

JOINT MONTAGUE FINANCE COMMITTEE, SELECTBOARD, AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 19, 2025 at 6 PM

This meeting was held via Zoom and recorded:

<https://vimeo.com/982262386>

Finance Committee Chair Dorinda Bell-Upp called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Selectboard Vice-Chair Matt Lord called their meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Finance Committee members present: Chair Dorinda Bell-Upp, Vice Chair Fred Bowman, Jennifer Waryas, Leigh Rae, Chris Menegoni (at 6:45pm), Francia Wisnewski, and John Hanold

Finance Committee members absent:

Others present: Town Administrator Walter Ramsey, Assistant Town Administrator Chris Nolan-Zeller, Town Accountant Angelica Desroches, Gregory Garrison – CIC, Ariel Elan – CIC, Rich Kuklewicz – Selectboard, Chris Boutwell – Selectboard, Sam Urkiel-DPW Superintendent, Bryan Camden – Airport Manager

The meeting was recorded by MCTV as well as by Angelica Desroches

DPW FY26 Capital Requests Revisit:

- Ms. Wisnewski wanted to know why it was necessary to buy both the trucks this year and what would be the implications of delaying a year. She also added, wanting to know if the other additional costs like insurance are included in the budget and what is the full breakdown of the cost of the vehicle. Mr. Hanold stated that because it is a capital request then the cost of the vehicle is the only cost included in the request. He wanted to know the urgency of the request from Mr. Urkiel.
- Mr. Urkiel presented what the DPW is looking for in capital requests. He reported that over the next 4 years he sees around \$800,000 in requests each year. This year's capital requests were what were outlined and drawn up by the previous DPW Superintendent and he did not defer from that. The current facility allows DPW to take good care of washing and storing the trucks which extend their life. After covid the cost of vehicles and parts has increased significantly. The current trucks have rotten bodies, and the health and safety of the driver is a concern with possible emissions leaking into trucks. Ms. Bell-Upp questioned when the truck from last year will be delivered. Mr. Urkiel answered it should be delivered by the middle of summer, and he added that they had to shift from an automatic to a manual which some DPW CDL drivers do not qualify to drive. Ms. Waryas asked if these trucks are at end of life at 60,000 miles to which Mr. Urkiel stated that truck miles are much different than normal vehicle miles. Mr. Hanold wanted to know what the DPW will do if they cannot get both trucks. Mr. Urkiel responded that if the truck breaks down it will sit and wait for parts. This will not put the department out of order, but the services will slow down. Ms. Rae inquired about what the DPW strategies would be if a leaner budget were required. Mr. Urkiel shared his strategy with approaching many different funding sources including grants. He also shared that they are trying to keep doing projects in house to keep the cost of the projects lower, but that he needs the equipment to keep with this strategy. Mr. Garrison reinforced that this is a goal to keep doing more work in-

house to save money. He added that the plan this year had \$8,000,000 in capital requests but the committee was able to reduce this by evaluating needs to only recommend forward what is possible and needed. Ms. Waryas raised her concern that she is not aware of the full impact all these decisions have on the taxpayer and the big picture of what the needs of the Town are and the opportunity costs. Mr. Hanold requested that the Committee conclude on the trucks and stated that in his opinion the Town has the money now and things are going to get more expensive so we should move forward with the trucks.

- Mr. Urkiel gave a brief presentation on the need for Meadow Road guardrails. He stated that he is concerned that the current guardrails would not hold a car from going into the river. He does not want to use Chapter 90 funds on this project because he believes those need to be focused on asphalt instead of these other roadway costs. Mr. Hanold questioned whether this can be done as one project or whether it can be separated. Mr. Urkiel responded that he would like to do it as one project to save money on bidding. Mr. Menegoni inquired if the DPW will be doing any of the work in-house to which Mr. Urkiel stated most of it would be done through vendor other than hardening shoulders and removing debris under guardrail.
- Mr. Ramsay and Mr. Kuklewicz stated that the Selectboard would not be voting tonight since they only have 2 members and would rather vote next Monday when they have their full board.
- Mr. Hanold and Mr. Kuklewicz both shared that the initial purpose for the discretionary funds allows visibility into the funds and allows the DPW to move fluidly on making major repairs on things they need in a timely manner. This is under the approval of the Selectboard.
- **DPW 10-Wheel Dump Truck for \$365,000**
 - Move to recommend \$365,000 to purchase and equip a 10-wheel dump truck, to be raised from Free Cash. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Nay, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **DPW Dump Truck for \$325,000**
 - Move to recommend \$325,000 to purchase and equip a dump truck, to be raised from Town Capital Stabilization Fund. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Abstain, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Abstain, Wisnewski – Aye
- **Meadow Road Guardrail for \$200,000**
 - Move to recommend \$200,000 for the replacement of guardrails on Meadow Road, to be raised from Free Cash. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **DPW Discretionary Account for \$36,470**
 - Move to recommend \$36,470 for the DPW Discretionary Account, to be raised from Taxation. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Nay, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye

Reconcile Selectboard and Finance Committee Budget Recommendations

FY26 Operating Budgets

- **Town Operating Budget Request of \$12,747,055**

- Move to recommend a Town operating budget of \$12,747,055, with \$12,747,055 to be raised from Taxation. Mr. Hanold seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **Clean Water Facility Operating Budget Request of \$3,221,303**
 - Move to recommend a Clean Water Facility operating budget of \$3,221,303, with \$406,188 to be raised from Taxation and \$2,815,115 to be raised from Sewer Revenues. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **Airport Operating Budget Request of \$425,732**
 - Move to recommend an Airport operating budget of \$425,732, with \$23,372 to be raised from Town Sale of Real Estate, \$99,396 to be raised from Taxation, and \$302,964 to be raised from Airport Revenues. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Abstain, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Abstain, Menegoni – Nay, Wisnewski – Abstain
 - Ms. Bell-Upp wondered what the Finance Committee vote stems from while Mr. Camden is on the call. Mr. Hanold wanted to know what the plan is that these funding sources are contributing to. Mr. Camden stated that this is the cost of running the facility up to state and federal standards. Mr. Kuklewicz shared his concern that the airport budget is too tight, which forces him to have to ask for appropriation from the Town. Mr. Hanold would rather see the airport budget what they need to operate with some built in for unexpected costs and asked where this number would come from. Ms. Desroches advised that there is still room left in the levy due to the police union and linked to NAGE wages not being settled. Mr. Camden relayed that he has a long-term plan for the airport and that he has projects that he wants to complete.
- **Colle Operating Budget Request of \$52,250**
 - Move to recommend a Colle operating budget of \$52,250, said sum to be raised from Colle Receipts Reserved for Appropriation. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **GMRSD Assessment of \$12,663,178**
 - Move to recommend a GMRSD assessment of \$12,663,178, said sum to be raised from Taxation. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye
- **FCTS Assessment of \$841,660**
 - Move to recommend a FCTS assessment of \$841,660, said sum to be raised from Taxation. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Abstain, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye

Remaining ATM Special Article Recommendations

- **Pay and Class Implementation - \$125,154**

- Ms. Bell-Upp questioned whether this number is expected to change in the next few weeks. Mr. Ramsey answered that if the Selectboard approved the number on Monday it would change the number.
- Discussed tabling this discussion for next week in anticipation of the Selectboard finalizing the discussion on linked to NAGE next week.

Vote Schedule I Elected Officials and Schedule II Appointed Officials

- **Schedule I Elected Officials**

- Move to recommend Schedule I Elected Officials as presented. Mr. Bowman seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye, Wisnewski – Aye

- **Schedule II Appointed Officials**

- Ms. Desroches and Mr. Ramsey reported that they did change the salaried presentation to hourly rates to be cohesive with the new wage scales from the Collins Center.
- Move to recommend Schedule II Appointed Officials as presented. Mr. Hanold seconded.
 - Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Abstain, Wisnewski – Aye

Updates from Town Administrator:

- Canal District Stabilization article request article has come in. This article is for the demolition of the Strathmore pedestrian bridge. There are utilities on the bridge that need to be abated and capped that are Town owned. The proposal currently is \$50,000.
- Planning a pre-town meeting and the interest of the Finance Committee around that idea.

Topics not anticipated within 48 hours of posting:

Next Meetings:

- a. 3/26/25 – FC Final Votes and report
- b. 4/2/25 – FC Reviews background
- c. 4/9/25 – FC report complete

Adjournment

Selectboard adjourns their meeting at 7:50 pm.

Mr. Bowman makes the motion to adjourn at 7:51 PM. Seconded by Mr. Hanold and approved.

Bell-Upp – Aye, Bowman – Aye, Waryas – Aye, Rae – Aye, Hanold – Aye, Menegoni – Aye

Respectfully submitted,
Angelica Desroches

Documents and exhibits: