



Town of Wayland Massachusetts

Finance Committee

Jonathan Barnett
Steve Correia (Co-Chair)
Michael Hoyle
Kelly Lappin (Vice Chair)
April Methot
Brian O’Herlihy
Pamela Roman (Co-Chair)

FINANCE COMMITTEE

March 11, 2024

In-Person and Remote

Town Building – Select Board Meeting Room

41 Cochituate Road, Wayland, MA

7:00 P.M. Minutes

Attendance: S. Correia, M. Hoyle, K. Lappin (via Zoom – joined at 8:03 PM), A. Methot, B. O’Herlihy, and P. Roman. Absent: J. Barnett. Also in attendance: John Bugbee, Assistant Town Manager.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Co-Chair P. Roman at 7:01 PM. She noted that she, S. Correia, M. Hoyle, A. Methot and B. O’Herlihy were all participating in person¹ and then read the following:

One may watch or may participate remotely with the meeting link that can be found at <https://www.wayland.ma.us/public-body-meeting-information-virtual-in-person-and-hybrid>. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting will be conducted in person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law. This meeting may be recorded and will be made available to the public on WayCAM as soon after the meeting as is practicable. When required by law or allowed by the Co-Chairs, persons wishing to provide public comment or otherwise participate in the meeting, may do so by in person attendance, or

¹ P. Roman and B. O’Herlihy noted that K. Lappin joined the meeting via Zoom at 8:03 PM.

by accessing the meeting remotely, as noted above. We request public comment be limited to two minutes per person.

P. Roman reviewed the agenda for the public.

Materials Discussed/Distributed: Meeting Agenda for 3/11/2024; draft Minutes for meeting held on 3/4/2024; revised FY25 Capital Budget and 5-Year Capital Plan Excel spreadsheet (V7 dated 1/11/2024) prepared by B. Keveny; Fiscal 2025 Town Manager Operating Budget PDF file (dated 12/20/2023); Finance Committee (FinCom) Excel Budget file (v4 dated 2/27/2024); B. Keveny Excel spreadsheet analyzing the changes in the Town Manager’s FY25 Operating Budget and Funding Sources, including Proposed Uses of Free Cash; P. Roman email dated 3/5/2024 with additional FinCom questions on FY25 Operating and Capital Budgets; B. Keveny email dated 3/6/2024 responding to FinCom questions on net change in full-time equivalents (FTE); J. Bugbee emails dated 3/7/2024 and 3/11/2024, together with Excel spreadsheets detailing status of capital projects approved in FY16 to FY24, and B. O’Herlihy summary of aggregate remaining funding available for ongoing capital projects by fiscal year; and draft FinCom comments on 2024 ATM warrant Articles D, P, Q, U, AA, GG, II and OO.

Announcements:

None.

Public Comment and Members’ Response:

David Bernstein, 25 Glezen Lane and lead petitioner on 2024 ATM warrant *Article OO*, provided an update on his article, including the positions taken by the School Committee (SC) (unanimous support) and Select Board (SB) (declined to support). D. Bernstein noted that he had met with Michael McCall, Town Manager, who offered to include him in a working group to address issues with the existing grass playing fields. D. Bernstein declined, preferring instead to pursue the approval of *Article OO* at the 2024 ATM. He thanked FinCom for its previous vote to support this warrant article.

P. Roman invited D. Bernstein to stay for the FinCom’s discussion of *Article OO* which she agreed to take out of order in the agenda.

Discussion of Article OO:

Article OO (Establish Athletic Fields Planning Committee)

B. O’Herlihy noted that Mr. Bernstein had provided the update he planned to give, noting that the actual votes of the SC and SB were 4-0-0 and 1-4-0, respectively. He also noted the Board of Public Works (BoPW) deferred action, if any, on *Article OO* until its next meeting (which is tentatively scheduled for 3/19/2024). B. O’Herlihy reported that he has not heard from the Co-Chairs of the Recreation Commission (RC) and did not know if the RC was planning to meet prior to the 3/20/2024 deadline for submitting the FinCom’s write ups to the Town Manager’s office. Finally, he reminded the Members that at the time they voted to support *Article OO* they noted that such position might be reconsidered if the boards, committees, and commissions referenced in *Article OO* were to vote not to support this warrant article. Members were not inclined to revisit their votes at this time.

Discussion on FY25 Draft Operating Budget

P. Roman noted that union contract negotiations were being finalized with various Town unions and B. Keveny hoped to distribute a revised Town Manager FY25 Operating Budget on 3/12/24. She anticipates the revised budget will reflect the allocation of FY25 cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) for Town union and non-union employees, other than the Fire union, to the various Departmental Personnel line items, with the FY25 budgeted amount in the Unclassified: Reserve for Salary Settlement being reduced to \$286,000. She also noted that the proposed funding amounts for the Capital Stabilization and Special Education (SPED) Reserve Funds were increased from \$100,000 and \$50,000, respectively, noted at a prior meeting to \$250,000 and \$150,000, respectively, after reallocating the Free Cash earmarked by the Town Manager and Finance Director for the previously proposed Route 20 Corridor Roadway Improvement work, i.e., withdrawn *Article Z*.

Later in the meeting, B. O’Herlihy noted that the Town Manager and Finance Director had proposed to the SB repurposing approximately \$535,000 of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, previously earmarked for the costs related to the emergency connection to the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA), to pay for the full-day kindergarten (FDK) transition costs. It was unclear if the BoPW had been apprised of this proposal. B. O’Herlihy noted that the SB was reviewing a proposed grant agreement at its meeting this evening and that the School Committee’s agenda for its 3/13/2024 meeting reflected a potential vote to reduce its

overall FY25 Operating Budget to reflect the use of ARPA funds to pay for the FDK transition costs. B. O’Herlihy noted that he has raised a question regarding the impact, if any, of using ARPA funds and reduction in the Schools FY25 Operating Budget on the Town’s anticipated increase in Chapter 70 funding in FY26.

Discussion about FY25 Omnibus Budget Presentation and Finance Committee Report, including Budget Drivers, Trends, Recommendations

P. Roman noted that she had requested a FY26 forecast from B. Keveny noting that a Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) forecasting template previously provided by B. Keveny was not filled in with any numbers. Members agreed that the initial forecast should come from Town staff.

S. Correia suggested providing the Town Manager and Finance Director with a list of items needed to complete the *Report of the Finance Committee*. Members noted the following possible items (covering the prior five to ten years): (i) comparable information from peer communities, e.g., average home prices, tax bills, ranking, etc.; (ii) new growth; (iii) average COLA; (iv) health costs; (v) State aid; (vi) municipal interest rates; and (vii) operating overrides. P. Roman noted that the DOR web site has some of this data. S. Correia thought the FinCom might consider using more graphs and less text in its *Report of the Finance Committee*.

Vote to approve Minutes of 3/4/24:

Members reviewed the draft Minutes of 3/4/24. S. Correia moved to approve the Minutes of 3/4/24, as amended. A. Methot seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 5-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes) and P. Roman (yes).

Discussion and Possible Vote on Articles, including, but not limited, to Articles A, I, K, L, O, Q, S-U, GG, II, KK, NN and OO:

The Members continued their review, discussion, and votes on the following 2024 ATM warrant articles:

Article U: Fire Department Staffing Study

S. Correia noted that this article is requesting \$39,000, funded by the ambulance fund or Free Cash, to complete a staffing study for the Fire Department covering both

staffing levels and efficiencies. S. Correia confirmed this study would not duplicate the Classification and Compensation Study noted in *Article V*.

B. O’Herlihy moved that the FinCom recommend approval of this article. S. Correia seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 5-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes), and P. Roman (yes).

Article AA: Reaffirm Remote Participation at Town Meeting

A. Methot noted that she had checked the status of the Town’s special legislation on the Massachusetts legislature’s web site and confirmed that no progress has been made on advancing the legislation. B. O’Herlihy confirmed that other legislation noted in the 2023 ATM warrant was still pending. Members proposed various edits to the proposed write up. A vote to support this article was taken at the last meeting, so no further action was required.

Article GG: CPA – Historic Preservation Project: Restoration of Stone’s Bridge

A. Methot noted that she had received additional input on this proposed project that resulted in a few edits to the draft write up reviewed at the last meeting. In particular, she noted the involvement of the Facilities Department and the status of the mussels at the footing of the bridge. Members proposed various additional edits to the write up.

J. Bugbee, who had joined the meeting for a discussion of open capital projects, noted that it was his understanding that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would require the Town to either rebuild or remove the bridge should it collapse and the cost could be substantially more than the funds requested in *Article GG*, together with funds previously approved for this proposed restoration project. He also believes the bridge is a protected historic structure and, therefore, it can’t simply be demolished to eliminate the risk of collapse. It was unclear what Framingham’s responsibility would be should the bridge collapse given the bridge’s location in both Wayland and Framingham.

A vote on this article was deferred until the next meeting to give A. Methot time to get answers to the issues raised by J. Bugbee.

Discussion on FY25 Draft Capital Budget and 5-Year Capital Plan, with Assistant Town Manager, John Bugbee. Possible vote.

J. Bugbee reviewed his detailed summary of open capital projects. He noted that he had updated his original version to include estimated completion dates for various School projects.

P. Roman noted that \$23 million of the \$27 million of open projects was projected to be completed by the end of FY 2025. K. Lappin would like to add additional information, including the original appropriation for each project, and asked to have unspent appropriations for the same project grouped together.

J. Bugbee noted that he was reviewing third-party software that would permit the accumulation and maintenance of consistent data on outstanding capital projects and ongoing monitoring of the progress of the projects. He hoped to have the software up and running in the next 30 to 60 days. He also noted that he had volunteered to monitor the ongoing progress of the open projects.

The Members questioned whether B. Keveny had reviewed J. Bugbee's spreadsheet for potential excess funds upon close out of various projects. B. O'Herlihy noted, for example, the \$350,000 related to a Water capital project that didn't appear as if it would be used and suggested that this amount might be available to fund Water capital projects in the FY25 Capital Budget. J. Bugbee agreed to confirm with B. Keveny.

Discussion and Possible Vote on Articles, including, but not limited, to Articles A, I, K, L, O, Q, S-U, GG, II, KK, NN and OO (continued):

The Members continued their review, discussion, and votes on the following 2024 ATM warrant articles:

Article II: CPA – Recreation Project: Wayland Community Pool Rehabilitation & Improvements at Cochituate Ball Fields

A. Methot confirmed that the applicant for the Cochituate Ball Field request was the Eliza J. Norton Foundation. Members proposed various additional edits to the write up.

B. O’Herlihy moved that the FinCom recommend approval of this article. S. Correia seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 6-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), K. Lappin (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes), and P. Roman (yes).

Article K: Accept Gifts of Land

A. Methot noted that this article had not yet been withdrawn by the SB. She is unaware of any gifts of land.

Article Q: Special Education Reserve Fund

M. Hoyle noted that this article requested the appropriation of \$150,000 to be deposited in the SPED Reserve Fund established by a vote at the 2023 ATM. He anticipated the funding source for this article would be Free Cash. He also noted that the entire \$150,000 funded in FY2024 was anticipated to be used by the Schools to fund excess SPED costs in FY2024. Members proposed edits to the write up.

A. Methot moved that the FinCom recommend approval of this article. M. Hoyle seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 5-1-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), K. Lappin (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (no), and P. Roman (yes).

Article I: Fund Union Agreements

S. Correia noted that he had completed his write up of this article, but needed final numbers from B. Keveny before presenting to the Members for review and vote. It was his understanding that the remaining union contract settlements (other than the Fire union) were imminent.

Article S: Revise Town Code Chapter 43: Personnel

S. Correia noted that he had completed the draft write up of this article, but was waiting until the SB and Chair of the Personnel Board completed their review of the proposed changes to Town Code Chapter 43: Personnel before presenting his write up to the Members for review and vote.

Article T: Amend Zoning Bylaws & Town Zoning Map – MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing

S. Correia noted that he had completed the draft write up of this article which would amend the Town Code and Zoning Map to include a new multi-family housing overlay district intended to comply with the so-called MBTA Communities legislation. He noted the Planning Board was holding a public hearing on 3/12/2024

after which he would make any required edits and have available for review at the next meeting.

Article NN: Solar Compact Development for Wayland

S. Correia noted that the Petitioners had submitted a revised article which changed it from a request to approve a resolution to a request to approve various new by-law provisions. The Town Manager needs to determine if the revised article language was timely submitted before a write up can be completed for this article.

Article OO (Establish Athletic Fields Planning Committee)

B. O’Herlihy followed up on his prior comments on this article and suggested the FinCom may want to consider deferring its vote on this article if the BoPW and RC have not taken a position prior to the 3/20/2024 deadline for submitting the FinCom’s write up. If Members are inclined to do so, they will have to first agree to revoke their prior position. B. O’Herlihy suggested deferring action, if any, to a future meeting.

Article A: Recognize Citizens & Employees for Particular Service to Town Article

K. Lappin noted that she had received the list of citizens and employees and would have a draft for review at the next meeting.

Article L: Capital Stabilization Fund Appropriation

K. Lappin noted she had completed the draft write up, noting that the original requested appropriation was reduced from \$500,000 to \$250,000 to be funded with Free Cash versus taxation. Members deferred review of and vote on this article until the next meeting.

Article D: OPEB Funding

K. Lappin noted that she had received new information regarding the proposed FY25 contribution to the Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust fund. Due to a reduction in the funding anticipated to be received from various revolving accounts, the original requested appropriation of \$531,030 was reduced to \$519,147.

Given this new information, S. Correia moved that the FinCom revoke its position on this article. B. O’Herlihy seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 6-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), K. Lappin (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes), and P. Roman (yes).

K. Lappin moved that the FinCom recommend approval of this article, as revised. S. Correia seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 6-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), K. Lappin (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes), and P. Roman (yes).

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Co-Chairs 48 Hours Prior to Posting, if any, and Setting Next Meeting:

None.

P. Roman noted the next regular meetings tentatively will be scheduled for 3/13/2024 at 8:00 PM and 3/18/2024 at 7:00 PM.

Adjournment:

A. Methot moved to adjourn the meeting. M. Hoyle seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote of 6-0-0: S. Correia (yes), M. Hoyle (yes), K. Lappin (yes), A. Methot (yes), B. O’Herlihy (yes) and P. Roman (yes). Meeting adjourned at 10:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Brian O’Herlihy
Minutes Taker