

# Town of Uxbridge, Massachusetts Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 10 October 2017

Place: Lower Town Hall  
Meeting Room

Attendance: Present or Absent

Peter DeMers - Chair	P	Evelyn Marchand	P	Derek Normadin	P
Mark Andrews- Vice Chair	P	Michael Wilson	P		
Susan Franz- Clerk	P				

Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen Joint Meeting  
Public Hearing, Fall Annual Town Meeting 2017

Call to Order: 6:30 PM

Also present:

Mr. David Genereux, Town Manager  
Mr. Brian Hyde, School Business Manager  
Chairman Ed Mahary, Capital Committee  
Ms. Marsha Petrillo, Counsel on Aging  
Members of the public

1) Capital items

A) School capital items

Article 4  
D1

Presentation by Brian Hyde for the school committee on the Taft boiler replacement, phase II, and the classroom flooring replacements.

The school facilities are completing phase 1 including the removal of boiler #2 and a move of

controllers to the boiler #1. Two cast iron Smith boilers are being replaced with Weil McClain 88 Series 2 high energy efficiency boilers. The cost is about \$100,000 each. The first boiler installation is 90% complete. Phase 2 will be the replacement of the remaining boiler and steam trap repairs. Lifetime should be 25-30 years. The manufacturers warranty is usually 20 years. Installation should be a 1 year warranty.

There may be a future weatherization project. There was a request to get numbers on the projected cost savings from energy efficiency. There should be savings with both gas and water costs.

The first replaced boiler will be in service this winter. Scheduling for the second boiler replacement is likely sometime in January or February.

M.G.L. Chapter 25 / Section 44 Green Communities Act allows towns to work directly with utility companies to obtain energy evaluations similar to what MassSave provides. There have been audits, but not a full assessment. There is an upfront cost to the town to participate. The estimated time to recoup the cost is 2.8 years. The expenditure is on the order of \$20,000 per building.

MSBA rejected a request for funding for \$100,000. Their rules now fund projects where boilers are more than 30 years old. Mr. Hyde suggests it can be more cost effective to "shop around."

Chairman Ed Mahary presented on behalf of the Capital Committee.

The Capital Committee's assessment is that the Taft School is at risk if the boilers do not perform. There was a question as to whether any asbestos issues had been assessed and addressed. Mr. Mahary deferred to Mr. Mike Velanger to speak to.

Article 4

D1

The Capital Committee voted unanimously to recommend flooring replacements. Health and safety issues for the children involved, in light of these being the younger students, are the primary concern. The proposal is to replace the carpets with more easily maintained tiles.

Two more rooms have been identified requiring asbestos abatement. When those two rooms are complete, Taft will be asbestos-free.

Mr. Hyde presented that each room is about 30' x 30'. It should take a few days work for each one. The cost is \$3800-\$5000 per room. The scheduled implementation will be during vacations and over the summer. The schools are paying to do this for 3-4 classrooms each summer from their own budgets. The tile material is VCT.

Mr. Michael Potaski asked why if Eversource could replace boilers at no cost to the Crown and

Eagle and the Uxbridge Housing Authority through a state program, why the town is paying for this project and not the state through Eversource. Mr. Hyde responded that the schools are working with both Eversource and National Grid on this project.

### Article 3

#### C4

School Salaries: \$60,000

Mr. Hyde presented that this budget item was part of a potential collaboration to share IT costs between the town and school's IT departments. The school would also like to collaborate for school landscape maintenance in a future project.

There was a question as to the staff who would be receiving these funds. The Town Manager said the school committee was still reviewing this proposal.

\$37,000-\$40,000 is anticipated for the hire of a full-time IT tech. The balance would be for an adjustment for the School IT director to transition to a Town IT Director. The police department would remain under contract to the outside vendor but other IT services would move to the salaried positions. The goal is to largely move away from a consultancy-based service to a salaried in-house position.

Mr. Hyde presented that the average IT director \$117,000. Ours is currently paid about \$80,000. Currently there are three people in this department. There is a job description for the IT technician position. The job description for the IT director position will need to be updated. There was no response as to who the IT director would be reporting to.

There was a suggestion that there should be a clear proposal presented for these kinds of requests to present to the Finance Committee and to the Board of Selectmen ahead of Town Meeting.

The Town Manager suggested that personnel should likely be funded through the school budget lines and fixed recurring costs, including town service contracts and equipment replacements could be funded through the town-side budget. There was a clarification that this is a raise-and-appropriate budget item with an overall goal to reduce costs to the town.

There was a suggestion that projects that will improve service and reduce costs should be better documented for presentation to all of the residents at town meeting.

The town manager noted there is a late addition to table D that has not been issued as an updated warrant item.

### Transfer for Stabilization

\$60,000

Ford E350 Van, Senior Center

Mr. Mahary presented that for rolling stock we should be setting aside \$137,000 DPW, \$205,000 Fire Dept.

Ms. Marsha Petrillo commented that the van is reaching its 10-year life expectancy. It is having maintenance issues and is not reliable. Approximately 10-14 people depend on this vehicle daily for transport to meals at the Senior Center. Mobility works prepared the bid for the new vehicle. This includes a \$5,800 rebate under a government contract agreement. The van will cost \$59,000 with the rebate for a 14-passenger van including a new lift and space for two wheelchairs. The current vehicle has 76,000 miles. The request is for \$60,000.

The Senior Center's smaller van is an 8-passenger van that is primarily used for 60-80 medical transportation runs per month. This provides rides for physical therapy, dialysis, cancer treatment, and other appointments. The formula grant pays for the drivers. The drivers are not required to hold a Class C license. The 8-passenger was purchased in 2010. The vehicle that is being replaced was purchased in 2008.

There was a question as to whether a lease agreement has been explored. It was clarified that a lease could be appropriated from stabilization if the funding was in place for each year of the lease. There was also a suggestion to explore extended warranty options for these types of lower-mileage vehicles that may be replaced before 100,000 miles.

Mr. Potaski contributed that residents at the Crown and Eagle rely heavily on these vehicles for transport.

Mr. Brian Plasko presented that power train warranties for similar vehicles is 5 years/60,000 miles with a basic warranty of 3 years/36,000.

Mr. Paul Paulino recommended that leases may include servicing that could result in considerable savings.

Article 14, 15

Mr. Plasko recommended that we need more diversity on our boards and committees and raised the concern that meeting attendance may be impacting the effectiveness of town boards and committees. He stated that 70% of the Conservation Committee and 40% of the Board of Selectmen meetings have a member missing from meetings and who sits on more than one committee. He suggested that better recruitment of volunteers, better advertising, a town hall open house, and other activities could help engage our citizens.

A concern was raised about the number of committees that are seeking new members.

There was a response that committees and boards cannot be productive when members do not attend meetings and that working on even one board requires a significant contribution of time

costs for all town employees, including the schools. Contracts are posted by the town accountant on the town website. There was a request that presenters come prepared for the final Finance Committee ahead of town meeting.

There was a request to review the numbers for this table and to present them at the Finance Committee meeting on October 11, 2017. The Board of Selectmen would need to sign and post the final warrant within seven days of Town Meeting.

Mr. Lance Anderson commented that he had spoken to Mrs. Modica in June 2016 about the Town Manager's contract and was told that he was "out of contract." Mrs. Modica there would have been an employment agreement. It was Mr. Anderson's view, the payout amount should have been zero.

*The Board of Selectmen recessed and removed to the Board of Selectmen room.*

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**Votes on recommendations by the Finance Committee for Town Meeting**

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Motion: Favorable Recommendation for Article 10 23 Arch Street-Acceptance of Easement First MA                      Second <del>MH</del> MW      Vote 6-0-0
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Motion: Favorable Recommendation for Article 11 Citizen's Petition-Street Acceptance Clark Road, assuming acceptance by the BOS First MA                      Second SF                      Vote 6-0-0
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Motion: Article 12  
Citizen's Petition-Street Acceptance Bentley Drive and Kieronski Ct.  
No Motion, passover

Public discussion: Article 13, Community Preservation Act

There was no response on the issue raised for a graduated adoption of 1-3%.

*Mr DeMers left the meeting*

Mr. Potaski commented that he believed that the act mandated that 10% of the money that is

and attention.

It was noted that the recycling committee has high interest and staffed its positions within a few weeks.

Mr. Paulino observed that he had spoken to a number of people who had submitted talent bank forms but then received no response. The town manager stated the forms are dated when they come in and are kept in the manager's office.

Mr. Paulino also suggested that checking the backgrounds of candidates and due diligence for appointments to compliment the information that is provided.

## Review of Budget Amendments

Table B1

Board of Selectmen Expense

\$20,000

The intent is to place an ad for a new town manager. Depending on the response, the additional funds are to support a consultancy for a more extensive candidate search. The remainder will be returned to stabilization. A previous search cost our town \$10,000. Millbury spent approximately \$15,000.

Article 3

Table C

Town Manager Professional Salaries

This brings the money available for hiring a new town manager up to \$150,000.

A new version of the warrant has been prepared with revised numbers for Table C. The changes bring the table total amount to \$212,301. The revised version should be available tomorrow.

The committee expressed concern that a copy of the changes was not provided to the committee and that the numbers appear to be in flux at a point that is very late in the process.

Chairman Piccirillo noted that the number includes an appropriation for a contractual payout to the departing town manager which included previous service as a non-union town employee. There was a suggestion that town counsel should be asked to review the issue. There were also general concerns raised about the status of agreements for non-union town employees.

There was a strong suggestion that there would need to be a future review of policy for accrual

raised be set aside to remove land from the tax roles and shrinks the tax base. Concerns were raised that apartments are primarily located in parts of town that are served by water and sewer and the assessments from the sewer project and from higher assessments would be passed onto the renters.

Mr. Potaski stated that “no town had received a matching contribution in years” and that this is not a good deal.

Ms. Franz observed that Mr. Potaski was partly correct in his assessment but that a very small percentage of projects within the 10% open space requirement are actually purchases and that there is a requirement by for a minimum match of 5% by law.

Mr. Potaski responded that it was his view whether it is 5% or 25% it is not matching because it is not 100%.

Mr. Marchand expressed his view that the article is another way to go around the 2 1/2 limit.

There was a discussion that the assessment is a percentage of taxes, not an assessment on the total value of the property. The view was expressed that is was a back-door tax increase. Another view was expressed that the town may not want to go down this road fully at this time.

Motion: Unfavorable Recommendation for Article 13		
Community Preservation Act		
First MA	Second SF	Vote 3-2-0

Motion: Favorable Recommendation for Article 14		
Citizen’s Petition-Amendment to the General Bylaws Multiple Town Positions		
First MA	Second SF	Vote 4-1-0

Issues were raised that while the community would like to see diversity on committees but that we may not have enough people currently who are willing to participate.

It was expressed that there are known cases of talent bank forms that have not been responded to multiple times and that we may not have actual numbers on how many people are interested in participating.

Mr. Mahary expressed his opinion that he found it personally finds it troubling that the Moderator also serves on the Capital Committee and that it seems like a conflict. In his view, there may be similar conflicts between duties on other committees and people operating at the executive level should have one function. To say it is not the right time, he responds that there are 9,900 voters in the town. We should be able to draw upon that and it the town a service by bringing in a larger group.

Motion: Favorable Recommendation for Article 15  
Citizen's Petition, Amendment to the Charter-Multiple Town Positions  
First MA                      Second SF                      Vote 4-1-0

Article 7  
Authorization for Municipal Charges Liens via M.G.L. Chapter 40 Section 58  
Passover

*Mr. DeMers returns to the meeting*

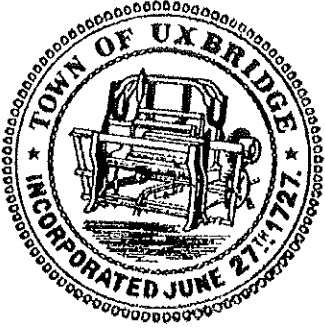
Motion: Favorable Recommendation for Article 5  
Increase funding limits of community gardens, dog park, and pout pond recreation committee revolving funds.  
First MA                      Second MH MW Vote ~~5-0-1~~ 5-1

A concern was raised that we were given a number but that we were never given a justification about this change. The suggestion was an issue that the amounts being raised in the revolving funds are larger than the current fund limits.

*The Public Hearing is continued until October 11, 2017*

Motion to adjourn at 8:38 pm  
First MA                      Second SF                      Vote 6-0-0





# Finance Committee Approval Sheet

Date: October 10, 2017

Location: Lower Town Hall Meeting Room

Name	Signature	Date
Peter DeMers		12 DEC 2017
Mark Andrews		12 Dec 2017
Susan Franz		12 Dec 2017
Evelyn Marchand		12/12/17
Derek Normadin		12-12-17
Michael Wilson		12-12-17

