



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL BUILDING
8 PARK STREET

Thursday, March 16, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

**ADAMS VISITOR CENTER, 3 HOOSAC ST, ADAMS, MA 01220
1st Floor Meeting Room**

CALL TO ORDER: On the above date, the Finance Committee held a workshop at 6:02 PM at the Adams Visitor Center. Chairperson Carol Cushenette opened the Meeting. Present: Chairperson Carol Cushenette; Vice-chair Timothy Burdick; Members Justin Duval, Jay Nocher, Jeff King, Robert Lennon, Stephanie Melito, David Lennon, Erin Mucci, Carrie Burnett, and Sarah Kline. *Members Michele Butler, and Aimee Kupiec were absent.* Also present were Jay Green, Town Administrator; Crystal Wojcik, Town Finance Director; and Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary. Member Rachel Tomkowicz arrived at 6:10pm.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by member Meczywor to approve the August 29th, 2022 Meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Member Mucci. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Member Meczywor to approve the October 26th, 2022 Meeting minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Mucci. The motion passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

A motion was made by Vice-chair Burdick to nominate Member Burnett as Chair. The motion was seconded by Chairperson Cushenette. Member Burnett accepted the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

Member Meczywor was nominated by member Cushenette as Vice-chair. The motion was seconded by Member Burdick. Member Meczywor accepted the nomination. The motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET WORKSHOP:

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Overview: Jay Green, Town Administrator and Crystal Wojcik, Town Finance Director provided a copy of the budget to the Finance Committee.

Jay Green reminded the finance committee of the upcoming meetings introduced the budget by summarizing his cover letter. He encouraged the finance committee to ask questions regarding the data that is provided.

Member Cushenette noted that there is a large amount of data in the binders and it should be more than sufficient in providing an understanding of the Town's budget.

The one portion of the budget that was not ready yet is the Capital Projects. We do not yet know what Fiscal Year 23 free cash will be certified at yet.

Adams does not tax to the maximum (2.5% over the previous year) which means that the Town of Adams is working within the confines of Proposition 2.5

Property taxes continue to account for about 74% of revenue, which provides a stable base for the town. Motor vehicle Excise Tax is the third largest source of tax revenue for the Town.

Crystal Wojcik spoke regarding Capital Outlay: The target amount to have in the Town Stabilization fund is roughly 10% of the Town's overall budget. The Town of Adams is well on their way to that. The reserve account is recommended to be roughly 3% of the total budget. If it exceeds that, the Town can create specialized Stabilization fund.

Only about 3% of the Town Budget is Debt service. Best practices suggest not going above 10% so we are well below what is considered health.

The Levy Limit excludes the HVRSD Capital override for FY24. Debt service payment is excluded from Proposition 2.5 so that the tax levy is an accurate reflection.

Member Murray asked if the property tax receipts was based on a projected 100% collection rate. *Jay Green* clarified that budgets are built around an assumption of 100% collection. If the number is not met (Adams usually collects at a rate of 98%) then the remaining percentages is taken out of the Town's Free Cash fund by the state.

Crystal Wojcik, As of right now, receipts for licenses and fees as well as rooms tax is lower than past years. Fines and forfeitures are also down.

We have an obligation to maintain the infrastructure, but it's hard to do without significant increases to the budget.

Parking meters as an income source has a potential to grow.

Vice-Chair *Meczywor* asked if there is a sense of what the income will be from the Marijuana industry. *Jay Green* spoke about the fact that there is new legislation around Host Community Agreements and how they required a 3% community impact fee, however the new legislation may be changing that as some marijuana companies are suing their host communities.

The "New Growth" estimate should be done conservatively, so the Town of Adams uses the amount of \$25,000. State best practices state that a Town should be conservative based on the variability of growth.

Average Single-Family Home tax assessment is \$191,903 in Adams. The highest single-family tax bill in the county is Williamstown. Out of all 31 communities, Adams is number 26. Out of

351 cities and towns in the commonwealth, Adams is 331. There are only 20 communities that are considered more affordable than us.

Jay Green urged the Finance Committee to help disseminate this information accordingly. There is a lot of misinformation that gets spread around. It is important that the people on the finance committee be able to help the other residents of the Town understand the budget.

A new budget department has been included to include the Greylock glen. Two critical positions have been created. The Executive Director will be responsible for starting the commission, foundation, and structure of the environmental center. The second position is Superintendent of building and grounds. Eventually, they will be able to articulate what is needed as far as a grounds crew. Hopefully, the Greylock Glen will begin generating revenue and an enterprise budget that will allow it to self-sustain and not put any burden on the tax base. We have some room in other accounts, such as technology, to support the Glen once it is up and running.

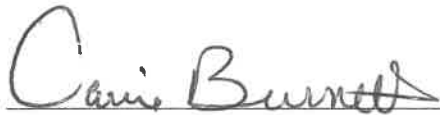
Right now, we are working on a restaurant RFP to get the restaurant operator up there.

The finance subcommittee of the board of selectmen is working on coming up with a borrowing plan to complete the Memorial Building and some other projects.

Chairperson Burnett suggested looking closely at the School Budget.

Member Burdick made a motion to adjourn. Member Cushenette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:43pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Bri Hantman, Recording Secretary.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Carrie Burnett", written over a horizontal line.

Carrie Burnett, Finance Committee Chairperson