

Auburn Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting - April 5, 2023

Members Participating: Anne Cavanaugh, Kevin Kennedy, Ed Coleman, Patrick Jones, Michael Marshall
Members Not Participating: Diane Byrne (Remote) Trevor Sansoucy (Remote)
Also Present: Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz and Chief Financial Officer/Town Accountant Karen Harnois

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M. by the Chair Anne Cavanaugh.

The Chair announced that this open meeting of the Finance Committee is being conducted both in-person and remotely, consistent with Chapter 107 of the Acts of 2022, which suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed to participate remotely as long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

For the public to join the meeting remotely, by telephone call 1-786-535-3211 access code 991-599-357, join by computer: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/991599357>.

All supporting materials that have been provided to members of this body are available on the Town's website. The public is encouraged to follow along using the posted agenda.

The Chair noted that the meeting was being recorded by Auburn Cable Television.

Chair Cavanaugh confirmed that all members that were participating were present and could hear her:

- Kevin Kennedy - Here
- Ed Coleman - Here
- Trevor Sansoucy - Not participating
- Michael Marshall - Here
- Patrick Jones - Here
- Diane Byrne - Not participating

There were no members participating remotely.

Town Officials:

- Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz - Here
- CFO/Town Accountant Karen Harnois - Here
- Adm. Assistant Sharon Kwiatkowski -Here

Ms. Cavanaugh gave an overview of the meeting agenda.

May 2, 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant - Board Vote on Recommendations for the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz gave an overview of the updated FY2024 Budget and corrected CIP revenue. There were no changes to the bottom line of the Capital Improvements Budget.

The Finance Committee voted the following recommendations on the Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles.

Article 3. Raises and Appropriates FY2024 Budget.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 2. Fixes the Salary of Elected Officials for FY2024.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 4. Capital Improvement Budget for FY2024.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 5. Short Term Borrowing Authorization.

Article 6. Authorizes Selectmen to Secure Grants.

Article 7. Authorizes Selectmen to Hold Public Auction.

Article 8. Authorizes Banking Agreements.

Article 9. Establishes or Renews Revolving Funds, in accordance with MGL Chapter 44, Section 53D and MGL Chapter 71.

Article 10. Authorizes Town Manager to Secure State Funds for Roads and Bridges.

The Finance Committee voted to take Articles 5 through 10 with one vote (Motion made by Mr. Jones; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval of Articles 5 through 10 (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 11. Appropriates Chapter 90 Funds, if available, for road repair.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 12. Appropriates \$125,000.00 from Medicaid Receipts within the General Fund Revenues to the Auburn School Department Operating Budget for FY2024.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 13. Appropriates a sum of money, which is the interest earned by the Auburn High School Gymnasium Health and Recreational Trust Fund to offset School Dept. costs at Auburn High School in support of community health and recreational activities at Auburn High School gymnasium and related facilities and equipment.

Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz discussed this article that is on the annual town meeting warrant every year. He explained that, at this time, the interest amount is unknown. The Finance Committee voted to take no position on this article until the night of the town meeting (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 14. Appropriates a sum of money from McKinney-Vento Receipts within the General Fund Revenues to the Auburn School Department Operating Budget for FY2024 to fund transportation for students to and from school who have become homeless during the fiscal year. Ed Kazanovicz explained that the McKinney-Vento receipts are direct aid from the State. He said that it's unknown when the actual dollar amount will be available. He will ask the School Department for direction.

The Finance Committee voted to take no position on this article until the night of the town meeting (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 15. Appropriates a sum of money from Foster Care Transportation Receipts within the General Fund Revenues to the Auburn School Department Operating Budget for FY2024, to fund transportation costs to students to and from school, who are residing in Foster Care placements during the Fiscal Year. The Town Manager advised that, as with the prior article, he doesn't know when the exact dollar amount will be provided by the State.

The Finance Committee voted to take no position on this article until the night of the town meeting (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 16. Establishes a special purpose stabilization fund from Opioid Settlement proceeds for educational/health related purposes. Ed Kazanovicz explained the rationale for establishing the special purpose stabilization fund from the opioid settlement revenues. He said that \$120,000.00 in proceeds from the lawsuit have been received to date. He advised the Finance Committee that funds would be expended through Town Meeting appropriations.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 17. Appropriates \$40,000.00 from Free Cash to cover costs not reimbursed under policy coverage from damage from the burst pipe at the Senior Center. The Town Manager discussed the article, which was for costs not reimbursed under policy coverage from damage from the burst pipe at the Senior Center. He said that there was a \$5,000.00 deductible and that the insurance denied coverage for HVAC.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 18. Appropriates \$225,856.00 from Receipts Reserved for Appropriation-Bond Premium Reserve Acct. #26135 for the payment of a lease purchase obligation for three (3) Police vehicles fully equipped.

The Town Manager described the requested appropriation for the police vehicles.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 19. Appropriates \$25,000.00 from Overlay Surplus 01-2230 for Training, Support and Services.

The Town Manager advised that the Overlay Surplus funds have already been certified. Town Assessor Seth Woolard was present and explained the request for training, support and services in the Assessors Division.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 20. Appropriates \$61,000.00 from Free Cash for Software costs.

The Town Manager advised that this article seeks the appropriation to replace software that the Town has now. He said that costs have increased and there has been an insufficient level of support by the current provider.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 21. Appropriates \$16,720.00 from FY2024 General Fund Revenues to fund a Regional Housing Coordinator.

DDIS Director Darlene Coyle was present and explained the request to fund a Regional Housing Coordinator, in coordination with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, as part of the Housing Plan study. She said that the individual would work four hours per week for the first year.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 22. Appropriates the sum of \$2,895.00 from FY2024 General Fund Revenues for the purpose of all ZBA/PLANNING site plan, variances, special permits, ANR and subdivision records in one database. Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz explained the request.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 23. Appropriates the sum of \$20,000.00 from Available Funds: Election Dropoff Box 25162002 (\$3,156.00), FY21 November Election Postage 25162003 (\$2,225.56), State Early Voting 251622017 (\$11,232.32), and State Primary Election

251007 (\$3,386.12), for a high speed ImageCast Central Bundle Tabulator for use with all VBM/ABS ballots at Elections.

Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz explained the available funding sources for the ImageCast Central Bundle Tabulator requested by the Town Clerk. He said that the machine would help with the early voting ballots. Committee members had additional questions on the specifics of the machine that could not be answered since the Town Clerk was not able to come to the meeting,

Mr. Coleman made a motion to recommend approval. Mr. Marshall seconded the motion and the vote was 3 to 2, failed. Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Jones opposed.

The Finance Committee then voted to take no position on this article until the night of the town meeting (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 24. Appropriates \$150,000.00 from Sewer Retained Earnings for engineering and design services to evaluate and rehabilitate a portion of the 16-inch ductile iron force main, which conveys sewerage from the Sword Street Pump Station.

Assistant DPW Director/Sewer Superintendent Nick Swartz was present and explained the work that was needed to be done on the 16-inch ductile iron force main, which conveys sewerage from the Sword Street Pump Station.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 25. Appropriates \$200,000.00 from Sewer Retained Earnings for engineering and design services to rehabilitate a portion of the 24-inch reinforced concrete sewer interceptor line, which runs from Goddard Drive to Route 20.

Nick Swartz explained the need for rehabilitation of the concrete sewer interceptor line that runs from Goddard Drive to Route 20.

Mr. Kennedy discussed a plan to address long-term remedies. He asked about the percentage of the Town that was on the sewer system and pays user fees. Mr. Swartz said that it was 80%.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 26. Appropriates \$100,000.00 from FY2024 General Fund Revenues for safety and electrical upgrades within the DPW Highway Garage. DPW Director Joanna Paquin explained the upgrades planned within the DPW highway garage.

Following the discussion, Town Manager Kazanovicz said that he was reconsidering the funding source and recommended changing the revenue source to Free Cash.

The Finance Committee voted to accept the Town Manager's recommendation to change the funding source for Article 26 to Free Cash (Motion made by Mr. Jones; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval of Article 26 as amended (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 27. Amends the Town of Auburn Zoning Bylaws, Section 7 signs.

The Finance Committee voted to defer to the petitioner of Article 27 (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Article 28. Amends the Town of Auburn Zoning Bylaws, Overlay Districts 4.1 Floodplain District.

The Finance Committee voted to defer to the petitioner of Article 28 (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

The Finance Committee reviewed the following transfer requests.

Finance Department #01141 Assessing Division:

\$120.00 from Acct. #011412-542102 Miscellaneous Supplies to Acct. #011412-5311 Update Reval, to pay for envelopes for Reval mailing.

The Finance Committee voted to approve the transfer (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

#01192 Town Hall:

\$2,000.00 from Acct. #011922-5430 Building Maintenance to Acct. #0119225273 Equipment Rental, for increased costs and the need to replenish the meter in the mailing machine.

The Finance Committee voted to approve the transfer (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

The Finance Committee voted to recommend approval of a total appropriation for the Capital Improvements Budget for FY2024 as follows:

- \$ 405,660.00 Sewer Capital to be funded through Retained Earnings
- \$ 36,000.00 Cable Access Capital (Retained Earnings)
- \$ 1,580,990.00 Lease obligations to be funded through tax levy
Appropriation
- \$ 30,000.00 Amount funded through CIP Trust
- \$ 50,000.00 (PREMIUM) Bond Sale
- \$ 951,000.00 Amount Funded through Bond Proceeds

Total Appropriation for FY2024 - \$3,053,650.00 as presented by the Town Manager (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Chair Anne Cavanaugh asked if there were any questions or concerns about the minutes of March 15, 2023 and March 22, 2023. There being none, the Chair accepted the minutes of March 15, 2023 and March 22, 2023.

The Finance Committee agreed to meet before the town meeting on Tuesday May 2, 2023 at 5:30 P. M. at the Auburn High School to finish voting its recommendations on the town meeting warrant articles.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:51 P.M. (Motion made by Mr. Kennedy; motion seconded by Mr. Coleman) voted in favor 5 to 0.

Submitted: Sharon A. Kwiatkowski
Admin. Assistant to the Town Manager

The following documents were part of the Finance Committee's Meeting of April 5, 2023 and are retained in the Executive Office of the Town Manager:

- April 5, 2023 Agenda
- May 2, 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant
- Transfer Requests: Finance Department - Assessing; Town Hall
- Capital Improvements (CIP) Budget FY2024
- Minutes of March 15, 2023 and March 22, 2023