

Weare Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday October 27, 2021, 7:00 pm

Opening

The Meeting of the Weare Finance Committee was called to order at 7:03 pm on October 27, 2021, by Tom Downing, Committee Chair.

Present

Eileen Meaney – Town Moderator
Naomi Bolton – Town Administrator
Tom Downing
Megan Thellen
Leah Borla
Tom Clow
Neal Kurk
Bill Anderson
Gary Evans
James Drury
Elisabeth Salis Evans
Jeff Spring

Approval of Minutes

None to approve at this meeting

Swearing in Of New Members

Eileen Meaney informed the committee that 3 members resigned Rachel Cisto, Christine Hague and Nicole Herbst. Thanks to those members for the time that they dedicated to the Finance committee. Two new members will be sworn in. Elisabeth Salis Evans was sworn in as a new member of the finance committee. Jeff Spring was also sworn in as a new member of the committee for the 2021/2022 year. Moderator Meaney handed out the Code of Ethics for the Finance Committee and discussed the role and expectations for the committee members. Be thorough, be fair to be respectful to those that we interact with as members of the finance committee.

Introduction of Members

Current and new Members were introduced. In the spirit of transparency, Gary Evans noted that new member Elizabeth Evans was married to his nephew and Jeff Spring also noted that his wife is a teacher in the Weare School District.

Elections

Tom Downing opened the nominations for elected positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary

Tom Downing was nominated by Neal Kurk as the chair. Seconded by Megan Thellen. No other nominations were brought forth. Tom Downing was elected as the Finance Committee chair.

Megan Thellen was nominated by Leah Borla and seconded by Tom Downing. No other nominees were brought forth. Megan Thellen was elected as the Vice Chair.

Leah Borla was nominated as Secretary by Tom Downing. A second was issued by James Drury. No other nominees were brought forth. Leah Borla was elected as the Secretary.

Sub Committees

Weare School – Bill Anderson, Megan Thellen, Tammi Hagman, Neal Kurk

John Stark- Leah Borla, Gary Evans, Liz Salis Evans

Town Committee- Tom Clough, James Drury, Jeff Spring

Tom Downing discussed the duties of the sub committee members and how communication back to the Finance Committee is beneficial. Tom Clough and Gary Evans discussed the benefits of attending the meetings but that attendance to every meeting is not required. Bill Anderson stated some additional benefits of attending the meetings in person such as clarification of details and transparency of how items are presented.

Procedural Discussion

Outstanding meeting minutes from last year to be re-sent to the committee for review so they can be approved at the next meeting

Old Business –

Tom Downing reminded the committee members to be respectful when dealing with community members and department heads. Tom Downing asked Neal Kurk if he could

remain impartial regarding his involvement with a the Weare Taxpayer Coalition and the finance committee. He also asked if Mr. Kurk intended to continue to send mailers out after the committee send their final recommendations. Neal Kurk stated that he intended to continue to send mailers if he felt they were necessary. Megan Thellen asked if Mr. Kurk's involvement in the Taxpayer coalition and the finance committee could be perceived as a conflict of interest. Eileen Meaney spoke to the legal opinion from the Town Counsel regarding conflict of interest. Moderator Meaney discussed the need for diversity of committee members in order to come to effectively and purposefully collaborate in order to make a better-informed decision for the citizens of the town. Therefor, committee members are able to participate in any groups that they would like as long as there is no conflict such as holding an elected position on another official town committee or board.

The FOIA request made by Naomi Bolton was discussed. Two members failed to respond last year; Dennis Aubin and Neal Kurk were the only two members that did not respond. Mr. Kurk stated that his interpretation of the law was that unless he had information to share that he did not have to respond. Tom Downing stated that his interpretation was that a response was required since the communication sent to committee members and noted in the approved meeting minutes dated January 6, 2021, that all responses needed to be sent to Leah Borla, committee Secretary by January 13, 2021. Neal asked if there was a legal opinion on the matter. To date, there is not.

Naomi Bolton reviewed the calendar for the scheduled department budget meetings. Neal Kurk expressed a concern that this schedule does not allow enough time to ask questions and have discussions. Naomi stated that she would be amenable to carrying any concerns back to the town in the event that the committee has concerns.

New Business:

Calendar schedule

Naomi Bolton discussed the calendar and the availability of the room. After review of the Calendar, the next finance committee meeting will be Wednesday November 17, 2021. The December meeting has been tentatively set for 12/15 (Police, Fire, DPW Library, Park). The deliberative session 2/12/22 at the Middle School. Town meeting is 3/8/22. 11/17 CIP, 12/6 DPW, 12/20 Finalize

Agenda for Next Meeting

CIP presentation Police Fire and DPW

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm by Tom Downing, Committee Chair. The next general meeting will be at 7:00 pm on on January 20, 2021, via Zoom.

Minutes submitted by: Leah Borla, Secretary

Approved by: