

**Town of Sudbury  
Finance Committee  
Minutes of Meeting  
Tuesday, May 5, 2015**

The Town of Sudbury's Finance Committee (FinCom) Meeting was held in conference room B of Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School and was called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman Susan Berry.

Finance Committee Attendance

- Susan Berry, Joan Carlton, Adrian Davies, Jose Garcia-Meitin, Mark Minassian, William Kneeland, Jeff Atwater, Fred Floru

**Item 1 (Shown on Agenda as Item 2) – Review FinCom remarks on Articles 28 and 34.**

Article 28 – Lights at Cutting Field.

Susan Berry distributed a draft copy of the remarks to be read at town meeting to explain why the FinCom did not recommend approval of Article 28. After some discussion, the FinCom agreed on the following explanation.

Last night at Town Meeting, we discussed and passed an article to establish a Stabilization Fund for town-owned synthetic turf fields with \$1. This article was introduced because no money has been put aside to replace turf fields when the surface deteriorates. Our Parks, Recreation & Aquatics Director has stated that these fields have a life expectancy of 10 to 12 years, that once they go there is no repair possible, and that the cost of replacing the Cutting Field's surface is estimated to be \$400,000. Cutting Field was opened in October of 2006 and therefore is close to the end of its life expectancy. Before spending money on lights for Cutting Field, the Town needs to be sure we have the money to replace the synthetic surface on this field. Until the town is presented with a specific plan for funding replacement costs for Cutting, voting to increase taxes for lights on this field seems premature.

Therefore, the Finance Committee recommends disapproval Article 28.

Article 34 – Dedication of Local Meal Tax Revenue to OPEB

Susan Berry distributed a draft copy of the remarks to be read at town meeting to explain why the FinCom did not recommend approval of Article 34. After some discussion, the FinCom agreed on the following explanation.

The Finance Committee agrees that we, the Town, must address the issue of our unfunded OPEB liability, but we recommend Disapproval of Article 34 at this time. We have just voted to put 4.3 Million dollars in the Post Employment Health Insurance Liability Fund (OPEB Trust) – a good start, and we have begun the process of including the OPEB Normal cost in each cost center's budget.

In FY17, the cost centers each need to add another one-third of the normal cost of OPEB to their budgets. Given that we have voted an FY16 budget that will use up any excess levy, the cost centers will have a difficult time preparing an FY17 budget that does not cut services. This is not the time to remove approximately \$200,000 in revenue from the money available for the FY17 budget.

Therefore, the Finance Committee recommends disapproval of this article.

**Item 2 (Shown on Agenda as Item 1) – Hear and/or vote on Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles as needed.**

Article 41 – Minuteman Regional Vocation School District – Withdrawal

Fred Floru had read comments of families that attend the school who have had a very positive experience at the Minuteman Regional Vocational School. Bill Kneeland responded that other vocational schools, Assabet and Nashoba in particular, could also present good options for vocational students, at cheaper rates. Chair Susan Berry expressed frustration that the management of Minuteman does not disclose a lot of financial information and statistics.

Bill Kneeland moved to approve the article 41. Mark Minassian seconded. The vote was 7-0-1 in favor. Fred Floru abstained.

Article 54 – Appropriate \$1,000,000 to build a “greenway style” trail on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Two members of the FinCom are abutter to this trail so they decided not to take a position on the article.

The FinCom was told that the CIAC recommended against this article. After some discussion, Jose Garcia-Meitin made a motion to recommend approval of this article. Mark Minassian seconded the motion. The vote was 1 in favor, 5 against and 2 abstained.

Article 55 – Appropriate \$1,000,000 to build a “greenway style” trail on the Mass Central Rail Trail.

The FinCom was told that the CIAC recommended ~~against~~ approval of this article. After some discussion, Mark Minassian made a motion to recommend approval of this article. Adrian Davies seconded the motion. The vote was 3 in favor, 5 against.

Article 56 – Senior Property Tax Relief Petition

Mark Minassian made a motion to recommend Indefinite Postponement of this article. Bill Kneeland seconded the motion. The vote was 8 in favor and 0 against.

### Item 3 – General Business

Susan Berry explained that the next meeting after the Town Meeting would be held on June 15<sup>th</sup>. She explained that at that meeting, the FinCom would vote on the appointment of a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. She asked permission of the FinCom members to run this meeting. All members agreed.

### Item 4 – Adjournment to L/S Auditorium

Mark Minassian made a motion to continue the FinCom meeting in attendance at, and for the duration of the Sudbury Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting. Bill Kneeland seconded the motion. The vote was 8 in favor and 0 against.

Prior to the commencement of the Town Meeting on May 5th, FinCom readjoined in the auditorium of Lincoln-Sudbury Regional High School. FinCom discussed news that The Board of Selectmen had voted to indefinitely postpone Article 41. Members of the Board of Selectmen felt that article 41 would send too strong a message to Minuteman Regional Vocational School suggesting that the Town of Sudbury was unwilling to negotiate with the School. By communicating a strong desire to leave, the Town might be limiting its bargaining leverage in future discussions. Fred Floru motioned to support an indefinite postponement of Article 41. Jose Garcia-Meitin seconded the motion. FinCom voted ~~unanimously~~ in favor of the motion 5-3.