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Approved: 5/14/24  
JPK

# TOWN OF WINCHENDON



WINCHENDON TOWN CLERK  
RECD MAY 15 2024 AM 10:37

## Finance Committee

Telephone (978)-297-5419

### Regular Meeting/Public Hearing

Finance Committee Minutes

April 23, 2024 6:30PM

Town Hall 2nd Floor Auditorium

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**Members Present:** Chair Thomas J. Kane Jr., Vice-Chair Dr. Maureen Ward, Charles C. Corts, Doug Delay, Anthony Dickson, James Reid

**Guests:** Town Manager- Bill McKinney

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#### List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- April 23, 2024 Regular Meeting Agenda
  - April 23, 2024 Public Hearing Agenda
  - April 9. 2024 Minutes
  - Town Meeting Finance Committee Report
  - Warrant Articles for the Annual Town Meeting
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#### Finance Committee Meeting

**6:30PM:** Chair Thomas Kane Jr. called the Finance Committee meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Audio/video recording disclosure was announced, hearing none.

#### **Minutes:** April 9. 2024

Dr. M. Ward motioned to approve the April 9. 2024 minutes, 2nd by C. Corts.

**Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

#### **Town Meeting Finance Committee Report Discussion:**

T. Kane explained the purpose of their discussion was to review the report that the Finance Committee will present at the Annual Town Meeting on May 20th, 2024.

The first line, budget expenses, shows where they were for the current year, FY24. It includes the town department, school department, fixed costs, and the total, along with the same budgetary numbers that were on the docket for FY25. T. Kane wanted to illustrate that fixed costs are increasing at a much higher percent than the town and school departments. The town department increased 1.8%, the school department increased 2.6%, and the fixed costs increased 10.5%. The overall budget increased 4% and Dr. M. Ward wanted to stress the fact that was due to both the school department and the town being

very cautious on what they spent. She suggested highlighting or making the total bold, to emphasize it and have it stand out. T. Kane felt that fixed costs needed to be explained better. He defined them as bills that need to be paid, sent from a 3rd party vendor. The two largest fixed costs were health insurance and the Worcester County Retirement. Others were school choice and charter tuitions, Medicare, Unemployment and Workers Comp, Liability and Life Insurance. Monty Tech has actually decreased the last couple of years due to less students attending from Winchendon. Dr. M. Ward suggested bolding that total as well. It was noted that the two biggest increases were from the two biggest items in the whole budget, health insurance and Worcester County Retirement. Health Insurance increased \$300,000 and Worcester County Retirement increased \$200,000, totaling half a million dollars. J. Reid suggested adding in the numbers from '23 to show the increase from '23 to '24 and the trend that the projections are increasing more each year. If there were any projections for '26 that would be helpful to include as well, and stress the fact that the town needs to be proactive in preparing for these increases each year. Dr. M. Ward agreed, and T. Kane added that would also illustrate the impact of Chapter 70 aid that the town started receiving in '22. Under revenues, the Chapter 70 local aid increase was less than \$100,000 on a \$16M budget. T. Kane was worried that adding the 3rd year would make the slide too busy. Dr. M. Ward suggested making the totals a separate slide. After further discussion they decided to keep it as is and verbally bring it up during the presentation.

Under Revenues, T. Kane pointed out that this section would really benefit from showing the 3 year comparisons. The Chapter 70 local aid between '23 and '24 increased well over a million dollars. Dr. M. Ward suggesting adding the percentages like the previous section. T. Kane would verbally address certain line items that aren't specifically sectioned out such as cannabis, ambulance, meals tax, etc. When there is a change in state aid, it makes a big impact on the overall budget.

The next section addresses balancing the budget and how the town plans to do so. In regards to the current revenues and expenses, it is not balanced, as there is a shortfall of over half a million dollars. The final budget is being balanced by using the remaining \$200,000 in ARPA funds, which is a non recurring revenue, and \$350,000 of free cash. Free cash totaled \$929,433. A main point T. Kane wanted to stress was that starting next year's budget, FY26, the town is already down \$550,000. It is going to be a challenge for the town to try and close that gap and also prepare for the next round of increases in health insurance and retirement. A budget cannot be sustained on non-recurring revenues, there needs to be a plan with some assumption on how the revenues are going to grow to close that gap between expenses and revenues. T. Kane stated there were three strategies the town could take to address those issues. The first being to cut expenses with some sort of reduction in the services it provides to its citizens, the second being to increase revenues, and third would be a combination of both.

D. Delay asked if there was a place in the report to remind people in town that they were not funding the stabilization fund, OPEB, or the sick time/buy back contractual obligations for a year. He wanted to stress that it is more than a \$550,000 deficit, estimating a total of \$700,000-\$800,000 deficit. It was agreed that was a good point and T. Kane would add it to the report.

**Committee Member Comments:** Dr. M. Ward wanted to remind the public there was an open position on the Finance Committee, if anyone was interested please send a letter of interest to the moderator through the town managers office.

**Public Input:** None.

**Adjourn: 6:50PM- Dr. M. Ward motioned to adjourn, 2nd by J. Reid  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

**Public Hearing**

**7:00PM:** Chair Thomas Kane Jr. called the Finance Committee public hearing to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Audio/video recording disclosure was announced, hearing none.

**Public Hearing of the Warrant Articles for the Annual Town Meeting to be held on Monday, May 20, 2024 in the Murdock High School Auditorium**

**Vote on recommendations for the Warrant Articles:**

**REPORTS AND COMMITTEES**

**ARTICLE 1-** To see if the Town will vote and act on the report of the Finance Committee, the annual report of the Selectmen and of any other officers or committees required to report to the Town, or act in relation thereto.

T. Kane stated the Finance Committee will have a report to present at the Annual Town Meeting. It will focus on the challenges that the town has faced with fixed costs, the differences between the increase in expenses and increase in revenues, and the impact it has on the town for next year and future years.

**OPIOID SETTLEMENT AUTHORIZATION ARTICLES**

**ARTICLE 2-** To see if the Town in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 77 of the Acts of 2023 to rescind the vote taken under Article 3 at the Annual Town Meeting of May 15, 2023, which established an Opioid Abatement Stabilization Fund and dedicating 100% of the opioid litigation settlement funds received by the Town for such fund pursuant to G.L. c. 40. § 5B, such funds henceforth to be placed in a special revenue fund to be expended without further appropriation for all of the purposes allowed by law, including those outlined in applicable opioid litigation settlement documents, or act in relation thereto.

Bill McKinney explained that last year the town voted to create a stabilization fund for the opioid settlement funds, but since then the state has changed the law and requires the funds to be placed in a special revenue fund. Last year they received about \$80,000, so the town will be taking that \$80,000 from free cash to transfer to this special revenue fund, and going forward all the monies the town receives from the opioid settlements will go directly into the special revenue fund. T. Kane stated that last year it was discussed they would collaborate with neighboring towns to put a greater amount of money together to fund certain services. B. McKinney replied yes, they have a contract with GAAMHA, and while they have not given them anything yet, they do plan to.

**REVOLVING FUNDS AUTHORIZATION ARTICLE**

**ARTICLE 3-** To see if the Town will vote to fix the maximum amount to be spent during fiscal year 2025 beginning on July 1, 2024, for the revolving funds for certain departments, boards, committees, agencies, or officers in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44, Section 53 E1/2, or take any other action relative thereto.

<b><u>Revolving Fund</u></b>	<b>Department, Board, Committee</b>	<b>FY2025</b>
	<b>Agency or Officer</b>	<b>Spending Limit</b>
Agriculture	Agricultural Commission	\$1,000
Large Copy Fees	Planning & Development	\$1,000

Finance Committee Minutes  
April 23, 2024

Restitution Fees	Land Use	\$1,000
Extended Day	School	\$10,000
Damaged Books	School	\$5,000
Summer School	School	\$1,000
Recycling	Board of Health	\$1,000
Composting	Board of Health	\$1,000
Arts Lottery	Arts Lottery Commission	\$7,500
Wetland Fees	Conservation	\$20,000
Library Copy Fees	Librarian/Library Trustees	\$8,000
Library Material	Librarian/Library Trustees	\$8,000
Student Parking	School	\$5,000
Community Development	Town Manager	\$25,000
Block Program Income		

Dr. M. Ward mentioned in the bylaws, there are only 5 authorized revolving funds; agriculture commission, planning and development plotter fees, library copy fees, library materials, and community development block grant program income. She understood that Mass General Law says they can have all these revolving funds, but the bylaws specifically state 5. She questioned how they could add more without changing the bylaw at the same time. B. McKinney stated that their legal council has suggested updating the bylaws at the Fall Town Meeting to reflect the added revolving funds.

Thomas Liao asked if it would make sense to wait adding the additional revolving funds until the town was ready to change the bylaw. Dr. M. Ward agreed.

## **USUAL AND CUSTOMARY FINANCIAL ARTICLES**

### **ARTICLE 4- Senior Tax Work-Off**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from other available funds the sum of seven thousand seven hundred dollars (\$7,700) for the Senior Tax Work-off Program, or act in relation thereto.

### **ARTICLE 5- Non-Profit Assistance**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from other available funds the sum of \$27,500 as a grant to the non-profit Community Action Committee, inc., in consideration with the numerous services provided to the town.

Jane LaPointe asked if it would make sense to create a printout of the services offered by the CAC for the town meeting. Dr. M. Ward stated a power point presentation would be helpful and save on printouts.

### **ARTICLE 6- General Government**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and transfer from other available funds the sum of \$17,712,045 for the operating budget of the Town for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, or act in relation thereto.

Town of Winchendon- Summary of Other Available Funds	
Cemetery Trust	\$3,444
Title V Liens Redemption	\$16,747
Infrastructure Investment Fund	\$20,000
Water Indirect Costs	\$216,337

Wastewater Indirect Costs	\$135,403
Transfer Station Indirect Costs	\$23,474
PEG Access Indirect Costs	\$5,106
Homeless Transportation	\$20,000
Free Cash	\$350,000
<b>TOTAL OTHER AVAILABLE FUNDS</b>	<b>\$790,511</b>

B. McKinney stated their legal counsel suggested to add free cash to this article versus separating it in a separate article. T. Kane disagreed, and stated he is sure legal council is correct in being able to add it in, but suggested it be separated, at the very least bring attention to the fact that it is an unusual inclusion.

#### **GENERAL FUND APPROPRIATION SUMMARY**

	<b>Detail of Appropriations</b>		
	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY24</b>	<b>FY25</b>
	<b>TM BUDGET</b>	<b>THRU 12/31/23</b>	<b>TM BUDGET</b>
School Transportation	\$1,655,949	\$631,262	\$1,625,220
Total School Transportation	\$1,655,949	\$631,262	\$1,625,220
Selectmen			
Expenses	\$24,750	\$3,240	\$24,750
Total Selectmen	\$24,750	\$3,240	\$24,750
Town Manager			
Personnel	\$284,753	\$195,182	\$270,000
Expenses (including legal)	\$60,000	\$16,681	\$64,590
Total Town Manager	\$344,843	\$211,863	\$335,190
Finance Committee			
Personnel	\$1,500	\$650	\$1,500
Expenses	\$181,100	\$283	\$181,100
Total Finance Committee	\$182,660	\$933	\$182,660
Accounting			
Personnel	\$152,006	\$69,655	\$155,580
Expenses (including OPEB)	\$8,750	\$80	\$8,750
Total Accounting	\$160,756	\$69,735	\$164,330
Assessor			
Expenses	\$103,560	\$57,760	\$107,660
Total Assessor	\$103,560	\$57,760	\$107,660
Collector/Treasurer			
Personnel	\$163,098	\$78,316	\$188,390
Expenses	\$71,534	\$42,372	\$98,160
Total Collector/Treasurer	\$234,632	\$120,688	\$286,550
Information Technology			
Personnel	\$83,802	\$37,633	\$85,900

Expenses (including DP)	\$89,900	\$61,356	\$113,300
Total Information Technology	\$173,702	\$98,989	\$199,200
<b>Communication Committee</b>			
Personnel	\$2,417	\$14,209	\$2,420
Expenses	\$7,550	\$28,931	\$9,900
Total Communication Committee	\$9,967	\$43,140	\$12,320
<b>Town Clerk (including Registrations)</b>			
Personnel	\$122,716	\$59,434	\$125,710
Expenses	\$64,091	\$9,181	\$94,685
Total Town Clerk	\$186,807	\$68,615	\$220,395
<b>Planning and Community Development (including Conservation and ZBA)</b>			
Personnel	\$110,406	\$45,077	\$112,980
Expenses	\$27,005	\$16,377	\$27,505
Total Planning and Community	\$137,411	\$61,454	\$140,485
<b>Town Hall</b>			
Personnel	\$41,862	\$21,920	\$57,450
Expenses	\$86,650	\$24,581	\$86,650
Total Town Hall	\$128,512	\$46,501	\$144,100
<b>Police (including dispatch and animal control)</b>			
Personnel	\$1,820,810	\$939,559	\$1,878,380
Expenses	\$205,276	\$114,379	\$215,830
Total Police	\$2,026,086	\$1,053,938	\$2,094,210
<b>Fire (including ambulance)</b>			
Personnel	\$1,287,037	\$681,342	\$1,349,675
Expenses	\$217,286	\$86,233	\$263,700
Total Fire	\$1,504,323	\$767,575	\$1,613,375
<b>Land Use</b>			
Personnel	\$100,368	\$47,886	\$121,540
Expenses	\$7,650	\$2,194	\$7,650
Total Land Use	\$108,018	\$50,080	\$129,190
<b>Emergency Management</b>			
Personnel	\$2,666		\$2,670
Expenses	\$1,450	\$1,107	\$1,350
Total Emergency Management	\$4,116	\$1,107	\$4,020
<b>DPW (Including highway, fleet paint, street lighting, landfill, cemetery, tree trimming)</b>			
Personnel	\$887,022	\$384,344	\$957,100
Expenses	\$443,650	\$272,062	\$492,850
Total DPW	\$1,330,672	\$656,406	\$1,449,950

DPW Snow and Ice			
Personnel	\$70,000	\$8,349	\$70,000
Expenses	\$160,000	\$95,708	\$160,000
Total DPW Snow and Ice	\$230,000	\$104,057	\$230,000
Health (including outside service and visiting nurse)			
Personnel	\$56,745	\$26,977	\$58,070
Expenses	\$15,215	\$5,345	\$15,220
Total Health	\$71,960	\$32,322	\$73,290
Council on Aging			
Personnel	\$197,110	\$92,205	\$199,560
Expenses	\$32,400	\$4,381	\$34,290
Total Council on Aging	\$229,510	\$96,586	\$233,850
Veterans Services			
Personnel	\$23,011	\$10,867	\$23,600
Expenses	\$163,180	\$80,974	\$163,180
Total Veterans Services	\$186,191	\$91,841	\$186,780
Library			
Personnel	\$191,738	\$91,104	\$205,925
Expenses	\$57,250	\$36,008	\$62,075
Total Library	\$248,988	\$127,112	\$268,000
Recreation			
Personnel and Expenses	\$8,698	\$4,297	\$55,130
Total Recreation	\$8,698	\$4,297	\$55,130
Historic Commission			
Expenses	\$1,000	\$525	\$1,000
Total Historic Commission	\$1,000	\$525	\$1,000
Debt service principal and interest			
Expenses	\$1,153,598	\$278,592	\$857,600
Total Debt	\$1,153,598	\$278,592	\$857,600
State Assessments			
Expenses	\$1,006,083	\$333,024	\$1,126,690
Total State Assessments	\$1,006,083	\$333,024	\$1,126,690
Employer Expenses (pension, worker' comp, unemployed, health insurance, life insurance, medicare)			
Expenses	\$4,936,962	\$3,493,222	\$5,565,100
Total Employer Expenses	\$4,936,962	\$3,493,222	\$5,565,100
Property/Liability Insurance			
Expenses	\$354,484	\$364,910	\$381,000

Total Property/Liability Insurance \$354,484	\$364,910	\$381,000
<b>Total \$16,744,238</b>	<b>\$8,869,774</b>	<b>\$17,712,045</b>

Pinky Evans Liao asked if the town knows it's in trouble, why wait until next year to fix it? B. McKinney replied there have already been several cuts made, resulting in a bare-bones budget for the departments. The increases are large and coming from items that cannot be cut out, or be detrimental to the people in town to cut. Dr. M. Ward added when the town is looking at over half a million dollars, the cuts aren't the small things they can scrape off each department, the town would be looking at large items such as not offering ambulance services, cutting senior citizen services, closing the library, etc. Those are big impact items and take a while to find that amount of money. Brian Croteau added that back when the prior town manager was in office, they cut quite a bit from each department and they are still feeling the effects from it. The strategy the town manager chose was to create a level service budget for the departments.

#### **USUAL AND CUSTOMARY WATER ENTERPRISE ARTICLE**

##### **ARTICLE 7- Water Enterprise**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,072,078 for the direct costs of the Water Department Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and that indirect costs of \$216,337 appropriated in the general government budget be funded by Water Receipts, or act in relation thereto.

The Enterprise Funds are funded by the water receipts, people pay the water bill and it in turn gets funded. The indirect costs have to do with employee benefits, including the town manager, accountant and treasurer, DPW director and staff. Those charges get offset by the water receipts.

#### **USUAL AND CUSTOMARY WASTEWATER ENTERPRISE ARTICLE**

##### **ARTICLE 8- Wastewater Enterprise**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$1,271,179 (Wastewater Receipts of \$1,081,179 and Betterment Revenues of \$190,000) for the direct costs of the Wastewater Treatment Department Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and that indirect costs of \$135,403 appropriated in the general government budget be funded by Wastewater Receipts, or act in relation thereto.

#### **USUAL/CUSTOMARY AND ADDITIONAL TRANSFER STATION ENTERPRISE ARTICLES**

##### **ARTICLE 9- Transfer Station Enterprise**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$259,810 from Transfer Station Receipts for direct costs of the Transfer Station Enterprise Fund for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and that indirect costs of \$23,474 appropriated in the general government budget be funded by Transfer Station Receipts, or act in relation thereto.

##### **ARTICLE 10- Appropriation Retained Earnings- Transfer Station Enterprise Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate a sum of \$70,000 from Transfer Station Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings to cover additional expenses for FY24, including trash compactors, or act in relation thereto.

B. Croteau explained there has been a significant increase in people using the transfer station over having private trash collection due to it being cheaper. The ultimate goal is to have our own compactors, omitting 3rd party systems, allowing the town to better control costs. One item they are currently

working on is taking the cardboard and putting it in its own compactor because they can get paid to get rid of it.

#### **CABLE PUBLIC ACCESS ENTERPRISE ARTICLES**

##### **ARTICLE 11- Cable Public Access Enterprise Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$125,894 for the direct costs to operate the Public, Education, and Governmental Access Media enterprise for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, and that indirect costs of \$5,106 appropriated in the general government budget be funded by PEG Access receipts, or act in relation thereto.

#### **USUAL AND CUSTOMARY EDUCATION BUDGET ARTICLE**

##### **ARTICLE 12- School Department Budget**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds the sum of \$17,432,926 for the operating budget of the Winchendon Public Schools for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, or act in relation thereto.

#### **ANNUAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT ARTICLE**

##### **ARTICLE 13- Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$662,230 to fund the Town's assessment for its share of the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024, or act in relation thereto.

#### **CAPITAL ARTICLES**

##### **ARTICLE 14**

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to G.L. c. 44, § 20, to appropriate the sum of \$42,982.31 from the unspent balance of the funds authorized under Article 13 of the May 16, 2022 Annual Town Meeting for DPW Roofs, for the new purpose to fund additional DPW Capital Improvements, or act in relation thereto.

B. Croteau was happy to announce they came in under budget on the project for the roof and salt shed, at just under \$43,000. In order for them to do further building repairs such as weatherizing the garage doors and other items that will make the DPW whole, the article needs to be voted on.

##### **ARTICLE 15- Appropriation Retained Earnings- Wastewater Enterprise Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$110,445 from Wastewater Enterprise Fund Retained Earnings for one-half (1/2) of the cost to purchase and equip a 6 Wheel Dump Truck (with the other 1/2 coming from the Water Enterprise Fund), or act in relation thereto.

B. Croteau stated this truck is used on every repair and water break, so it is crucial to have a truck that's reliable. The truck they currently have is not dependable and needs a significant amount of work that is not worth putting into it. The turn-around time to receive the truck is about a year right now.

##### **ARTICLE 16- Appropriation Water Enterprise Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, and/or borrow the sum of \$110,445 for one-half (1/2) of the cost to purchase and equip a 6 Wheel Dump Truck (with the other 1/2 coming from the Wastewater Enterprise Fund), and that the Treasurer, with the approval of

the Board of Selectmen, be authorized to borrow under and pursuant to MGL, or take any action relative thereto.

#### **ARTICLE 17- Appropriation- Capital Improvements for Fiscal Year 2025- Free Cash**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$ 77,000 and that the Town be authorized to accept any available grant funds, for the purposes of funding the following capital requests, or take any other action relative thereto.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
DPW	Vehicle	\$62,000
Library	Exterior Repairs	\$15,000

#### **ARTICLE 18- Capital Improvements Fiscal Year 2025- Grants**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$ 71,200 and that the Town be authorized to accept any available grant funds, for the purposes of funding the following capital requests, or take any other action relative thereto.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Grant Source</b>
Police	Police Cruiser Replacement	\$71,200	911 Grant

### **FINANCIAL ARTICLES**

#### **ARTICLE 19- Transfer Free Cash to Stabilization**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$200,000 to the Stabilization Fund, or act in relation thereto.

B. McKinney stated at the town meeting in December, there were a few unpaid bills including a large bill for health insurance. Since the Free Cash was not certified, they asked the town to take it out of the Stabilization Account. This would return the money back to the Stabilization Account.

#### **ARTICLE 20- Transfer Free Cash to Opioid Special Revenue Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$80,949.93 (which is the amount received from the Opioid settlements for FY23 and prior) to the Opioid Special Revenue Fund, or act in relation thereto.

#### **ARTICLE 21- To change term of borrowing authorization for prior years capital project**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote of the Town adopted under Article 13 of the Warrant at the May, 2022 Town Meeting, which vote authorized the borrowing of money for various capital expenditures, to change the maximum terms for which each such borrowing could be amortized, or take any other action relative thereto.

#### **ARTICLE 22- To change term of borrowing authorization for prior years capital project**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote of the Town adopted under Article 18 of the Warrant at the May, 2022 Town Meeting, which vote authorized the borrowing of money for various capital expenditures, to change the maximum terms for which each such borrowing could be amortized, or take any other action relative thereto.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS ARTICLES**

### **ARTICLE 23- Youth Commission**

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8E, and establish a Youth Commission, to be known as the Town of Winchendon Youth Commission, and established for the purpose of carrying out programs which may be designed or established to meet the opportunities, challenges, and problems of youth in the Town, and in conjunction with any similar or related programs of any agency of the Commonwealth or any agency of the federal government; said Commission shall consist of seven (7) members, to be appointed by the Town Manager and subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen, and further, the terms of the initial members of said Commission shall be for one, two, or three years and so arranged that the terms of approximately one third of the members will expire each year, and their successors shall be appointed for a term of three years each, or take any other action relative thereto.

### **ARTICLE 24 – Commission On Disabilities**

To see if the Town will vote to accept the provisions of General Laws Chapter 40, Section 8J, and establish a Commission on Disabilities, to be known as the Town of Winchendon Commission on Disabilities, and established for the purposes set forth in Section 8J; said Commission shall consist of five (5) members, to be appointed by the Town Manager and subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen; a majority of said Commission members shall consist of people with disabilities, one member shall be a member of the immediate family of a person with a disability, and one member of said Commission shall be either an elected or appointed official of the Town; and further, the terms of the initial members of said Commission shall be for one, two or three years, and so arranged that the term of one-third of the members expires each year, and their successor shall be appointed for terms of three years each; or take any other action relative thereto.

### **ARTICLE 25 – PILOT Agreement**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a Tax Agreement for payments-in-lieu-of-taxes ("PILOT") pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 59, Section 38H(b), and Chapter 164, Section 1, or any other enabling authority, upon terms and conditions as the Board shall deem in the best interest of the Town, for personal property associated with a solar photovoltaic facility to be located at 875 Spring Street (Parcel Number 9-0-97), and to take all actions necessary to implement such agreement; or take any other action relative thereto.

B. McKinney explained this would be the first time since FY17/18 that there was a new PILOT agreement. This came from the assessors, it was a permanent project that was authorized by the BOS to enter into negotiations to come up with a PILOT agreement. Typically, they will set up a cost per kilowatt hour and grows 2.5% per year, usually for about 20 years.

Dr. M Ward requested more information on the current taxes for the property. She would like to know the current revenue from taxes and compare it to the projected revenue.

### **ARTICLE 26 – Increase Demand Fees**

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to General Laws Chapter 60, Section 15(2) to increase the Demand Fees in the Collector Treasurer's office from \$5.00 to \$15.00, or act in relation thereto.

## **REQUEST TO CONVEY TOWN PROPERTY**

Finance Committee Minutes

April 23, 2024

Page 11 of 17

## **ARTICLE 27**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to transfer a certain parcel of land and buildings situated at 275-281 Lincoln Avenue, Winchendon, consisting of approximately 1.441 acres, and being Map 2D2 0 3, described in an instrument recorded with the Worcester South Registry of Deeds in Book 59532, Page 91, from the purposes for which the property is currently held to the purpose of conveyance, and to convey said property to the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority, on such terms and for such consideration as the Board of Selectmen deems appropriate, or act in relation thereto. Said parcel of municipal land is proposed to be transferred for the purpose of resale to further promote community/economic development, or act in relation thereto.

This was voted on at the December Special Town Meeting, but it had the incorrect map and lot number.

## **ZONING BYLAW ARTICLES**

### **ARTICLE 28- Flood Zoning Bylaw**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the current Town of Winchendon Flood Zoning Bylaw Section 4.1 Flood Plain Conservancy Districts to incorporate the MA Model Flood Zoning Bylaw to make FEMA compliant as recommended by the Planning Board on March 19, 2024, in a document entitled "Flood Plain Zoning Bylaw FEMA changes" on file in the office of the Town Clerk and available on the Town's website [www.townofwinchendon.com](http://www.townofwinchendon.com), or act in relation thereto.

## **CITIZEN'S PETITION ARTICLES** **(Non-binding Referendum)**

### **ARTICLE 29- Citizen's Petition**

We the Citizens petition that the Town of Winchendon does not allow any permits or projects with Comm-97 or other contaminated soil to be brought, stored or dumped in Winchendon. As a town endowed with water resources including rivers, aquifers and wetlands, concerns of water contamination for residents and wildlife exceed any short-term economic benefit, or act in relation thereto.

### **ARTICLE 30- Citizen's Petition**

That the Town of Winchendon refuse any and all permit requests or renewals for earth removal operations due to concerns of degrading air quality and increasing the risks for respiratory disease, noise pollution and traffic, or act in relation thereto.

### **ARTICLE 31- Citizen's Petition**

To see if the Town will vote to assign the fiscal responsibility of the new water pipe, to those, who solely rely on these public services. Residents who have wells and septic systems, pay to maintain those independently, and should not be given the extra financial burden, of paying for a similar service, that will not directly benefit them. In addition, these residents also financially contribute, to the town's shared community spaces.

Lastly, securing additional grants, and ensuring a fiscally responsible contract with Ashburnham, will be helpful in reducing our residents final cost.

### **ARTICLE 32- Citizen's Petition**

#### **Resolution in Support of Changing the Commonwealth Flag and Seal of Massachusetts**

**Whereas** the history of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is replete with instances of conflict between the European Colonists and the Native Nations of the region, who first extended the hand of friendship to the Colonists on their shores in 1620, and helped them to survive starvation during the settlers' first winters on their land;

**Whereas** members of the Native Nation for whom the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is named were ambushed and killed by Myles Standish, first commander of the Plymouth Colony at Wessagusett (now Weymouth) in April of 1623, barely two years after the Pilgrims arrived; Annual Town Meeting Warrant May 20, 2024 Page 15 of 16

**Whereas** the Colonial broadsword held by a white hand above the head of the indigenous person on the Massachusetts Flag and Seal is modeled after Myles Standish's own broadsword, borrowed for that purpose from the Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth by the illustrator Edmund Garrett in 1884;

**Whereas** the belt binding the Native's cloak on the Flag and Seal is modeled after a belt worn by Metacomet, known to the English as King Philip, who was among the Indigenous leaders that resorted to a mutually destructive war in 1675-76 in defense of Native lands against Colonial encroachment;

**Whereas** the proportions of the body of the Indigenous person on the Flag and Seal were taken from the skeleton of an Indigenous person unearthed in Winthrop, the bow modeled after a bow taken from an Indigenous man shot and killed by a colonist in Sudbury in 1665, and the facial features taken from a photograph of an Ojibwe chief from Great Falls, Montana, considered by the illustrator to be a "fine specimen of an Indian," though not from Massachusetts.

**Whereas** the history of relations between Massachusetts since Colonial times and the Native Nations who continue to live within the orders includes the forced internment of thousands of so-called "praying Indians" on Deer Island, in Boston Harbor, where they died by the hundreds of exposure in the winter of 1675, the enslavement of Indigenous people in Boston, Bermuda, and the Caribbean Islands, the offering of 40 pounds sterling as bounty for the scalps of Indigenous men, women and children in Massachusetts beginning in 1686, increased to 100 pounds sterling for the scalps of Indigenous adult males by 1722, half that amount for Indigenous women and children.

**Whereas** Indigenous people were legally prohibited from even stepping foot into Boston from 1675 until 2004, when that Colonial law was finally repealed;

**Whereas** the 400th anniversary of the landing of the Colonists at Plymouth Plantation, which gave rise to the long chain of genocidal wars and deliberate government policies of cultural destruction against Native Nations of this continent, occurred in the year 2020, affording every citizen of the Commonwealth a chance to reflect upon this history and come to an appreciation of the need for better relations between the descendants of the Colonial immigrants and the Native Nations of the Commonwealth;

**Whereas** the land area now known as the Town of Winchendon, shares a rich Native history with modern tribal Nations such as the Nipmuc, the Penacook, and the Abenaki, who inhabited this area long before the first colonial settlers arrived, in 1753;

Now, therefore, **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Town of Winchendon hereby adopts this resolution in support of work of the Official Seal and Motto of the Commonwealth, established by a Resolve of the General

Finance Committee Minutes

April 23, 2024

Page 13 of 17

Court in 2021 and appointed by the Governor to recommend changes to the current flag and seal of Massachusetts, and **in support of a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth** that may better reflect our aspirations for harmonious and respectful relations between all people who now call Massachusetts home. The town clerk shall forward a copy of this resolution to Sen. Nick Collins and Rep. Antonio Cabral, co-chairs of the Joint Commission on State Administration, and to Sen. Jo Comerford, Rep. Jonathan Zlotnik and Rep. Susannah Whipps, with the request that they strongly support for the work of the aforementioned Special Commission and advocate for a new flag and seal for the Commonwealth.

## 5 MINUTE RECESS

### **Vote on recommendations for the Warrant Articles**

**ARTICLE 1-** The committee is still working on the report, they will hold off on voting for now.

**ARTICLE 2-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 2, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 3-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 3, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 4-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 4, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 5-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 5, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 6-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 6, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 7-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 7, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 8-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 8, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 9-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 9, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 10-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 10, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 11-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 11, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 12-** Dr. M. Ward stated that although it is a bottom line budget, and the school committee did meet the bottom line, in good conscious as a former educator, she could not support the budget due to the content. They have cut \$755,000 from Memorial, in teachers, classrooms, specialists, guidance and behavior specialists, and librarians. They have cut \$367,000 from Toy Town, \$77,000 from the middle school, and \$35,000 from the high school for a total of \$1.8 Million dollars in cuts, to increase class sizes,

decrease 1-1 time with students, in a district where 75% of the students last year failed to meet proficiency. The district office, on the other hand, the superintendent salary increased, the superintendent's clerical staff has increased, legal fees went up 50%, special education legal fees went up 150%, the special education director salary increased 19%, and the clerical staff at the high school went up 100% along with an increase in district wide salaries.

Dr. M. Ward motioned to not support the budget, motion failed.

**D. Delay motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 12, 2nd by J. Reid  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (N) Kane (Y) 5-1**

**ARTICLE 13-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 13, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 14-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 14, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 15-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 15, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 16-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 16, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 17-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 17, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 18-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 18, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 19-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 19, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 20-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 20, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 21-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 21, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 22-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 22, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 23-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 23, 2nd by J. Reid  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 24-** Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 24, 2nd by A. Dickson  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0

**ARTICLE 25- Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 25, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

**ARTICLE 26- Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 26, 2nd by D. Delay  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

**ARTICLE 27- Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 27, 2nd by J. Reid  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

**ARTICLE 28- Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to recommend Article 28, 2nd by A.  
Dickson**

**Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

Dr. M. Ward motioned for the Finance Committee to abstain from voting on the non-binding referendum citizen petition articles, 2nd by D. Delay

**Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

**Member Comments:** None.

**Public Input:** None.

**Adjourn: 8:55PM- Dr. M. Ward motioned to adjourn, 2nd by C. Corts  
Corts (Y) Delay (Y) Dickson (Y) Reid (Y) Ward (Y) Kane (Y) 6-0**

Respectfully submitted:

Brianna Lindahl, Finance Committee Recording Secretary

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Thomas Kane Jr., Chair

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Dr. Maureen Ward, Vice-Chair

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Charles C. Corts

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Douglas Delay

Anthony Dickson

James Reid