

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 17, 2017  
Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room  
109 Front St., Winchendon, MA 01475

**Present:**

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

Katie Broome, Recording Secretary

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**List of Documents Presented At Meeting:**

- Winchendon Police Department Presentation Slides
  - Town Of Winchendon Special Town Meeting Warrant- November 13, 2017
  - Town Of Winchendon 2018 General Budget Report
  - Town Of Winchendon 2018 Education Budget Report
  - Town Of Winchendon 2018 Water Department Budget Report
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**5:30 PM Police Station Meeting**

The Finance Committee meeting at the Winchendon Police Department was called to order by Chairman Thomas Kane at 5:31pm, this motion was seconded by Dr. Maureen Ward.

The Finance Committee met with Police Chief Walsh at the Winchendon Police Department to view a presentation of the current activity and statistics of the WPD in comparison to previous years, and to hold a discussion about the necessity of new equipment and vehicles for the Winchendon Police. After the presentation, the Finance committee was able to ask questions and obtain further information about the daily duties and emergency duties of the WPD, and how these duties directly and indirectly affect the Winchendon populace. After these discussions, the Finance Committee took a tour, led by Police Chief Walsh, of the new police department to physically see what amenities the station already has, and what further amenities the station needs.

Upon finishing the tour of the Police Department, Chairman Kane called to recess the first portion of the 10/17/17 meeting at 6:47pm, to return to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium at the Winchendon Town Hall. Dr. Ward seconded the motion.

**7:00PM Town Hall Meeting**

The meeting was reconvened by Chairman Kane at 7:05PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes:**

A motion was made to postpone the approval of the minutes for Sept. 12, 2017 by Dr. Maureen Ward, in order for the minutes to be amended. The motion was seconded by Christian Orobello.

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

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A motion was made by Dr. Ward to approve the minutes for the Tri-Board Meeting of Sept. 28, 2017, and seconded by Orobello.

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

**Public Hearing On The Warrants For The Special Town Meeting:**

Chairman Kane introduced the Revised edition of the Warrants for the Special Town Meeting, as was revised by the Board of Selectmen on October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Chairman Kane called on Town Manager Keith Hickey to join the Finance Committee in the discussion of the revised articles.

**Article 1: Addressing the Finance Committee on Budget Reports**

Chairman Kane gave interest in where the Free Cash, as reported in the Revised Special Town Meeting Warrants, came from, and how that free cash relates to the deficit that town has been paying back. Chairman Kane raised the idea to put together a brief presentation, which would be shown by the Finance Committee at the Special Town Meeting, to better assess the financial situation of the town, and the available and free cash it may have, and where it would be best spent. Dr. Ward noted that such a presentation would need to gain approval, and it was agreed upon that the Financial Committee would meet at 6:30PM before the Special Town Meeting to get this approval.

**Article 2: For the town to transfer \$301,995 of Free Cash for Capital Items:**

Town Manager Hickey was called upon to address the Financial Committee about Article 2 of the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

Town Manager Hickey first raised the needs of the police department, which had been addressed to the financial committee earlier in the evening. He reiterated that the Winchendon Police Department was in need of the replacement of a second police cruiser. The cruiser to be replaced is currently at 130,000 miles, when the cruisers should be replaced after they are driven for 100,000 miles, when they begin to cost the town more money than it is currently worth. The Police Department also needs to replace Duty Weapons that are also aging past a point of usefulness. Finally the Police Department needs to replace and acquire more patrol rifles for each police vehicle.

Town Manager Hickey next addressed the needs of the Winchendon School System. The schools need to replace their one ton dump truck that is rusted beyond repair, a multipurpose tractor, and its attachments, which is used to maintain the grounds and ball fields, upgrading the failing phone system at Murdock Middle/High School, and to purchase 17 more security cameras to help bolster the security systems at the schools.

The final capital item that Town Manager Hickey spoke about was to repave a section of the Fire Department parking lot, where the base of the parking lot failed, and the trucks began to sink into the ground. Dr. Ward asked the Town Manager if it would be separate area than where they want to extend the building, to which Town Manager Hickey assured that it was a separate area, which would be serviced by the Winchendon Department of Public Works, which would further save the town money in the repaving of that area.

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**Article 3: To transfer available funds into the Snow and Ice Reserve Account**

Town Manager Hickey explained that the transfer of \$28,000 of available funds to the Finance Committee Snow and Ice Reserve Account would allow the town to purchase technology that would be placed on salting and sanding trucks, which would dictate how much salt and sand would be spread across the road. This technology would further save the town money in conserving salt and sand for future winters. This technology would cost about \$26,400. The remaining \$4,200 budget would be put to obtaining a blowing attachment for the DPW tractor to more quickly and effectively clear sidewalks, and could help cut down on snow days and delayed openings for school.

**Article 4: To transfer available funds to reconstruct sidewalks on Central and Grove Streets.**

Town Manager Hickey informed that Article 4 looks to transfer \$50,000 from available funds to reconstruct the sidewalks leading up to Toy Town Elementary and Murdock Middle High Schools, in order to make these sidewalks ADA compliant. The Public Works Director and the Community Development Director have recently applied for a grant for \$400,000 to fix the roads and sidewalks leading up to these schools. The engineer's estimate for the cost of this project at being \$450,000, and the town is looking for the extra \$50,000 to come from the available funds. Town Manager Hickey goes on to ask that if the town is unsuccessful in obtaining the \$400,000 grant, that this article be looked over, as the extra \$50,000 will not be needed in that instance.

**Skip to Article 12**

Town Manager Hickey asked the Financial Committee if it would be possible to move on to Article 12, then come back to Article 5, as Planning Director Tracy Murphy could address the article, any questions and concerns the Finance Committee has, and be able to go home. Chairman Kane agrees.

**Article 12: Temporary Moratorium on Recreational Marijuana Establishments**

Town Manager Hickey explains that this article would put off the establishment of any recreational marijuana businesses in the town of Winchendon until July 01, 2018, so that the town of Winchendon can begin to zone specific areas of the town best suited to a recreational marijuana establishment after the policies and procedures are put into place. If policies are established and agreed upon, and an area for such an establishment is decided upon before July 2018, the moratorium can be lifted early.

**Article 5: To transfer available funds as an advance for Special Duty Police Detail Agency Fund**

Town Manager Hickey informs that Article 5 would transfer \$20,000 as an advance for Special Duty Police Detail. This advance would assure that this fund would not go into the negative while waiting for the payment from vendors for special duty police detail at events, and that this fund would remain in the positive throughout the year, and at the end of the fiscal year. Dr. Ward asked Town Manager Hickey if this would be a one-time advance, to which he assured that it would be. As the vendors pay for the special duty police detail they require, it refills the fund, keeping it in the positive, so that a second advance would not be needed

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**Clarification: Free Cash vs. Available Funds**

Chairman Kane inquired about the change of the wording in some of the articles in the Warrant that had stated Free Cash, but were changed to available funds (articles 2-5). Town Manager Hickey said that this change in wording, from Free Cash to Available Funds, allows the town more flexibility in where the transfer of money comes from than if the money were to strictly come from Free Cash, or from other funds that are available to redirect. Town Manager Hickey was advised by the Commonwealth to reserve \$550,000 in free cash, so that \$399,995 could be used in this warrant, and \$150,000 in case of emergency, and use the rest to help pay off the deficit that Winchendon has. Mr. Robichaud added that after this deficit is paid off, he would like to see a portion of this free cash being saved and put into stabilization for the town. Town Manager Hickey agrees, and states that he would like to see a portion of future Free Cash put into Liability and Stabilization funds for the town.

**Article 6-9**

Town Manager Hickey addressed Articles 6,7,8, and 9 at once, as all of the articles are similar, and all go to increasing the town's operating budget. This budget would fund the shortfall in the electrical portions of the general fund and school fund, as well as the funds for the water and sewer departments. Town Manager Hickey was under the assumption that the town solar array was to be finished by October 2017 at the latest, however, that has not occurred, and the money that would have been saved for the electrical portions of the town budgets will not be available, leaving shortfalls in these budgets where these savings were anticipated. Chairman Kane asked if there were available revenues to bolster these budgets, and Town Manager Hickey stated that this bolster will come from available funds. Chairman Kane clarified that he would like to know if this money were transferred, if those in town could see it reflected in their property taxes, to which Town Manager Hickey says that it could, but below the 2 ½% threshold.

Town Manager Hickey wanted to further touch on Article 9, as it has two purposes in the warrant, the first being an electrical line item, and the second being a maintenance and repair line item. \$17,700 would be going to update software at the Wastewater Treatment Department. The current software on the computer systems at the Treatment Plant will no longer be supported by Microsoft, and needs to be replaced so that, in case of failure, the Plant would avoid disaster, and would not increase the water and sewer rates.

**Article 10: Selling Property on High Street**

Town Manager Hickey describes Article 10 as trying to sell a 6.6 acre piece of property on High St., with an old unused water tank, to which is attached the emergency transmission repeater system that allows the police and fire department to communicate during an emergency, however, because this water tank is deteriorating, it put this emergency communication at great risk. Instead, it is requested the town sell this piece of land to the hospital for another piece of land, with an already established Comcast radio tower and radio tower equipment that can be bought by the town for \$100-\$1000, and would be a more reliable emergency communication tower. The swap of these properties would require the town meeting vote at this Special Town Meeting.

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**Article 11: Rescind Prior Year Board Authorizations**

The Town Manager raised article 11 to rescind two bond authorizations from 2013 and 2014, the first for a diesel tractor with a mowing deck, and the second for a town hall boiler replacement. Since these bonds were authorized, we were able to receive a grant for the boiler, and were able to acquire a tractor from a converse fund.

**Voting:**

**Article 1:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Delay  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 2:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Dokulil  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(N) ROBICHAUD(N) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 3:**

**Motion To Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Dokulil  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(N) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 4:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Dr. Ward **Seconded:** Orobello  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(N) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 5:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Dr. Ward **Seconded:** Orobello  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 6:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Delay **Seconded:** Orobello  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 7:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Corts  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 8:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Dokulil  
KANE(Y) OROBELLO(Y) WARD(Y) ROBICHAUD(Y) DOKULIL(Y) CORTS(Y)  
DELAY(Y)

**Article 9:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Dokulil

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DELAY(Y)**

**Article 10:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Dr. Ward **Seconded:** Orobello

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

**Article 11:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Orobello **Seconded:** Dokulil

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

**Article 12:**

**Motion to Recommend:** Dr. Ward **Seconded:** Delay

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

**November Meeting:** Chairman Kane said that the next Finance Committee meeting will take place at 5:30pm at the DPW Garage, as well as the short town meeting before the Special Town Meeting Monday, November 13, 2017.

**Member Comments:** Christian Orobello said that he liked that the committee went to the police department and listened to the presentation, and was able to take part in a discussion with the Winchendon Police Department about their duties and participate in discussion with them, to better understand how they affect our community, and looks forward to doing so again with different departments of the town of Winchendon. The more the Finance Committee can connect with these departments for the population of Winchendon, the more the town is able to better understand what their taxes pay for, and puts better strategy for further town financial discussion.

**Adjournment:**

Dr. Ward made a motion to adjourn at 7:55PM , Dokulil seconded.