

# TOWN OF WINCHENDON



## Finance Committee

Telephone (978)-297-5419

### Finance Committee Meeting/Public Hearing

October 10, 2018

Town Hall 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium

**Present:** Chairman Thomas J Kane Jr., Dr. Maureen Ward, Douglas Delay,  
Charles C. Corts, Amy Salter, Charles (CJ) Husselbee

**Absent:** Vice-Chair Christian Orobello  
Brianna Roberts, Recording Secretary

**Materials:** Agenda, October 10, 2018

**Call to Order: 6:30 PM**  
Pledge of Allegiance

**Announcements:** Mr. Kane introduced the two new board members, Amy Salter and Charles (CJ) Husselbee.

**Approval of Minutes:** September 11<sup>th</sup> 2018. Dr. Ward motioned to approve the minutes with corrections noted and Mr. Delay seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Abstain) Husselbee (Abstain) Kane (Y)**

**Year to Date Reports:**

Mr. Kane let the board know the year to date reports were not prepared yet.

**Potential Department Visits:**

Mr. Kane stated the board plans on meeting with the school department at each of the 3 schools, once a month beginning in November.

**Special Town Meeting; Review Warrant:**

The board reviewed the articles in the warrant; there was no discussion before the public hearing.

Dr. Ward motioned to take a recess before the public hearing at 7:00PM and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

**Mr. Kane called the public hearing to order at 7:00PM**

This public hearing is to review the warrant for the special town meeting scheduled on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

Mr. Kane stated the first article is for the finance committee, the report has not been prepared yet so they chose to move on to article 2.

Article 2 is in regards to see if the town will transfer available funds in the sum of \$147,000 for the construction of the sally port for the police station.

Mr. Keith Hickey stated articles 2 through 10 are being request to be funded through free cash, so there is no additional raise to appropriate which means no impact to the taxpayer directly.

Dr. Ward asked what the total free cash sum is and Mr. Hickey replied \$1,064,151 with the deficit borrowing \$311,990 that is being repaid in March 2019 when the note comes due. Proposing to use \$734,265 of free cash, which will leave a free cash balance of \$329,886.

Mr. Hickey explained the board of selectman sponsored an article at the spring 2017 town meeting to request a \$691,000 to construct the sally port for the police station. This bid was based off an engineers estimate. \$500,000 is being funded by Robinson Broadhurst and \$69,000 is being funded through a state grant. The taxpayers were asked to fund \$122,000 over a 3-year period, about \$40,000 a year. The highest bid was just over \$1,000,000. Mr. Hickey and Chief Officer Walsh went back to the drawing board and discussed options to cut costs. The original proposal that was approved at the 2017 meeting included a structure that would have provided additional storage space, a forensic lab, and armory. After reviewing ways of cutting costs, it was agreed upon staying with the same brick style as the other buildings downtown but reducing the size by 9 feet, which eliminated the forensic lab and armory room. These two rooms can be added to the existing building with some minor costs in the future. The town went back out to bid for a smaller sally port with the lowest bid being \$838,000. The contractors have held their bids for almost a year and Mr. Hickey hopes the finance committee will approve this additional cost to get the project started.

Dr. Ward stated that with the funded being taken into consideration and the additional cost, the taxpayers are being asked to fund 18% of the project, for a total of \$169,000.

Mr. Kane asked if there are any comments or questions from the public, there are none.

Mr. Kane moved on to article 3, which asks the town to transfer available funds of \$100,000 into the stabilization account. Mr. Hickey explains the town was authorized to withdraw \$94,000 from the stabilization account at the May 2018 town meeting with the promise to return the funds as soon as possible.

Article 4 is in regards to if the town will vote to transfer available funds the additional \$14,000 to be added to the department of public works vehicle maintenance account, which would increase that account to \$123,257. Mr. Kane stated he has a question in regards to the next few articles. He stated the articles don't address the specific line items that the money is going to be added to. Mr. Hickey stated they will try to explain and clarify better.

Article 5 is in regards to if the town will vote to raise the appropriated additional \$4,000 to be added to the public works administration expense. Mr. Hickey explained this is fund the emergency action plan update regarding the dams in town.

Article 6 is to add \$11,756 to the department of public works foreman personnel account, which would increase the accounts to \$262,361. Mr. Hickey explained an employee unexpectedly retired and the \$11,756 was for vacation and sick time.

Article 7 is in regards to if the town will vote to transfer \$22,255 to be added to the fire department personnel expense account, which would increase the account to \$92,775. Mr. Hickey explained that this was similar to the DPW situation, the fire chief retired in July.

Article 8 is in regards to if the town will vote to transfer \$75,000 for the purpose of contracting with a firm to prepare a central fire station facility needs study for future station expansion plans. Mr. Hickey explained the fire station does not meet the current needs of the town. The parking needs to be expanded and the vehicles need to be stored in a climate-controlled facility. The bunk and locker rooms are unisex; this needs to be updated to separate sex rooms. The \$75,000 is to fund a company to come out and access the facility to recommend updates.

Article 9 is in regards to \$45,000 of free cash and using it to fund a director of curriculum position. Superintendent Joan Landers explained in 2016 there was a review from the department of education, which showed there was a great need for a director of curriculum. Mr. Kane asked Ms. Landers if she is concerned at all about hiring someone of quality mid-year. She suggested the position be posted as interim until someone of quality can be hired. This position is extremely important and needed as soon as possible; she does not believe it would be smart to wait until next year. Dr. Ward suggested changing the position name to director of instruction, and curriculum.

Article 10 is a request to pay prior year bills of \$3,264 from free cash. These bills were generated around the end of the fiscal year to fund a few expenses from graduation.

Article 11 is in regards to see if the town will vote to transfer from free cash the sum of \$422,275 to offset the FY19 tax rate. Mr. Hickey explained this article will be passed over because motions were made to transfer from free cash for articles 2-10.

Article 12 is in regards to see if the town will vote to amend the FY19 operation budget by decreasing the unemployment insurance \$14,626 and increasing the debt service interest expense short term interest by the same amount. Mr. Hickey explained this is just a transfer mid year; the \$14,626 is how much is spent on interest to pay the retirement costs to Worcester county retirement. By paying it in full, the amount of interest is discounted.

Article 13 is in regards to see if the town will vote to transfer from water-retained earnings \$40,000 to be added to the water enterprise fund water system maintenance expense account, which would increase the overall budget for the water enterprise to \$966,720. Mr. Hickey explained this \$40,000 was budgeting for in fiscal 2018. At the end of 2018 the \$40,000 should have been encumbered and carried forward into fiscal 2019 so the water department could go out and repair water hydrants and take care of other needed repairs.

Article 14 is in regards to transferring the money from the water-retained earnings of \$54,913 to offset water rates. Mr. Hickey explained that because of the wet spring we had, the water-retained earnings were down. This request is to balance the budget and keep the water rates from increasing.

Mr. Rick Morin came forward and asked the board about drawing the water from Ashburnham. Mr. Hickey explained there is enough water and accessibility to water to accept another water user in town, for example, a marijuana growing facility.

Article 15 is in regards to see if the town will transfer wastewater retained earnings of \$4,734 to be added to the enterprise fund chief operating personnel account, which would increase the overall balance to \$1,235,534. Mr. Hickey stated this is for unexpected costs of a retired employee to fund vacation and sick time. Dr. Ward asked if the town has a policy requiring a year's notice of retirement so the town has enough time to budget. Mr. Hickey answered that he was not sure there is such policy in place but agreed that it should be taken into consideration.

Article 16 is in regards to see if the town will vote to transfer from the wastewater retained earnings the sum of \$72,467 to offset wastewater rates. Mr. Hickey explained this is similar to the water situation. When less water is being used, less wastewater is produced.

Dr. Ward motioned to close the public hearing for the warrant articles- October 29<sup>th</sup> 2018, at 8:05PM and to open the regular FINCOM meeting. Ms. Salter seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

**Mr. Kane closed the public hearing at 8:05PM.**

#### **Recommendations on warrant articles:**

Mr. Kane stated he agreed with Dr. Ward's recommendation of clarifying the line items.

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 1 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 2 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 3 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

Mr. Delay asked if there were any opportunities to fund more than \$100,000 with the remaining \$329,000 in free cash. Dr. Ward responded that the reasoning behind having extra cash is to have it there in case of any unexpected encumbrances.

Mr. Kane asked for a vote on Article 3.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 4 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 5 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 6 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.

**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 7 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 8 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 9 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 10 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Mr. Kane asked Mr. Hickey to clarify if the board should pass over this article or vote.  
Mr. Hickey explained this should be passed over as it was trying to show how much total free cash was being spent but it has in turn made the article more confusing, as it does not clarify in the specific article where that free cash is being distributed.

Dr. Ward motioned to pass over Article 11 and Mr. Delay seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Dr. Ward moved to recommend Article 12 and Mr. Husselbee seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Mr. Husselbee moved to recommend Article 13 and Mr. Delay seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Mr. Husselbee moved to recommend Article 14 and Mr. Corts seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**  
Mr. Husselbee moved to recommend Article 15 and Mr. Corts seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

Mr. Husselbee moved to recommend Article 16 and Mr. Delay seconded the motion.  
**Delay (Y) Ward (Y) Corts (Y) Salter (Y) Husselbee (Y) Kane (Y)**

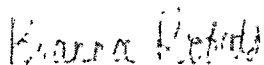
Mr. Hickey thanked the board for their time and continued cooperation.

Mr. Kane stated the board would meet with the school at the next meeting on November 13th.

Mr. Kane asked the public for any comments.

**Dr. Ward motioned to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Corts seconded the motion. The board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:30PM.**

Respectfully submitted:



Brianna Roberts, Finance Committee Recording Secretary

Finance Committee Minutes  
October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018