

# **Weare Finance Committee**

## **Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday January 26, 2021 6:30 pm

### **Opening**

The Meeting of the Weare Finance Committee was called to order at 6:30 pm on January 26, 2021 via Zoom Video Conference by Tom Downing, Committee Chair.

### **Present**

Eileen Meaney – Town Moderator, Naomi Bolton – Town Administrator  
Tom Downing  
Megan Thellen  
Leah Borla  
Tom Clow  
James Drury  
Tammi Hagman  
Rachel Cisto (late)  
Gary Evans (absent)  
Neal Kurk  
Bill Anderson  
Nicole Herbst  
Dennis Aubin  
Christine Hague  
Benji Knapp  
Bob Vizina

### **Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the 01/20/2020 minutes as amended was made by Nicole Herbst. Megan Thellen issued a second. Minutes were approved by Members Tom Downing, Megan Thellen, Leah Borla, Tom Clow, James Drury, Bill Anderson, Nicole Herbst and Chris Hague. Neal Kurk and Dennis Aubin did not approve of the minutes as amended.

### **Outstanding Actions**

None to discuss- \*\*Notes for audio setup-Audio and microphone off on the laptop. Call in with external speaker and no internal microphone.

## **Sub Committee Reports**

**Weare School and JSRHS** – Deliberative session still TBD. We can still email regarding the meeting that is occurring on 1/27/2021 in case we have questions and do meet tomorrow evening as well.

**Town** – unaware of any changes in the budget

## **Review**

### **Town Article Discussion**

Procedural discussion

**Motion to Recommend Article 09:** Article read by Megan Thellen. James Drury motions to recommend. Tom Clow issued a second to recommend Article 09.

Discussion:

Bill Anderson – Current vs. proposed 4.46% increase current v default 2.35% increase. If the FC follows a line to maintain it would be about a \$322 increase on a \$250,000 home. If CARES funds are received, the default budget will be the best option.

Neal Kurk – Since there was additional funds from last year there should be enough surplus to cover the additional budget costs. Naomi deferred to Beth but she cannot be heard. Naomi explained that the money was not spent and warrant article that were not fully expended. The 2020 surplus was in the range of \$293,000, add warrant article leftover funds \$307,000. Tax offset was about \$350,000

Tom Clow – the prior year used for tax rate because the year has not been audited. The actual amount will not be known until an audit. Question regarding the default – police budget – full time salary proposed higher than default due to hiring of more senior officers. The figures should be the same in both proposed and default. Believes it should be discussed by selectman prior to session or get a legal opinion.

Neal Kurk – number from last year should be the same in the proposed budget due to the state law.

Naomi – increase two officers and a promotion. All in proposed not in default.

Neal Kurk – what is the salary increase per person?

Naomi – Increase 2 officers – both 3% Avril \$1810, Lewis 3%, Muese promoted to Corporal \$14,000

Chris Hague – the budget does seem to include any items that are unnecessary. More safety items.

Megan Thellen – re: Neal questions regarding increases – dept heads gets budget increase do they all get the non-union increase as well?

Naomi – yes because the increases are already in effect.

Tom D. – comment – there was a 40% increase for the Library director was off putting but that was not why the budget was voted down. Do we agree with the process and if not, the selectman are elected and can be replaced. Do the Selectmen have the ability to change set funds?

Chris H. – the FC should see all the budgets before we get the warrant. Cannot change anything set with trust funds.

Nicole – agrees with Bill but has an issue with taking into account where we are with WSD maybe not going to be as willing to approve other town items.

Neal – the FC can go back and review if the final impact is larger than we feel comfortable with when we all completed with deliberations.

Tom C. feels it is a reasonable budget

Nicole – Tax impact of all yes?

Megan - yes vote would equal \$5.60 last year was \$4.79

Vote on Article 09: All in favor as written: Tom D. Yes, Megan No, Leah No, Neal No, Chris No, Tom C. Yes, James Yes, Dennis No, Tammi No, Nicole Yes, Bill No, Gary Yes Rachel Yes

Motion to recommend has failed. Motion to Not Recommend Article as written James made motion, Megan issued a Second

Motion to Recommend: Tom D. No, Megan Yes, Leah Yes, Neal Yes, Chris Yes, Tom C No, James No, Dennis No, Tammi No, Nicole No, Bill Yes, Rachel No, Gary No

Motion to Not Recommend Passes 7 to 6 reasons as follows:

- Minimal tax impact over default

- Surplus that can be used in default

**Motion to Recommend Article 10:** Read by Tom Downing. Tom Clow motions to recommend. Chris Issues a second.

Discussion: Neal Kurk cannot states he support article.

Naomi – 98 Employees, 70.3% are first responders.

Bill – Does not support article.

James – would be hypocritical to approve the school and not this article.

Nicole – Should not be comparing retirees and employees.

Vote to Recommend Article 10: Megan Yes, Leah Yes, Neal No Chris Yea Tom C. Yes, Gary Yes James No Dennis No Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel Yes Bill No Tom D. Yes

Motion to recommend Article 10 has passed by a vote of 9 to 4

Motion passes to recommend Article 10 points noted below

- Consistent with consumer index
- Retaining
- 70.3% are first responders

**Article 11** – Read by Tom D. Motion to recommend the Article issued by Tom C. Second issued by Gary Evans

**Discussion:** Bill Anderson – We have 4 of the 8 so far and he views this as a pause due to a larger tax impact.

Tom D. – fully supports this article

Nicole – agrees with this article. This year was more difficult due to part time employees being needed full time at their regular jobs. Maybe take a pause next year.

Tammi – fully supports article

Tom C. in favor of ensuring the safety of citizens of the town

James – believes that it is a necessary article to pass this year

Voting to Recommend: Megan Yes, Leah Yes, Neal No, Chris Yes, Tom C yes, Gary Yes, James Yes, Dennis No Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel Yes Bill No Tom D yes

Motion passes with all FC member that are present voting yes. 10 to 4

Motion to Recommend JSRHS Article 03 passes. Points noted below

- Consistency
- Staying on track with the safety plan

**Article 12** – Read by Megan Thellen. Motion to Recommend the Article James and a seconds was issued by Tom Clow

Discussion: Tom D in favor of having consistent employees

Chris – want to attract an older teen to be able to handle situations that may arise

Tom C. – they were not able to find lifeguard

Vote to recommend article 12 Megan Yes, Leah Yes, Neal Yes, Chris Yes Tom C yes Gary Yes James Yes Dennis No Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel Yes Bill Yes Tom D Yes

Motion to Recommend JSRHS Article 04 passes with a vote of 12 to 1

**Article 13:** Read by Tom D. Motion to recommend Article James Drury and a second was issued by Gary Evans

Discussion:

Chris – could have the ability to increase funds

Neal – pause article

Bill – pause article

Nicole – Why nine months rather than 6 months?

Naomi – move part time to full in March so there is 9 months of salary difference

Tom D. – legitimate issue with timeline in providing permits to citizens

James – needing to use other towns to back up to complete tasks. We need to provide out own resources

Vote to recommend Article 13: Megan No, Leah No, Neal No, Chris Yes Tom C yes Gary Yes James Yes Dennis No Tammi Yes Nicole No Rachel Yes Bill No Tom D. Yes

Motion to recommend Article 13 passes 7 to 6 Indefinite until rescinded

- Potential revenue
- Might need to pause

**Article 14** – Read by Tom D. Motion to recommend Article 14 by Gary second by James

Discussion – Tom D.

Zero impact article – we need to keep our equipment up to date

Vote to recommend Article 14 Megan Yes, Leah Yes, Neal Yes, Chris Yes, Tom C Yes Gary Yes James Yes Dennis abstain, Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel Yes Bill Yes Tom D Yes

Motion to Recommend Article 14 passes

**Article 15** – Read by Tom D Motion to recommend James second Gary

Discussion – Tom D. Fully equipped for everything on the same life cycle (ie might not be with radio) Lost two cars this year due to age. Department is down a vehicle.

Bill A supports adding another vehicle. Need to be able to support the staff. Chief would like to trade in cars to get SUV which are more practical

Neal – why is there a line item that has zero for police vehicles?

Naomi – considered adding one to operating and the other to a warrant article. The line item was removed to ensure transparency.

Chris – Can the verbiage be changed from fully equipped to equipped?

Tom D. – We should vote on it as is and allow Bill to add detail to the recommendation statement

Tom C clarified that they are down 3 cars

Vote to Recommend Article 15 Megan Yes, Leah Yes Neal Yes, Chris Yes Tom C yes Gary Yes James Yes Dennis yes Tammi yes Nicole yes Rachel yes Bill yes Tom D. yes

**Article 16** – Read by Tom D. Motion to Recommend Article 16 Leah Borla, Second by Gary

Discussion – Tom C. fully supports article reserve fund has \$64,000 can part of this be used to offset the tax burden?

Megan – parts for something else in reserve funds. Believes this should be a pause.

Benji – outfitting is not in the number there is an additional \$100,000 not out of the account yet. There will be around \$57,000 left

Vote to recommend Article 16 – Megan No, Leah Yes Neal No Chris Yes Tom yes Gary Yes James No Dennis No Tammi No Nicole No Rachel Yes Bill No Tom D No

Motion to not recommend Megan second Neal

Megan Yes, Leah No Neal Yes Chris No Gary No James Yes Tom No Dennis Yes Tammi Yes, Nicole Yes Rachel No Bill Yes Tom D. Yes

**Article 17** – Read by Tom D Motion to Recommend Article 17 James, second Gary

Discussion – Tom D. trash trailer is in bad shape. If we lose the trailer, we have to contract which will cost money.

Neal – do we have a cost of contracting out

Benji – we do not have a current cost

Tom D – if we lose one trailer will we be down to one?

Benji – we would have to deny demolition for the year and use that trailer for trash

Vote to recommend Article 17 Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal Yes Chris yes Tom Yes Gary Yes James yes Dennis yes Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel Yes Bill Yes Tom D Yes

**Article 18** – read by Megan Motion to recommend Article 18 James second Gary

Discussion – Tom D funds to offset potential or expected increases

James – town needs to raise a certain percentage and is ready when the state is ready to with funds. It also allows some immediate repair.

Neal – can the selectman use money from elsewhere to fund repairs?

Tom C – they have the right to but do they know if the money will be there?

Vote to recommend Article 18 Megan No Leah No Neal No Chris No Tom C No Gary Yes James Yes Dennis No Tammi No Nicole No Rachel No Bill No Tom D No

Motion to not recommend James second Megan

Megan Yes, Leah, Yes Neal Yes, Chris Yes Tom Yes Gary No James No Dennis yes  
Tammi Yes Nicole yes Rachel yes Bill yes Tom D Yes

**Article 19** – Read by Megan Motion to recommend Article 19 James second Gary

Discussion – Neal – does not think we need to discuss as it is necessary to maintain our roads.

Dennis - is that money matching do we still get money from state?

Benji - yes

Motion to recommend Article 19 Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal Yes Chris Yes Tom yes Gary  
yes James Yes Dennis Yes Tammi yes Nicole yes Rachel yes Bill yes Tom D yes

Motion to recommend passes unanimously

Article 20 – read by Megan

Motion to recommend article 20 James second Gary

Discussion -Neal how much in the fund? Any funds that can be used

Naomi - \$260,000 currently. \$60,000 is the baseline due to the number of items to maintain

Dennis – is the library covered in the fund

Chris – yes. Operating is covered by trust capital by town

Tom C - there is a lot of exterior work that needs to be completed on the old town hall.  
There is a need to maintain before the building worsens.

Tom D – was the A/C resolved in the town hall?

Naomi – repairs still need to be made.

Bill A. – feels this can wait until next year.

Vote to recommend Article 20 Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal No Chris yes Tom C yes Gary  
Yes James Yes Dennis No Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel yes Bill No Tom Yes

Motion to recommend Article 19 passes with a vote 10-3



**Article 21** – Read By Megan Motion to recommend Neal Tom D second

Neal – no tax impact. Funds come from trust fund

Vote to recommend Article 21 Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal Yes Chris Yes Tom C yes Gary yes James Yes Dennis yes Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Rachel yes Bill Yes Tom D. Yes

**Article 22** – Read by Megan Motion to Recommend James Gary second

Discussion – No tax impact 321,000

Vote to Recommend Article 22 Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal Yes Chris Yes Tom C yes Gary Yes James Yes Dennis Yes Tammi Yes Nicole Yes Nicole yes Rachel Yes Bill Yes Tom d Yes

Motion to recommend passes unanimously

**Article 23** – Read by Megan Motion to recommend James Gary second

Discussion – zero tax impact

Vote to recommend Megan Yes Leah Yes Neal yes Chris Yes Tom C yes

Motion passes unanimously

\$643.08 tax increase based on current article approval

**Old Business – No old business**

**New Business: None noted**

### **Agenda for Next Meeting**

The meeting will be set for January 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. The next meeting agenda will be distributed prior to the meeting but it is anticipated that the full budget including warrant articles.

### **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 10:03 pm by Tom Downing, Committee Chair. The next general meeting will be at 7:00 on on January 20, 2021 via Zoom.

Minutes submitted by: Leah Borla, Secretary

Approved by: