

## **Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Thursday, March 31, 2022**

**Present:**

**Finance Committee**

Roll Call 12 in attendance:

Mark Trudell	Susan Lawson
Dennis Crowley	Jeff Fisher
Josette Burke	Douglas Shea
Allyson Hamilton	Mark Sullivan
Brian Bain	Jean Kenney
Steve Hendricks	Lawrence Pitman

**Absent:** Kathleen Foley Greulich, Lucy Romanowiz, Lisa Van der Linden

**Additional attendees:**

Jim Johnson, Patrick Shield, Ed Forsberg, Timothy Bailey, Lisa Sinkus, Jodi Cuneo

The meeting was called to order by Mark Trudell at 7:05pm.

Meeting minutes of recorded meetings now include time stamps from the video for viewing actual content. The video can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7-BcXRMUFE>

*\*Approval of minutes is based off of the printed word and not the video\**

**Article 4 – FY 22 In-Year Budget (1:30)**

Capital Budget Committee Chair Ed Forsberg presented the two capital budget items in question. The first is a request for \$450,000 to replace an ambulance and the second is to purchase 9 defibrillators.

Jim Johnson stated that the ambulance replacement was originally scheduled later but is being moved up in an attempt to avoid rising prices and supply-chain issues. Fire Chief Timothy Bailey stated that ambulances are typically supposed to be replaced every three or four years.

Ed Forsberg stated that new defibrillators are needed in various public spaces. Josette Burke asked about lifespan of units and Director of Public Health responded through Jim Johnson that defibrillators have a lifespan of 8-10 years and the batteries should be replaced after 4 years. Mark Sullivan questioned how many lives defibrillators actually save.

**(20:20) Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded by Susan Lawson for **favorable action on Article 4**. The motion passed 11-0-1 (Jeff Fisher abstained).

**Article 10 FY 22 Snow and Ice Budget (23:10)**

Town Administrator Jim Johnson recommended no action on Article 10.

**(23:50) Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded by Susan Lawson for **no action on Article 10**.  
The motion passed 12-0-0.

**Article 11 Stabilization (24:12)**

Town Administrator Jim Johnson recommended no action on Article 11.

**(20:40) Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded by Susan Lawson for **no action on Article 11**.  
The motion passed 12-0-0.

**Article 12 OPEB (24:55)**

Town Administrator Jim Johnson recommended no action on Article 12.

**(25:20) Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded by Susan Lawson for **favorable action on Article 15**.  
The motion passed 11-1-0 (Lawrence Pitman no)

**Article 16 Personnel Board (28:30)**

Mark Trudell explained that this article would change the language in the Town Charter to essentially dissolve the Personnel Board and award its responsibilities to the Select Board.

Lawrence Pitman stated that he served on the Personnel Board in the past and described the various actions the Board would typically take. He stated that the Personnel Board traditionally advocates on behalf of non-union positions during negotiations and disputes and opposed the article.

Susan Lawson argued that Personnel Board members have no special expertise and the Select Board could just as easily execute its functions. Jim Johnson described occasions where the existence of the Personnel Board slowed or stood in the way of progress. Brian Bain spoke in favor of the article because the Personnel Board has been rendered obsolete by other boards.

**(40:20) Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded by Susan Lawson for **favorable action on Article 16**.  
The motion passed 10-2-0 (Brian Bain and Lawrence Pitman no).

**Article 6-9 Sewer & Water Budgets (41:00)**

Mark Trudell stated that the Finance Committee would attend the Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners' Public Rate Hearing on Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Article 6 is the FY 22 Water Budget, Article 7 is the FY 23 Water Budget, Article 8 is the FY 22 Sewer Budget, and Article 9 is the FY 23 Sewer Budget. None of the final amounts have been finalized yet.

Town Administrator Jim Johnson stated that the Board of Water & Sewer Commissioners have the ability to change their rates at any point in the year in the event that there is a budget shortage.

Treasurer / Collector Lisa Sinkus explained the process of how water usage is measured and billed to Walpole consumers.

The Finance Committee debated whether to make motions on Articles 6 - 9 or wait until after the Board of Water and Sewer Commissioners' Public Rate Hearing.

**(1:05:05) Motion** by Jeff Fisher and seconded by Dennis Crowley **to recommend Article 6 at Town Meeting**

The motion passed 11-0-1 (Brian Bain abstained).

**(1:07:05) Motion** by Jeff Fisher and seconded by Dennis Crowley **to recommend Article 7 at Town Meeting**

The motion passed 11-0-1 (Brian Bain abstained).

**(1:07:23) Motion** by Jeff Fisher and seconded by Dennis Crowley **to recommend Article 8 at Town Meeting**

The motion passed 11-0-1 (Brian Bain abstained).

**(1:07:33) Motion** by Jeff Fisher and seconded by Dennis Crowley **to recommend Article 9 at Town Meeting**

The motion passed 11-0-1 (Brian Bain abstained).

**Approval of Meeting Minutes (1:07:50)**

Mark Trudell moved to defer voting on meeting minutes until the next meeting.

The group discussed possible improvements to future minutes, including time stamps and more detail.

**Adjournment (1:14:20)**

**Motion** by Dennis Crowley and seconded Susan Lawson to adjourn.

The motion passed 12-0-0.

The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:15pm.