

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, January 09, 2018  
Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
109 Front St., Winchendon, MA 01475

**Present:**

Thomas Kane, Chairman  
Dr. Maureen Ward, Member  
Christian Orobello, Member  
James Robichaud, Member  
Charles Corts, Member  
Doug Delay, Member  
Tonya Dokulil, Member

Katie Broome, Recording Secretary

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**List of Documents Presented At Meeting:**

- Town Of Winchendon Year To Date Budget Reports

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**7:00PM Town Hall Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kane at 6:30PM. Chairman Kane then led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Minutes:**

*Minutes of December 12, 2017*

Mr. Delay motioned to approve the minutes of December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Mr. Robichaud seconded the motion.

**KANE(Y) WARD(Abstain) OROBELLO(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) CORTS(Abstain)  
DELAY(Y) DOKULIL(Abstain)**

*Minutes of September 12, 2017*

Dr. Ward moved to remove a statement on the minutes of September 12, 2017, which incorrectly quoted her as saying ‘revenue sharing will benefit the school and the town’. Dr. Ward motioned to approve the updated minutes of September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017, Ms. Dokulil seconded the motion.

**KANE(Y) WARD(Y) OROBELLO(Abstain) ROBICHAUD(Y) CORTS(Abstain)  
DELAY(Y) DOKULIL(Y)**

**Year to Date Reports:**

Chairman Kane opened the topic of the Town of Winchendon’s Year To Date Reports for the month of January. Mr. Robichaud noted that he did not receive a revenue report, and Chairman Kane confirmed that the board had not received the revenue report for this month. Mr. Robichaud asked Chairman Kane if he had looked into the status of the fund transfers that had been discussed at the previous meeting. While Chairman Kane had not yet been able to look into the transfers, he did look into the negative amount in the Homeless Transportation expenses, and it is thought that the negative expense is the result of a late payment from the previous year. Mr. Orobello called attention to the remaining balance of \$5564.61 in the Past Year School Bills, and asked whether that balance remained due to the school coming in under budget for the year. Chairman Kane noted that, while that could be the case, the remaining balance would return to the general funds.

Chairman Kane noted that he wanted to clarify with the school board why there are line items for teaching positions, which received no funds from the school, while other spending for

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other positions are nearly double the funds. Dr. Ward recommended that these funds could be easily clarified if the school could add a journal entry or note section to explain each adjustment, so there would be more clarity. Chairman Kane agreed to raise these questions to the school board at the joint meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Allocation of Free Cash into Stabilization Fund:**

Chairman Kane brought forward the discussion about setting forth policies to allocate certain percentages of free cash into a stabilization fund. Chairman Kane addressed the committee, reminding them that the town of Winchendon's free cash allowance is limited by the state of Massachusetts, which allows the town to have around \$360,000 of free cash annually. Mr. Robichaud noted that he would like to know the set regulations for the free cash that is allowed the town of Winchendon, so a percentage can go into a stabilization fund. Chairman Kane responded that since the town is currently in a unique situation, with the state's mandatory fiscal requirements, free cash is limited as there are already regulations for a certain amount of the town's funds to be set aside. Until the town of Winchendon is out of debt, financial options for the town's free cash are limited.

Mr. Robichaud noted that the town is otherwise pushing nearly one million dollars in free cash each year. Dr. Ward added that the town should also be prioritizing the free cash it spends on capital expenditures. She added that a Capital Expenditure Committee could help be a neutral third party to help with this prioritization. Dr. Ward noted that it would be a good question to bring before the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen and School Board later in the month.

Dr. Ward also mentioned that she would like to see more transparency with what capital expenditures gain priority over others. Chairman Kane agreed, noting that it should be visible when funds get shifted, as to who shifted these funds, and why the shift occurred. Dr. Ward agreed, and added that the deliberation should be public for further understanding and transparency. Mr. Orobello agreed, and noted that Chairman Kane had previously a good point about certain town departments that have a hard time saving money, especially those whose entire funds are mostly paid out as wages, that would need further help with capital expenditures. Dr. Ward noted that department who are particularly efficient in saving the town money, should also see some monetary return for the fiscal responsibility. Mr. Orobello added that there would obviously also need to be a little wiggle room for need, in the cases of departments who have little wiggle room in their finances.

Mr. Robichaud noted that for these reasons, a policy needs to be put into place for the Free Cash. Mr. Orobello agreed, and noted that he would like to see more individuals approach the committee with what necessities the town should be spending money on, so the populace of the town can also place an emphasis on what they believe is necessary for the town, as well as what each department finds necessary for the town.

Mr. Delay noted that the town needs to develop a plan, and note what percentage of free cash is a reasonable amount to save. Dr. Ward added that there should also be a policy for what amount of money the stabilization fund is not allowed to go below.

Dr. Ward raised that, while talking about what the town and the departments in the town find necessary to spend the free cash on, that it may be a good idea to visit the Beals Memorial Library for the next department visit before the February meeting. Chairman Kane agreed, and

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noted the Board of Trustees for the library were putting together a presentation for Finance Committee upon this visit. Dr. Ward recommended meeting at the library at 5:45pm, immediately before the Finance Committee meeting at Town Hall. The rest of the committee agreed that this time was acceptable, and that they could all make it.

**About the Joint Meeting with BOS and School Board:**

Chairman Kane raised the topic of the impending Joint Meeting at 6:30PM on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018, where the Town Manager will give his mid-year report, and asked the committee what they would like to see on the agenda. The committee responded to put the formation of a Capital Improvement Committee. Mr. Orobello added to inquire about the discrepancies in the school board's revenues. Chairman Kane added that he would also talk to the school board beforehand, so they would be able to adequately look into the revenues. Dr. Ward mentioned that it would also be pertinent to ask for an update on the committee looking at use of resources. Mr. Robichaud added that the finance committee should be inquiring about the solar panel project's pilot money. Mr. Robichaud also noted that he would like to ask about the 2 year hold for use of the supplemental reserve fund. Dr. Ward asked Chairman Kane if it were possible to find out before the joint meeting whether or not the town of Winchendon already has a Capital Improvement Committee or a Stabilization Committee formed. Chairman Kane noted that there was, at one time, a Capital Improvement Committee, but he will look into if it has met recently, and that maybe the town should look into how often that committee meets, and recommend that the committee meet more often.

Chairman Kane passed out the calendar for joint meeting and town meeting information to the board. He noted that the Town Meeting would be Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018, and that the warrant for the Town Meeting will be open from January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 to April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Dr. Ward asked if the upcoming major meetings on the calendar were locked in stone, as far as the dates and times they would be taking place. Chairman Kane said that the dates had been voted on by the Board of Selectman on January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018, during their meeting. Dr. Ward noted that she can't be here for the week of February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and would like to be present for that meeting, if it can be rescheduled. Chairman Kane said he will definitely look into changing the date to either February 22, 2018 or March 5, 2018.

Chairman Kane noted that the Finance Committee would be meeting for presentations for the Town Manager's budget, Monty Tech's budget, and the School Board's budget, all within the month of March. Chairman Kane added that the board would have to contact Monty Tech for a presentation by mid March. Dr. Ward asked if Chairman Kane is looking at either March 6<sup>th</sup> or March 20<sup>th</sup> for this presentation. Chairman Kane responded that either date would work. Chairman Kane noted that the School Board presentation should be scheduled for either Tuesday or Thursday, the week of March 12<sup>th</sup>, or March 19<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Ward asked if the Committee would be receiving an email when these dates are set, to which Chairman Kane replied that they would.

**Member Comments:**

Mr. Delay asked if the Committee was able to receive the revenue reports electronically, instead of needing to get a hard copy each week. Mr. Orobello recollected that the committee used to get the reports electronically before, and requested the hardcopy to take notes on, and

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Chairman Kane agreed that this was the case. Chairman Kane added that the Finance Committee could do both, and he could send out the electronic copy via email, if necessary.

**Public Input:**

**N/A**

**Adjournment:**

Dr. Ward made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:39PM. Mr. Orobello seconded the motion.

**KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)**