

Town of Adams Massachusetts 01220-2087

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

TOWN HALL BUILDING  
8 PARK STREET

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2021 AT 6:00 P.M.

### **FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** On the above date and time the Finance Committee held a meeting at the Adams Town Hall, 8 Park Street, Adams in the first floor Sun Room. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Finance Committee Chair Cushenette. Present from the Finance Committee were Vice Chair Burdick, Members Burnett, Butler, Duval, Foster, Kline, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, Murray, Nocher, and Tomkowicz. *Members Johnson and Kupiec were absent.* Also present were Town Administrator Green, Board of Selectmen Members Hoyt, Finance Director Wojcik, and Administrative Assistant Dunlap.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**June 7, 2021 Finance Committee Workshop Minutes:** *Motion made by Member Tomkowicz to approve the workshop minutes, second by Member Kline. Abstention by Members Foster and Murray. Voted in favor were Vice Chair Burdick, Members Butler, Duval, Kline, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, Nocher and Tomkowicz. Motion passed.*

**June 7, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes:** *Motion made by Member Mucci to approve the meeting minutes, second by Member Butler. Abstention by Member Murray. Voted in favor were Vice Chair Burdick, Members Butler, Duval, Foster, Kline, Meczywor, Melito, Mucci, Nocher and Tomkowicz. Motion passed.*

**Reserve Fund Transfer Request for Town Hall Elevator Repairs - 02131-58010 (Reserve Fund) to 06190-54390 (Town Hall/Building Maintenance, Elevator).** *Town Administrator Green* explained the need for the Reserve Fund Transfer, of \$33,000 for waterproofing of the elevator pit to include materials, labor and a one-year warranty. He noted it is a confined space and therefore Massachusetts General Law requires an elevator service technician to be on site at \$2,500 per day, totaling \$12,500 for the technician alone. He advised there is an elevator maintenance contract for preventative maintenance but this is outside the scope of it. He explained he added in a contingency amount to round it up to \$33,000 in case anything comes up in the process. He explained it is an ongoing issue that is getting worse. When the elevator inspection came time, it was realized that the Town has run out of good graces with state inspector and has to do the work. The former DPW Director was responsible for elevators and this responsibility shifted over to the Building Commissioner. He found a contractor to show what is needed to be done and how to do it. He reviewed the Hydra Concrete Waterproofing proposal for approximately five days' work and the warranty portion. The Finance Committee Members reviewed photos of the water infiltration. It was noted that the elevator was built in 1996 when new addition was put on, and it is not clear if the issue began right from installation. In back of building there is a pitch in the sidewalk angling toward the building and the caulking is gone. It was noted as being worst in the area where the elevator meets the pit. In the spring, DPW will provide equipment to lift up the sidewalk, re pitch it and repour the sidewalk within the regular DPW budget. *Finance Committee Member Burnett arrived at 6:07 p.m.*



Committee Members inquired whether preventative maintenance will be done after the fix and if there are other elevators in Town buildings that need to be inspected. It was explained that all elevators are inspected annually and the others have passed with no critical issues. It was clarified that the Town Hall elevator is under threat to be shut down from this issue. The Memorial School elevator is mothballed, and costs have been trimmed down on it. *Member Foster* inquired why this expense is not coming out of the operating budget instead of capital funds, and it was clarified that the request is to come from the Reserve Fund. He inquired why it was not put in the budget. It was explained that the Town didn't know this was going to be an issue this inspection year. If funds are not spent they go back into Free Cash. The balance in the Reserve Fund after this would be \$142,000 and the Town annually appropriates \$175,000. It was clarified that the sidewalk on the back side of the building is a separate project and this request is only for the elevator pit. The side walk is not the issue with the elevator pit, but can be addressed with caulking. It is desired for the elevator work to be done later in November, as soon as they can get here. The Town will have to pay for a reinspection once the work is done. The quote remains the same even if they can't get to it right away. As a proactive measure, Town staff is starting a list of things that need to be done and for an ongoing Capital Projects list, which will be distributed. This way issues will be taken care of little by little. A brief review of the Town budget was provided by the Town Administrator and the Capital Budget was explained. It was pointed out that the Operating Budget adds to the tax rate, and because of the model used the Town of Adams rides out economic storms well. ***Motion made by Member Butler to approved the Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$33,000, second by Member Foster. Vote: unanimous. Motion passed.***

**Assignment of Sub Committee Members:** *Chair Cushenette* explained she made a list of sub-committee areas that represent some of the highest dollar areas of the budget and requested Members sign up for topic areas and attend some of the meetings. She noted that the idea is to get details that have not been gotten in the past, taking the opportunity to provide learning, collaboration and support. She suggested Members ask good questions that pertain to the financial impact of the Town. *Town Administrator Green* advised he will talk with department heads to coordinate their schedules. *Chair Cushenette* reported she has already talked with School Superintendent Dean and he is on board, but will not have separate meetings. The Finance Committee will have a workshop right before the budget session and receive a report on the findings. A sign-up sheet was passed around. *Town Administrator Green* informed the Committee that the DPW is the catch-all for road repairs, public buildings, maintenance of the fleet, labor and operations and their budget includes public buildings and facilities. The Police Department also includes Animal and Parking Control. He explained that Community Development manages Chapter 90, ARPA and funds outside of the budget including grants. He noted that Capital expenditures touch on every department. He explained that he is asking departments to level-fund and give him a "wish list". Capital expenditures would require a meeting with him so he can provide a list of capital expenditures and ask questions. School Committee meetings would be longer and intense. The meeting attendees were briefly outlined per department. It was explained that this is an opportunity to ask about trends and why costs are going up, as well as why the Town is carrying a line item in each budget. *Member Kline* inquired about the areas of the Community Development budget that are not under the oversight of the Finance Committee and how the funds are being accounted for. *Finance Director Wojcik* advised she tracks them and they have restricted access to them. Revolving funds were briefly touched on. Trends on revolving funds inform whether to increase permit fees or shift to a completely off-tax-rate basis. \$2.3 Million was received for ARPA and criteria used to spend the money were reviewed. It was noted that the Board of Selectmen is focusing money on Wastewater and Water infrastructure for the Greylock Glen.

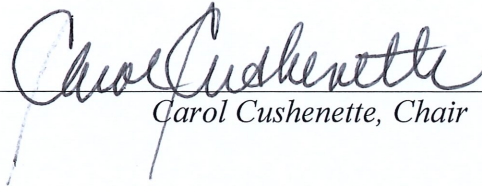
*Finance Director Wojcik* outlined that there are 63 sub-categories for what money can be spent on. It is quite extensive and there are specific requirements to be met as well as reporting. The requirements rule out a lot of possibilities and it is more geared toward communities like Pittsfield. Sub-Committee categories for Members to choose from were listed as the McCann School District, Adams Cheshire School District, Department of Public Works, Police Department, Community Development Department and Capital Expenditures.

**Finance Committee Training:** *Town Administrator Green* reviewed the request to do a finance committee training and orientation and provided a PowerPoint training. It was explained that the Finance Committee is part of the legislative branch of government in the Town's "Town Meeting" structure, which is a representative town government. The Town Budget process was reviewed. It was noted that it is the Finance Committee's until Town Meeting. The statutory foundation for this is Massachusetts General Law Chapter 39, Section 16. Finance Committee members are appointed by the Town Moderator. *At 6:36 p.m. Chair Cushenette left the meeting.* The Home Rule process, Town by-laws and the Special Acts were explained. It was noted that the 1983 Act establishing a Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator structure in the Town of Adams, and it also outlines Moderator appointments. Town Administrator powers and the restriction of Finance Committee Members from being on other boards and commissions was reviewed. *Chair Cushenette returned to the meeting at 6:40 p.m.* The timing and budget requirements were outlined and are located in the budget book issued annually. *At 6:42 Member Mucci left and also returned to the meeting.* It was pointed out that an Elected Official cannot spend money without the Chief Fiscal Officer approval and it shows controls on spending. It was outlined that the Board of Selectmen consider the tentative budget submitted by the Town Administrator on, or before the 75<sup>th</sup> day prior to the Annual Town Meeting and the Board of Selectmen shall transmit a copy of the budget with their recommendations to each member of the Finance Committee. Finance Committee by-laws dictate how the Committee works, including composition, appointment, and term. The provision for retired members was reviewed. A brief update was given to the Finance Committee on the General Government Review Committee status. Finance Committee powers and duties were reviewed, with examples. It was explained that marijuana money does not need to be appropriated, but Adams doesn't have that option yet. Other relevant by-laws, were reviewed. Revolving funds were briefly touched on, and the Town Code shows all revolving funds. The Personnel Classification Plan was explained, and Chapter 80 of the Personnel Rules and Regulations was referenced and listed in the Finance Committee Report. The Compensation Plan was explained and it was noted that there are Police, DPW/WWTP and Clerical Unions. Elected officials are not part of classification or compensation plans. The Reserve Fund purpose and use was explained as outlined in Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 6. Reserve Funds are for urgent, unforeseen expenditures, or a threat to public safety or health. The Role of Finance Committee Member wording from Finance Committee Handbook was outlined. The Town is annually audited by a professional CPA firm, with a management letter. It was pointed out that the Town's processes and protocols are good, and occasionally ways to improve and new things come up. Members were encouraged to look at the handbook download it. *Member Burnett* asked for a five-year comparison on expenditures, and it was explained the budget book shows the previous two fiscal years of appropriation. It was emphasized that the Chief Procurement Officer requires double signatures. The Town Administrator, Finance Director and Community Development do some of it. Procurement was briefly touched on with examples. No other business was conducted.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *Motion made by Vice Chair Burdick to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting, second by Member Butler. Vote: Unanimous. Motion passed. The Finance Committee Meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.*



*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Deborah J. Dunlap, Recording Secretary*



Carol Cushenette, Chair