

**Finance Committee Meeting November 23, 2021
(Joint with the Select Board)
Finance Committee Room**

Present: (Z – zoom)

Finance Committee

Roll Call 9 in attendance:

Mark Trudell

Steve Hendricks (Z, left at 7:00pm)

Dennis Crowley (Z)

Alice Susan Lawson

Jeff Fisher

Douglas Shea

Kathleen Foley Greulich (Z)

Mark Sullivan

Allyson Hamilton

Absent: Josette Burke, Andrew Flowers, Jean Kenney, Lawrence Pitman, Lucy Romanowiz, and Lisa Van der Linden

Additional attendees:

Select Board: Mark Gallivan, Benjamin Barrett, Glenn Maffei, Nancy Mackenzie, James O'Neill

School Committee: Bill Buckley, Nancy Gallivan, Mark Breen

School Building Committee: Dr. Bridget Gough, Katia Santiago-Taylor

Others: Jim Johnson, Patrick Shield, Jodi Cuneo, Lisa Sinkus, Aoife Kelly, Peter Frazier, Bryan Jarvis

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:

Select Board Chair Mark Gallivan called the meeting to order at 6:00pm, followed by a recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Hilltop Securities, Discussion and Vote on Middle School Project Borrowing Options

Town Administrator Jim Johnson announced that because borrowing rates are at historic lows, the main question was whether to borrow \$50 million now or borrow \$20 million now and the rest later. Peter Frazier of Hilltop Securities informed the Select Board of the risks involved in borrowing large sums of money and advised that 85% of the sum should be spent within three years.

Glenn Maffei asked about the drawbacks of holding on to unspent borrowed money for multiple years, Jim O'Neill expressed concerns about the possibility of borrowing rates going down and being locked into an agreement at the higher rate. Mr. Frazier stated that rates may continue to decrease in the short-term, but in the long-term they will almost certainly increase.

Mark Trudell recommended going ahead with the \$50 million now. Mark Gallivan clarified that in the unlikely event that the Middle School Project is cancelled, the already-borrowed money can be allocated to another project.

Nancy Gallivan asked what other towns in similar situations have done, and Mr. Frazier stated that many have borrowed larger sums to take advantage of lower rates. Bryan Jarvis of Compass Project Management explained the project's estimated timeline. Benjamin Barrett asked if there are any items

that may delay the project, and Mr. Jarvis speculated that that problems with the electrical equipment would be most likely pose a risk of delay.

Jim O'Neill stated that despite the risks, since it can be assumed that rates will go up in the long-term, the wisest choice would be to borrow the \$50 million now.

Motion by Mark Gallivan and seconded by Jim O'Neill to direct the Town Administrator, the Treasurer / Collector, and the Finance Director to move forward with a \$50 million borrowing for the Middle School Project.

The motion passed 5-0-0

Motion by Mark Gallivan and seconded by Glenn Maffei to approve the MSBA Middle School Project Funding Agreement and authorize the Town Administrator to sign on the Select Board's behalf.

The motion passed 5-0-0

Motion by Nancy Mackenzie and seconded by Mark Gallivan to recess and reconvene in five minutes in the Main Meeting Room

The motion passed 5-0-0

7:00pm – Steve Hendricks left the meeting

Appointment of School Building Committee Representative

After the Select Board recessed, the Finance Committee continued its meeting in the Finance Committee room and entertained discussion about its appointee to the School Building Committee. Alice Susan Lawson indicated that with the project starting to transition to a different phase, she would be stepping down from her position as the Finance Committee's appointment. She suggested that Allyson Hamilton replace her, and there were no further nominations.

Motion by Alice Susan Lawson and seconded by Mark Trudell to appoint Allyson Hamilton to be the Finance Committee's appointee to the School Building Committee

The motion passed 8-0-0

Adjournment

Motion by Alice Susan Lawson and seconded by Mark Trudell to adjourn

The motion passed 8-0-0

The Finance Committee adjourned at 7:15pm.