the scope of a prior Town Meeting article, to re-seal and repaint Unity Park walkways, by adding the crack-sealing and painting of the Unity Park Basketball Court. No additional funding is required.

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Finance Committee moved: To approve Article 2.

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

Selectboard moved: To approve Article 2.

Vote: Chris Boutwell - Aye, Rich Kuklewicz-Aye, Michael Nelson-Aye

3. The Selectboard requests a one-time increase to the Emergency Management Director's Fiscal Year 2021 stipend as a result of additional workload required by the COVID-19 pandemic. The increase of \$1,735 brings the total to \$7,500. The additional amount will be covered by CARES grant funds, but the actual stipend amount in Schedule II must be approved by Town Meeting.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend a one-time increase to the Emergency Management Director's Fiscal Year 2021 stipend of \$1,735 to be funded from Free Cash.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend a one-time increase to the Emergency Management Director's Fiscal Year 2021 stipend of \$1,735 to be funded from Free Cash

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

4. The IT Coordinator requests an increase of \$12,000 to the Fiscal Year 2021 IT Budget. The increase is needed in part because the current consultant will be moving out of state soon and will need someone local to provide eyes and hands. The additional costs breakdown as \$6,000 for additional consulting work beyond the scope of the current agreement (for support of equipment purchased since July 1<sup>st</sup>), \$3,000 for another local consultant to assist the main consultant, and \$3,000 for software to be installed on all non-Police computers to allow remote access for support.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend an increase of \$12,000 to the Fiscal Year 2021 IT Budget, to be funded from Free Cash.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend an increase of \$12,000 to the Fiscal Year 2021 IT Budget, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

5. The WPCF requests \$215,000 for a new, safer chlorination system as required by EPA. Ms. Little reported that this replacement has been mandated by the Environmental Protection

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Agency. Mr. Garrison commended the WPCF staff for in-house effort on this task, which substantially reduced the expected cost.

The funding of this Article and the next, from Sewer Retained Earnings, is possible in part because the new owner of the Strathmore Mill buildings has paid off accrued charges dating to the Southworth ownership period.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$215,000 for a new chlorination system at the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$215,000 for a new chlorination system at the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

6. The WPCF requests approval to enter into a 5-year lease-to-own contract for a new de-watering press. The current model was designed specifically to handle sludge with a large amount of by-product from paper mills, which we no longer have. The EPA has recently added this to the list of requirements for the facility. Continuing to use the current press is not only inefficient, but the sludge produced has a much higher water content, which costs more to dispose of. This request is for the first payment of \$70,000. Subsequent lease payments will be included in the annual operating budget as capital outlay expenses.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$70,000 for a new de-watering press at the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$70,000 for a new de-watering press at the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

7. The Planning Department requests \$77,150 for the Chestnut Hill Loop Bridge project. The request represents the gap between grant funding available to the project and the cost of all services, including 10% contingency. This amount does not include a \$15K request for a special guardrail finish, which is purely aesthetic. Mr. Ellis provided details of the project from the selected vendor, as well as recommendations from the Capital Improvements Committee on STM Articles.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$77,150 for the Chestnut Hill Loop Bridge project, to be funded from the Town Capital Stabilization Fund.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$77,150 for the Chestnut Hill Loop Bridge project, to be funded from the Town Capital Stabilization Fund.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

8. The first Airport article is for the purchase of the Pioneer Aviation property. The Town will have to borrow to make the purchase, but grant money and airport revenue is expected to be available to pay the annual debt service. The final amount borrowed is subject to an appraisal by the Mass DOT Aeronautics Board but is not expected to exceed the requested authorization.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$1,450,000 for the purchase of the Pioneer Aviation property, to be funded through long-term borrowing.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$1,450,000 for the purchase of the Pioneer Aviation property, to be funded through long-term borrowing.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson - Aye

9. The second Airport request is for \$68,000 for the fueling station upgrades at the property purchased in the previous article.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$68,000 for the airport fueling station, to be funded through long-term borrowing.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$68,000 for the airport fueling station, to be funded through long-term borrowing.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson – Aye

10. The third Airport request is for \$370,000 to build an 8-bay T-Hangar. The Town recently received commitment from Mass DOT Aeronautics to include 80% of this in its Fiscal year 2025 Capital Plan. After discussion it was decided that the Selectboard would remove this Article from the warrant. It may be addressed at a future Town Meeting.

Selectboard moved: To remove article 10 from the warrant for the February 25, 2021 Special Town Meeting.

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Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson – Aye

11. (New Article 10) The fourth Airport request is for an additional \$39,800 for the Fiscal Year 2021 Airport Budget. This amount would cover additional expenses that would be incurred through June 30<sup>th</sup> if the Pioneer Aviation Property is purchased. The Committee and the Selectboard commended Mr. Camden on his care in budgeting and his exploration of the complex purchase opportunity.

Finance Committee moved: To recommend \$39,800 for the Fiscal Year 2021 Airport Budget, to be funded from Free Cash.

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

Selectboard moved: To recommend \$39,800 for the Fiscal Year 2021 Airport Budget, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Kuklewicz – Aye, Nelson – Aye

### **Updates from Town Administrator and Town Accountant**

No further updates provided, beyond tonight's discussion.

### **Topics not anticipated and Suggestions for Future Agendas**

Ms. Audley noted that she had received instructions for submitting the Finance Committee's section of the 2020 Annual Report for the Town of Montague from Wendy Bogusz and asked for input on what to include.

Mr. Kuklewicz noted that the Franklin County Technical School's budget for FY22 should be available for public review by the end of the week and that the FCTS School Committee would discuss it on Wed., 2/10.

February 10 – Parks & Recreation and Public Works

February 17 – Water Pollution Control Facility and others

February 24 -- Police and Dispatch

Questions committee members wish to submit in advance to the DPW should be sent to Mr. Garrison and to Ms. Audley for the Police Department.

### **Adjournment**

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Finance Committee Moved: To adjourn at 7:47 PM

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

Selectboard Moved: To adjourn at 7:47 PM

Vote: Boutwell – Aye, Nelson – Aye, Kuklewicz - Aye

Respectfully submitted by John Hanold

**List of Documents and Exhibits:**

- Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Requests
- Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Narratives
- Draft STM Warrant for February 25, 2021
- Ellis email – results of CIC deliberations and info on Articles 7 and 10 (original)