



Natick Finance Committee

Pursuant to Chapter 40, Section 3 of the Town of Natick By-Laws, I attest that the attached copy is the approved copy of the minutes for the following Meeting:

Town of Natick Finance Committee

Meeting Date: October 4, 2018

The minutes were approved through the following action:

Motion:	Approved, as amended
Made by:	Mr. Scurlock
Seconded by:	Ms. Wollschlager
Vote:	9 – 0 – 0
Date:	November 5, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Evans

Secretary

Natick Finance Committee



TOWN OF NATICK

Meeting Notice

POSTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF M.G.L. CHAPTER 30A,
Sections 18-25

Natick Finance Committee

DAY, DATE AND TIME

October 4, 2018 at 6:00 PM

Posting Notice: This meeting posting was originally submitted to the Town Clerk and posted on the

Town web site calendar on October 1, 2018 at 10:00 AM; a revised meeting posting changing the time to 6:00 PM from 5:30 PM was submitted to the Town Clerk and posted on the web site on October 3 at 9:10 AM

PLACE OF MEETING

Room 139, Wilson Middle School, 22 Rutledge Road, Natick, MA

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristine Van Amsterdam	Bruce Evans	Cathi Collins
Jim Scurlock	Robert McCauley	Patrick Hayes
Linda Wollschlager	Dan Sullivan	Philip Rooney

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Lynn Tinney	David Gallo	Jeff DeLuca
Dirk Coburn	Mike Linehan	Dave Coffey

Town Administration

John Townsend, Deputy Town Administrator – Finance

Sean O’Brien, Assistant to Deputy Town Administrator – Finance

Bill Chenard, Deputy Town Administrator – Operations

MEETING Attorney General ENDA

- 1) Public Concerns/ Comments
 - a. Resident and Taxpayer Concerns and Comments
- 2) Meeting Minutes
 - a. Review & Approve the September 11, September 20, and September 25, 2018 meeting minutes
- 3) New Business
 - a. Executive Session – to discuss receipt of and response to Open Meeting Law Complaint – under purpose 1 (receipt of complaint against a public body)
- 4) 2018 Fall Town Meeting Warrant Articles - Public Hearing
 - a. [Article 1 - FY '19 Omnibus Adjustments](#)
 - b. [Article 31 - Actions Pertaining to Acquisition and Preservation of the Town’s easements on Mechanic Street](#)
 - c. [Article 38 - Amend Natick Town Charter; Natick Town By-Laws; Natick Zoning By-Laws: Constitution of zoning board of appeals, division and distribution of powers regarding MGL c. 40B sections 20-23](#)

Article 1, Motion A

Proposed Motion:

ARTICLE 1, MOTION A (Requires majority vote)

Finance Committee – 2018 October 4

“Move that the Town vote to increase the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 7 by the sum of \$272,935, said sum to be distributed as follows:

- To supplement the Department of Public Works budget as voted under Article 7 Motion C of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$13,176 to Public Works Salaries.
- To supplement the Administrative Support Services budget as voted under Article 7 Motion E of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$18,259 to Board of Selectmen Salaries.
- To supplement the Administrative Support Services budget as voted under Article 7 Motion E of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$2,500 to Finance Salaries.
- To supplement the Committees and Commissions budget as voted under Article 7 Motion F of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$30,000 to Affordable Housing Trust Expenses.
- To supplement the Shared Services budget as voted under Article 7 Motion G of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$25,000 to Other Personnel Services - Merit / Performance
- To supplement the Board of Selectmen’s budget as voted under Article 7 Motion E of the 2018 Annual Town Meeting by adding \$134,000 to CBA Settlements.
- To supplement the Legal budget as voted under Article 7 Motion E of the 2018 Annual Town Meeting by adding \$50,000 to Expenses.

With the above Budget be raised from following sources:

Tax Levy of Fiscal Year 2019 \$272,935”

Mr. Townsend read the proposed changes in motion A to the Finance Committee.

Questions from the Committee:

Mr. Rooney asked what was included in the salary increases line item. Mr. Townsend said that the increase in the Board of Selectmen line item is to cover the period of time where we were paying salaries to the previous Town Administrator as well as the new Town Administrator. The \$2,500 for the Finance department was to reconcile the salaries between two employees who had the exact same qualifications and duties, but one was male, the other female. This was done to ensure compliance with equal pay laws. Mr. Chenard said the Department of Public Works item is due to a change in the job requirements for one individual and the new Town Engineer was hired at a slightly higher salary than the previous Town Engineer.

Mr. Rooney asked for clarification on deferred merit increases. Mr. Chenard said that when the new Town Administrator started, we were in the process of allocating bonuses at that point. Given her unfamiliarity with the process and the people affected, the Town Administrator

suggested deferring these bonuses. These were the funds that were set aside for bonuses in FY18 in the budget, and they rolled to Free Cash, and she is requesting that they be appropriated now so that she can get bonuses to people who have earned them. The paperwork has been completed and we hope to issue these bonuses this fall after Town Meeting, if this is appropriated.

Mr. Rooney asked whether granting of bonuses was common. Mr. Chenard said, unlike many communities who award COLAs, Natick has a bonus pool where employees receive bonuses for excellent performance above and beyond their normal responsibilities. For example, it might be an employee who does something extraordinary or suggests an action that helps the Town save money or improves customer service. Since they were not awarded and FY 18, they rolled to Free Cash. The Town Administrator wants to re-appropriate them to deserving employees through this request. This is a one-time bonus that doesn't get added into the base salary. Mr. Hayes added that this was part of the revamp of the personnel classification and pay plan a few years ago.

Ms. Wollschlager asked for a description of the two new items today.

Mr. Townsend said that the \$134,000 is for two particular items:

- 1) Adding \$134,000 to CBA Settlements \$134,000
 - \$84,000 to pay for the full body scans that were negotiated as part of the Firefighters contract test to detect cancer
 - \$50,000 as a set-aside for potential obligations under Massachusetts Equal Pay Act (MEPA). We are conducting an analysis of both school and Town employees to determine where there may be discrepancies that we would have to fund under MEPA. Mr. Chenard added that the Town is required to do a MEPA analysis every five years.
- 2) Adding \$50,000 to Expenses to supplement the Legal budget. This is needed to address the issues raised by potential OML violations. We anticipate the need for Town Counsel on these assertions, so want to budget to address the increased legal expenses associated with that.

Ms. Wollschlager asked whether we were keeping track of all the costs that these complaints are costing the Town. Mr. Townsend said that he was certain that Town Counsel is tracking that and would be able to let us know. Mr. Chenard added that Town Counsel will itemize this on their bills.

Ms. Collins asked whether the \$25,000 for merit increases was encumbered in FY 18. Mr. Chenard stated that it is illegal to encumber salary money for individual employees.

Ms. Collins asked for confirmation that the additional \$30,000 for the affordable housing trust brings the total to \$80,000. Mr. Chenard confirmed that it was \$80,000.

Mr. Evans moved to recommend favorable action on article 1, Motion B to decrease in the amount of \$272.935, sourced from Tax Levy, motion as provided to the Finance Committee on October 3, 2018, seconded by Ms. Collins, Voted 9 – 0 – 0.

Debate:

Mr. Evans thanked Mr. Townsend and Mr. Chenard as well as Committee members for their questions. These addressed my concerns. I'm thankful to the administration for putting in set-asides for MEPA and legal expenses as prudent investments and am comfortable voting favorably on this motion.

Article 1, Motion B

Proposed motion from October 3, 2018 draft.

MOTION B: (Requires majority vote)

“Move that the Town vote to decrease the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under article 7 by the sum of \$1,694,125, said sum to be distributed as follows:

- To reduce the Shared Services budget as voted under Article 7 Motion G of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by reducing the Debt Service line item by \$1,694,125.

With the above Budget be reduced from the following sources:

Tax Levy of Fiscal Year 2019 \$1,694,125”

Mr. Townsend said that the Town had budgeted money for both the Kennedy Middle School project and the West Natick Fire Station project in FY19. However, given that the Town plans to borrow this money in December, there will not be a payment until FY20, so the Town is requesting a decrease in the appropriation by this amount. Mr. Chenard noted that this is not newly found cash for the Town; it goes away on the revenue side because you cannot increase your tax Levy for debt exclusion if the Town doesn't have that debt to pay.

Questions from the Committee

Mr. Rooney asked for clarification on the timing of this. Mr. Chenard said that the Town was not going to have a debt payment in FY19. However, as a result of not needing this that payment in FY 19, we cannot raise the tax levy by the amount of the Kennedy Middle School payment because that was budgeted as a debt exclusion project. Mr. Rooney asked for confirmation that this was included in the original debt service budget and Mr. Chenard confirmed that.

Ms. Collins asked how the Town projected vs. actual vs. new growth. Mr. Chenard said that the Town was slightly under the projection for local receipts when we closed and new growth is higher than projected, and state aid is up \$43,000. Ms. Collins said that the reason she asked was

that either last year or the year before, we were able to take into account those new funds and reduce what was coming out of Free Cash. Mr. Chenard asked Mr. O'Brien for what that excess amount might be and Mr. O'Brien said that it was between \$30,000 and \$40,000.

Mr. McCauley asked when the first debt service payment would be in FY20. Mr. Chenard said that the Town would like to have a debt service payment early in FY20 that was interest-only and a second payment in FY20 that was interest and principal.

Mr. Evans moved to recommend favorable action on article 1, Motion B to decrease the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 7 by \$1,694,125, said sum to be distributed, as follows: reduction of Shared Services budget voted by 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 7 by \$1,604,125, with the budget reduced from Tax Levy of FY2019, motion as provided to the Finance Committee on October 3, 2018, seconded by Ms. Collins, Voted 9 – 0 – 0.

Article 1, Motion C

Proposed Motion:

MOTION C: (Requires majority vote)

“Move that the Town vote to decrease the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under article 7 by the sum of \$60,000, said sum to be distributed as follows:

- To reduce the Water and Sewer Operations budget as voted under Article 7 Motion H of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by \$60,000.

With the above Budget be reduced from the following sources:

Water and Sewer User Fees \$60,000”

Mr. Townsend stated that the Town was budgeted to make a payment for generators that will not be required until FY20.

Questions from the Committee:

Ms. Wollschlager asked for what the borrowing that we didn't use was earmarked. Mr. Chenard said that it was the generators for the water treatment plant and that we will be doing that project at a later date and pay for it in FY20.

Mr. Evans moved to recommend favorable action on article 1, Motion C to decrease the appropriation voted by 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 7 motion H - Water and Sewer operations budget- of the 2018 spring annual Town Meeting by \$60,000, through

reduction of Water and Sewer User by \$60,000, motion as provided to the Finance Committee on October 3, 2018, seconded by Ms. Collins, Voted 9 – 0 – 0.

Debate: None

Article 1, Motion D

Proposed Motion

MOTION D (Requires majority vote)

“Move that the Town vote to increase the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under article 9 by the sum of \$3,011, said sum to be distributed as follows:

- To supplement the Bacon Free Library Salaries and Expenses budget as voted under Article 9 of the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting by adding \$3,011.

Mr. Townsend said that this motion seeks to increase the Bacon Free Library salaries and expenses budget by \$3,011.

Questions from the Committee:

Ms. Collins asked what required this increase. Mr. Chenard said that the part-time pay scale had increased to reflect the higher minimum wage and some positions at the Bacon Free Library were accidentally omitted.

*Mr. Evans moved to recommend favorable action on article 1, Motion D to increase the appropriation voted by the 2018 Spring Annual Town Meeting under Article 9 by \$3,011 to supplement the Bacon Free Library salaries and expenses budget as stated in the motion provided to the Finance Committee on October 3, 2018, **as amended to add sourced from Tax Levy**, seconded by Ms. Collins, Voted 9 – 0 – 0.*

Meeting Minutes:

Mr. Hayes noted that the proper OML procedure is to review public any changes that are made to the meeting minutes. You cannot simply send changes and have the secretary state that he has received them and has implemented those changes – you must actually review them publicly. We also have to work harder to improve the turnaround time on minutes because we don't have the luxury of time that we use to have.

Mr. Scurlock said that he remembered voting for more money in the Finance Committee budget to get more secretarial support and asked whether that was enough budget and support to do this.

Mr. Evans said that the Finance Committee lost Lisa Smith, who was excellent at turning minutes around quickly. Maureen is less experience with town Finances, so I'm trying to bring her along and assist her in learning how to do minutes efficiently. The jury is still out as the weather's she will come up to the level of Lisa. If she does, we will be in much better shape. Once you get out of the Fall Town Meeting rush, the January to April time frame is more manageable, and it's numbers, not zoning where Maureen has no familiarity with the discussion. Mr. Hayes' suggestion of using a transcription service might come into play if we get bogged down in the future.

Mr. Hayes said that we might be able to get to people working on transcription - for example Maureen might work Tuesday and someone else would work on transcription Thursday so that individually, they'd be working on one set of minutes per week. Another option is using an online transcription service, but that requires a lot of proofreading and editing.

Ms. Wollschlager asked whether an audio recording can serve as meeting minutes. Mr. Hayes said that from what he'd read, OML says that it must be a written document. Mr. Evans said that he is speculating, but there the concern may be that video and audio are easily alterable. Mr. Hayes said that we would discuss this further in the November December time frame in advance of next year's budget.

Mr. Hayes said that one of the challenges for our meeting minutes is that they are very detailed by necessity since they are used to help write the recommendation book. Subcommittee minutes need not be as detailed.

September 11, 2018

I received approvals from three members.

Ms. Wollschlager moved approval, seconded by Mr. McCauley, voted 8 – 0 – 1

Mr. Evans moved to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Collins voted 9 – 0 – 0