

MEETING MINUTES-WEST NEWBURY
FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date & Time: Tuesday September 10th, 2019 7pm

Location : 1910 Building 1st Floor Hearing Room

Attendees: Gary L. Roberts Jr., Chairman, Forbes Durey, Nathan Kelly, Brad Beaudoin, Angus Jennings, Jim Sperelakis, Jessica Knezek

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

2. Public Comment, Public comment is limited to 2 minutes per resident for items on the agenda. The chair may allow for more time depending on number of residents seeking to participate.

None.

3. Late File Items

Jennings. A new position has been posted for assistant to the Town manager and finance department. An offer may be sent out for the position next week with new hire in early October. The town accountant, Laurie Zwiak, has accepted another position in another town and her last day will be 9/26. This will make the fall very busy for the finance department. Jennings is looking for an interim accountant in the meantime.

4. Approval of minutes

Meeting minutes from 7/29 approved 5:0:1

5. Review Special Town Meeting Calendar and upcoming meeting dates

Future FinCom meeting dates: 9/10, 9/24, 9/30 joint meeting with BOS, 10/8, 10/15
CPC meeting is 9/19 thus the earliest the warrant can close is 9/20, which is the planned warrant article submission deadline.

6. Discuss the known or potential warrant articles for the STM

There will be 3 CPC articles, an article for the housing authority, a historic commission article for signage for the Training Green and a Carr Post article. The planning board will be proposing changes to definitions of zoning bylaws. The Board of health will have articles related to the old town dump and continuing monitoring efforts required by the DEP.

DPW will place 2 articles- for tree removal, and facility maintenance costs for the library. There was also a sewer main break at the 1910 building which also required repair and the rear stairway for the 1910 building was repaired. Free cash transfer was recommended to offset 2020 tax rate. Potential budget reduction articles from over-estimates from healthcare costs and there may not be any students attending Essix Agriculture which would save the town ~\$18,000.

7. Town Manager

a. Provide status update on the closeout of FY19

There were encumbrances for around \$15,000 from FY2019. The update to a new chart of accounts should continue to make following spending from the Town's chart of accounts to date to be reviewed by the Finance dept and the Finance Committee with the eventual goal of having

b. Review status of the financing on capital projects.

The water dept. will be having a water rate audit done which involves an independent consultant review the water dept's financial operation. These audits are favorable as they allow comparison of the Town's Water Dept. to established norms. The estimated tax impact is .00051 x real estate property assessed value, unchanged from materials published from Pentucket in the Spring of 2019. The timeline for construction is 3/2020 with a 3 year construction. An animation for the construction plan is available and Jennings will provide a copy to FinCom(and added here if possible). Submission for initial town building permits may begin as early as 11/2019. Durey asked about the timeline for the Middle St bridge. Jennings forecasts that that project is probably two years out. Jennings says the Town has applied for a 1 million dollar grant from MassWorks.

c. Update committee on the status of the Carr Post project.

There has been significant water infiltration of the turret section of the building. \$100,000 has been spent previously to provide structural support to the building to prevent it from falling apart. If viewed from the outside, iron rods can be seen with square wooden blocks holding the walls in. Essentially, the entire building and all its systems must be replaced, including the basement which is recommended to be filled. The projected cost is 1.5 Million dollars. The site has 8 parking spots which limits the buildings functional use. There is currently around 2 Million dollars in the CPA. Jennings notes that the Town can borrow funds against CPA funds. Jennings notes that he feels this is a project that the townspeople need to decide if this is worth the cost of preservation. Durey notes that with all the other large projects coming up with the New School, the Middle St bridge and the new Water tank, this project is very costly, has no defined use and does not have adequate parking. Kelly notes that there were older members of the town who felt very emotionally attached to the historic building and felt it was important to preserve this town asset. Kelly notes that this will be a large price

article and that folks that are in support of this project will show up to the fall town meeting whereas those against it probably will not. Beaudoin notes that this project is not qualify for special town meeting as this is not an unforeseen issue and can wait for the annual town meeting. Knezek asked if perhaps there were grants or fund raising opportunities for this project.

8. Committee Reports/Communications

a. Capital Improvements Committee

This committee has not met and there is nothing new to report however Jennings felt like the committee should meet a bit earlier which the FinCom generally agreed would be beneficial.

b. Investment Committee

This committee has not met and there is nothing new to report.

c. Discuss meeting with Town Manager and Selectman Kemper.

9. Adjournment