



Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL BUILDING

8 PARK STREET

Thursday, May 20, 2020, 6:30 p.m.
FINANCE COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes

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CALL TO ORDER: On the above date the Finance Committee held a meeting on the first-floor gymnasium of Adams Memorial School at 30 Columbia Street, Adams. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Finance Committee Chair Burdick. Present from the Finance Committee were Chairman Burdick, Vice Chairman Cowie, Members Cushenette, Foster, Kline, Kupiec, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, and Nocher. *Member Kline joined the meeting at 6:34 p.m. Member Nocher joined the meeting at 6:38 p.m.* Also present were Town Administrator Green, Town Clerk Meczywor, Town Assessor Wheeler, Treasurer / Tax Collector Rice and Administrative Assistant Dunlap. Present from the Board of Selectmen was Vice Chairman Hoyt.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The meeting minutes for *April 20, 2021, April 26, 2021 and April 27, 2021* were submitted for approval.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve the minutes for the April 20, 2021 meeting, second by Member Cushenette. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve the minutes for April 26, 2021, second by Member Melito. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve the minutes for April 27, 2021, second by Member Cushenette. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

At 6:34 p.m. Member Kline joined the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Review and Approval: *Chairman Burdick* reviewed each article and requested Committee Members hold any article they wished further discussion on. At 6:38 p.m. Member Nocher joined the meeting. Held for discussion were Articles 4, 5, 8, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, and 28. *Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Articles 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 22 as written, second by Member Cushenette. Vote: Unanimous. Motion passed.*

Articles held were discussed and voted on individually.

Article 4: *Member Meczywor advised this article was held to note his abstention from the vote. Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 4 as written, second by Member Foster. Voted in favor: Chairman Burdick, Vice Chairman Cowie, Members Cushenette, Foster, Kline, Kupiec, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, and Nocher. Abstention by Member Meczywor. Motion passed.*

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to fix the salary and compensation of its elective officers as listed.*

Article 5: *Vice Chairman Cowie* advised he held this article for housekeeping purposes. He noted that on April 26th Foster inquired whether the Director had the proper pay raise allocated to her, and it was clarified that it has been corrected. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve the article as written, second by Member Cushenette. Voted in favor were: Chairman Burdick, Vice Chairman Cowie, Members Cushenette, Foster, Kline, Kupiec, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, and Nocher. Abstention by Member Meczywor. Motion Passed.***

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to raise and appropriate or appropriate from available funds as noted, the amounts shown under the heading “**FY2022 Recommended.**”*

Article 8: *Vice Chairman Cowie* noted that there is a different amount listed in the budget book but presentation documents from the school were different. He stated when it was calculated it was based on the student population as of October 1, 2020 and inquired why there was a discrepancy. It was pointed out that it may be a scrivener’s error on Roman Numeral X. Town Administrator Green will clarify it with the school. Member Foster advised it is the exact same number as last year. Chairman Burdick explained that if incorrect, at Town Meeting it could be corrected on the floor. Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to move Article 8 forward for approval subject to clarification, verification, accuracy and correction in the Town Meeting Warrant, second by Member Meczywor. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed. It was confirmed that the Warrant book will reflect the correct amount.

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept the Hoosac Valley Regional School District FY22 budget and to raise and appropriate \$6,137.745.*

Article 20: Chairman Burdick asked for an explanation for the committee. Town Administrator Green reviewed that in current zoning bylaws, in the industrial zone marijuana establishments can do retail, cultivation and manufacturing. In the industrial park zone establishments cannot do retail, cultivation, or manufacturing, but only testing. He noted that over the past six months there were two or three inquiries to do cultivation within a building or in the industrial park. The potential businesses were told by the Town that zoning prohibits it and they went to a local community instead. The Board of Selectmen was asked at a workshop to modify zoning bylaws to allow cultivation and manufacturing in the industrial park, including the Burke property. This went forward to the Planning Board, and it is now being sent to Town Meeting. It was pointed out that the only change is the underlying language. The distinction on the level of review was explained and it was clarified that it gives them authority to exercise control and allows that type of use as the current bylaw is restrictive.

Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 20 as written, second by Member Kline. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 21: *Vice Chairman Cowie* advised he held this article because the warrant article provides for 1/3 payment from Free Cash and he inquired where the other 2/3 is in the budget. It was clarified that it is all from Free Cash, and three payments are proposed. The first fiscal year took two and free cash is the source. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 21 as written, second by Member Foster. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 23: *Vice Chairman Cowie* advised he held this article because of the reference to the consultant for \$45,000. It was explained that this amount is for Donna Cesan and was similar to what was done last year. The Town will keep Donna Cesan on staff through the special legislation for Covid through December. **Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 23 as written, second by Member Kline. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.**

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 24: *Vice Chairman Cowie* inquired what the expected life of a solar array is, and it was reported to be twenty years. It was explained that there are two different ways to measure it. It is anticipated to be \$50,000 annually and it may go up. It was clarified that no taxes are being paid on it but the Town is getting funds on the lease. It is unclear whether the money received will exceed what taxes would be because solar arrays are not taxable. It was mentioned that the agreement is not looking at the tax value of the property but at the capacity of the plant so there are no standards or comparables. It was pointed out that this was a private company and not part of a consortium. A PILOT Agreement was negotiated, the interest was sold to another solar company and the Town did not renegotiate. The PILOT Agreement must go to Town Meeting. An explanation was given on how the agreement works. **Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 24 as written, second by Member Kline. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.**

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 25: Vice Chairman Cowie reviewed that the American Rescue Plan has been passed. The US Treasury provided guidance and the Division of Local Services will distribute guidance before the Town can use them. Town Administrator Green advised that he is sure the Town will get the funds but doesn't have the guidance on how to use them yet. He gave a high-level overview of the needs at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, its history of repairs, the engineering study, and identified the improvements needed. He noted that the normal way to pay is through a program called the state revolving fund with low interest loans but it doesn't pay for design work. Article 26 asks for Town Meeting authorization of borrowing from the Revolving Fund for construction costs, and Article 25 asks to use an unused portion of the storm damage funds to pay Tighe and Bond to design the construction and rehabilitation of the Plant. Article 27 authorizes an asset management plan to put the Town higher on the list to get the bond money. He provided further information about the loan forgiveness process and its three specific steps. He noted that for Article 25, if the Town had a lot of capital money free cash or operating budget funds would be used but they are not currently available. The request is for Town Meeting to appropriate the funds to pay Tighe and Bond, and when the Town gets the grant funds the money will be put back. He explained that the storm damage bond has been supplemented by grants and did not have to be completely used. **Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 25 as written, second by Member Cushenette. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.**

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written*

Article 26: Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 26 as written, second by Member Kline. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 27: *Vice Chairman Cowie* inquired whether the asset management plan development is something that has to be done or just filling in check boxes on a form. It was clarified that Tighe and Bond advised the document meets state criteria and not only outlines when things will be replaced but goes beyond the plant to include stormwater. It documents catch basins, their construction, inspection, when they are rebuilt, and puts data in the database to show the town is maintaining equipment. It documents the life cycle of motors and other equipment, to help predict when to plan to replace items to help the Town to spend better instead of being in reactive mode. It was noted that it is possible there might be other grant money available in the future. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 27 as written, second by Member Kline. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 28: **Vice Chairman** Cowie noted that there are quite a few bars in town that haven't been open for a long time, and asked if this article was needed. It was noted that they are for On Premise Licenses only, and there are interested parties ready to take what there is available to issue. When the Greylock Glen and Mausert Block become active, the Town doesn't have them to work with. Board of Selectmen Vice Chairman Hoyt explained pocket licenses and the alcohol policies. ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to approve Article 28 as written, second by Member Kline. Voted in favor were Chairman Burdick, Members Cushenette, Foster, Kline, Kupiec, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, and Nocher. Voted in opposition was Vice Chairman Cowie. Motion passed.***

*The Finance Committee voted to **RECOMMEND** that the Town vote to accept this article as written.*

Article 29 To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: *Chairman Burdick* thanked the Members for going through the process. *Town Administrator Green* advised that information was formulating about a potential Reserve Fund Transfer request forthcoming for an ATV for the Forest Wardens.

ADJOURNMENT: ***Motion made by Vice Chairman Cowie to adjourn, second by Member Foster. Vote: Unanimous. Motion passed. The Finance Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Burdick', written over a horizontal line.

Finance Committee Chair