

Weare Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

Present at meeting:

- Finance Committee: Janice Mathews, Maria Fossiano, Tom Clow, Tom Flaherty, Gary Evans, Bill Anderson, James Drury, John Merva
- Finance Committee Members not present: Elizabeth Evans
- Town Administrator: Naomi Bolton
- Guest Speakers:
 - Brandon Montplaisir and Barry Charest, Weare Police Union Representatives.

Chair Tom Clow (TC) called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. He asked about minutes from the previous meeting. Tom Flaherty indicated that they were not yet prepared.

TC mentioned that the committee needs to review recommendations on the school articles voted on in the previous meeting. He also said that we need to prepare recommendation on the various Town articles, starting with the Police Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)

Weare PD CBA is a one year contract with an 8% increase. PD Union representatives outlined the details of the contract, expressing why this article needs to be supported. A key factor mentioned was that Weare is far behind equivalent towns due to default budgets being passed and even if this contract passes, Weare will still be behind. Various members asked questions.

Tom Flaherty asked if the committee has had an opportunity to read the contract; no members have seen the contract and the committee asked for a copy. Naomi Bolton said she would send it to the committee.

Naomi Bolton presented the Town Budget. She explained that some items were reduced from the budget presented at the recent public hearing, settling at a 7.52% proposed budget increase. She also mentioned that the last approved budget was from 2019.

She then discussed the article for non-union raises, which has not been finalized yet. It should be finalized by the next Monday. She also mentioned that it has been difficult to fill all positions.

She explained other articles on the Town Warrant, namely radios and vehicles. Notably, block grant funds will be used for highway equipment and ARPA funds will be used to offset the cost of a police vehicle.

She then discussed the Government Building article, adding funds to an existing fund for future cost needs, the Road Reconstruction article, which was reduced as well, and the Veterans' Tax Credit article, which was split into two articles, recommended by the NH Dept of Revenue. If the two Veterans' Credits pass, the current credit of \$500 will continue, otherwise, it will be reduced to a \$50 credit.

The committee then discussed and refined the draft language produced by Bill Anderson for the voters' guide, relating to the Weare and John Stark Warrants articles.

Tom Flaherty then presented a spreadsheet to the committee, outlining the tax impacts of all articles, so that the committee could review them as a single package to aiding with voting. The values for each article were verified.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the Town Proposed Operating budget, seconded by Gary Evans. Multiple members commented positively on the work done by the Board of Selectmen and Town Administration to reduce the original costs. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Gary Evans motioned for the committee to recommend the Police Department Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), seconded by James Drury. Multiple members commented on the problem of department turnover and retention. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the Fire Department Radios, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Gary Evans motioned for the committee to recommend the Fire Department Utility Vehicle, seconded by John Merva. The motion carried with a 7-1 vote, with Bill Anderson voting no, having concerns about depleting the Fire Department Special Revenue fund too quickly.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the Fully Equipped Police Department Cruiser Vehicle, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion carried with a 7-1 vote, with Bill Anderson voting no, concerned about the vehicle being an addition versus a replacement.

Gary Evans motioned for the committee to recommend the 10-Wheel Dump Truck, seconded by Tom Flaherty. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Tom Clow motioned for the committee to recommend the Government Building Maintenance article, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion carried with a 7-1 vote, with Tom Flaherty voting no.

Gary Evans motioned for the committee to recommend the Road Reconstruction article, seconded by Tom Clow. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the Tennis Court CRF article, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion carried with a 6-2 vote, with Janice Mathews and Maria Fossiano voting no, concerned that the plan was too open-ended.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the New Parks Revolving Fund article, seconded by Tom Flaherty. The motion carried with a 7-1 vote, with Janice Mathews voting no, concerned with the lack of a Parks and Recreation strategic plan.

James Drury motioned for the committee to recommend the Cemetery Cy-Pres article, seconded by Gary Evans. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Gary Evans motioned for the committee to recommend the Town Forester article, seconded by James Drury. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.

Tom Clow motioned for the committee to recommend the Optional Veterans' Credit article, seconded by John Merva. The motion carried 7-0-1, with Bill Anderson abstaining.

Tom Clow motioned for the committee to recommend the All Veterans' Credit article, seconded by Maria Fossiano. The motion carried 7-0-1, with Bill Anderson abstaining.

All votes were added to the worksheet presented by Tom Flaherty.

Tom Clow mentioned that the next meeting will be Wednesday, February 1, 2023 7pm. The committee will vote on the outstanding Town article (non-union raises).

Gary Evans motioned to adjourn at 9:45pm, seconded by John Merva and the motion passed.

Minutes Submitted by Tom Flaherty (Secretary) 1/28/23