

**TOWN OF SUDBURY  
FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 16, 2015**

**ATTENDENCE**

Finance Committee Members Present: Susan Berry, Chair, Fred Floru, Vice Chair, Jeff Atwater, Jeff Barker, Joan Carlton Adrian Davies, Jose Garcia-Meitin, Bryan Semple

**Also Present:**

Andrew Vanni, Finance Director/Treasurer Collector and Susan Iuliano, Selectman

**Absent:** Mark Minassian

**CONVENE:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:33 p.m., by Chairman, Susan Berry at the Flynn Building, 278 Old Sudbury Road, Sudbury, MA 01776

**ITEM 1: GENERAL BUSINESS**

**Approve Minutes:**

**Motion and Vote:**

Adrian Davies moved and Bryan Semple seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the September 14, 2015 meeting as submitted.

**The motion carried. The vote was 6 yes, 2 abstentions.**

**Transfers and Other Business:**

- Transfers - none
- Other Business. Chairman Berry stated that the next meeting is the December 14, 2015. This meeting will be at Town Hall. Chairman Berry also stated that the Board of Selectmen are meeting on December 1, 2015 to hold a tax classification hearing and will vote the tax percentage rate for business and residential.

**ITEM 2: FY17 Budget Planning**

- Chairman Berry reminded cost center liaisons to meet with the cost centers to finish up with Exhibit Two. The conversation moved toward a discussion on income and expenses for LS, the LS Solar Panel Canopy, and expense reductions relating to this canopy and cost savings.

- **Draft Budget Hearing Schedule:** Chairman Berry led the discussion on this item. Chairman Berry stated that by December 7, the liaison meetings with the cost centers should be complete. The cost center liaisons would present their report at the December 14 Finance Committee meeting. Representatives from the cost centers will be at this meeting to expand on any additional questions. Chairman Berry stated that by January 8 she would receive the budget reconciliation spreadsheets from the cost centers. She would distribute them to the Finance Committee members. Chairman Berry explained the contents of the spreadsheet. Chairman Berry stated that January 11 would be a regular monthly Finance Committee meeting. Ms. Carlton suggested that at the January 11 meeting the Finance Committee review the spreadsheets, not for content, but for consistency or inconsistencies that might need to be resolved. Chairman Berry stated that Budget Hearing presentations would begin on Wednesday, January 20, 2016 for Minuteman and the Town and on Thursday, January 21, 2016 for Sudbury Public Schools and Lincoln Sudbury Regional High School. These meetings would begin at 7pm and will take place at Town Hall. Chairman Berry stated that on January 22, the longer budget spreadsheet is due from the cost centers. Chairman Berry stated that February 1 would be a regular Finance Committee meeting. The agenda would include budget deliberations based on budget presentations from the cost centers.
  
- **Joint Meetings(s) with the BoS to hear Town Meeting articles:** Chairman Berry stated that Warrant Articles are due to the Board of Selectmen on February 1, 2016. This will be a first look at what the articles will be.
  
- **Cost Centers' Budget Hearing and Allocation:** Chairman Berry referred to communication received on convening a joint Finance Committee and Budget Strategies Task Force meeting and the BoS's review of the draft amendment to the Budget Strategies Task Force Mission Statement. Chairman Berry stated that the Finance Committee would need to give feedback to the Board of Selectmen for these deliberations. Chairman Berry stated her vision is, if necessary, to convene a meeting with the Finance Committee and members of the Budget Strategies Task Force who are from the cost centers and through these discussions on allocations, a determination would be made on how to get to a no override budget. Discussion followed. Chairman Berry noted that at the very least these preliminary deliberations would give the Finance Committee more information in order to make a decision. Chairman Berry added that getting to a no

override budget would be the priority for the joint meetings.

- **FinCom Spreadsheets:** The Finance Committee representative will talk with the other members of the Budget Strategies Task Force about new information added to the spreadsheet, which include OPEB normal cost, the FTES to match the salary line item, and to put in the number of employees that are eligible for benefits as well as how many are currently receiving benefits.

### **ITEM 3: Free Cash Policy**

Chairman Berry led the discussion on this item. The Finance Committee reviewed recommended changes for this policy. A lengthy discussion ensued on who votes the use of Free Cash and what would the Finance Committee's role would be in recommending the use of Free Cash. Chairman Berry stated that it is important to keep the stabilization fund at 5% of the operating budget by adding money from Free Cash from year to year and to reserve an amount equal to 1/2% of the operating budget. Once these two criteria are met then a consideration could be made on expending money from Free Cash to fund other items. Mr. Floru stated that the guidelines should suggest that operation expenses not be expended from Free Cash. The majority of the members agreed that Free Cash not be used to fund operating budgets. Mr. Semple suggested the following change to the draft Free Cash Policy: "To the extent certified Free Cash surplus remains, surplus may be used as determined and voted on by Town Meeting. However to use Free Cash to fund shortfalls in the operating budget is generally discouraged." This item would come back for discussion pending additional comments from Sudbury Public Schools (SPS), the Town Manager, and Mark Minassian, absent from this discussion.

### **ITEM 4: FinCom Facebook**

Mr. Semple led the discussion on this item. Mr. Semple outlined the objectives for creating a Finance Committee Facebook page. Mr. Semple stated that for many people, Facebook is a more efficient means of communication, above and beyond email for myriad of reasons. Mr. Semple stated that the town has started a Facebook page. Documents and events can be posted on the page. Visitors can post a comment on the page. A person can 'Like' the page and receive automatic updates. Mr. Semple described what a Finance Committee Facebook page would look like. A discussion then followed on what other towns are doing, Open Meeting Law implications, Facebook vs. the town's website. After a lengthy discussion the Finance Committee decided it was too early to pursue this initiative.

**ITEM 5: Board of Selectmen Draft Remote Meeting Attendance Policy**

Chairman Berry introduced this item. Chairman Berry stated that the Board of Selectmen have drafted this policy and would like feedback from the Finance Committee on the policy. The committee discussed the tenets of policy. The conversation that followed included issues with technology and access to materials. Chairman Berry stated that the requirement that all can view the participant and the participant can view all members may not be practical and should not be included in the policy, and that the FinCom feedback should suggest clearing up the inconsistencies on the language about materials. A discussion followed on using conference services that would provide smooth access for the remote participant.

**Motion and Vote:**

Bryan Semple moved and Joan Carlton seconded the motion to support the Sudbury Board of Selectmen adopting the Remote Meeting Attendance Policy.

**The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.**

**ITEM 6: Liaison Reports**

Mr. Semple presented an update on the Fairbanks Community Center Study Task Force meeting. Mr. Semple stated that this group has deliberated on a preliminary operation model that is based on square footage, and operating cost of between \$4M and \$25M based on three options. The tax bill would increase by either \$100 or \$700 based on chosen option. Discussion followed.

Fred Floru presented an update on the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) meeting. Mr. Floru stated that the town submitted a proposal requesting CPC funds to restore the Loring Parsonage property. Mr. Floru explained the issues associated with this request.

Mr. Barker reported that LS has a new Business Manager. This is a one-year assignment. The working relationship with him has been very productive.

**ITEM 7: PUBLIC COMMENTS**

John Baranowsky, resident on Belcher Drive, shared his comments the deliberations on the Budget Strategies Task Force and the challenges the committee would face during this budget season.

**ITEM 8: ADJOURNMENT****Motion and Vote:**

**Jeff Barker moved and Fred Floru seconded the motion that the November 16, 2015 Finance Committee meeting adjourn at**

**9:48 p.m.**

**The motion carried. The vote was unanimous.**

**Next Meeting Scheduled for December 14, 2016**

*Respectfully Submitted: Cheryl Gosmon, Recording Secretary*