



ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING

6/1/20 8:00 PM

Conducted by Remote Participation - Zoom Meeting

ATTENDEES:

Gibian*	Padaria*	Pokress*	Kellar*	McKenna*
Blundell*	Wallach*	Harmer*	Tosti*	
Ellis*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Kocur*	
White*	Beck	Jones*	Deshler*	
Franclemont*	Howard*	LaCourt*	Carman*	Diggins*

*Indicates present

VISITORS: Town Manager Adam Chapdelaine, Deputy Town Manager Sandy Pooler, Superintendent of Schools Kathleen Bodie, School CFO Michael Mason, School Committee Chair Len Kardon,

1. INTRODUCTION: Tosti read the rules for the meeting as formulated by Town Counsel based on the Governor's authorization (Ref 1). An important rule is that all votes must be by role call. See Ref 2 for the roll call record of attendance and votes.

2. APPENDIX E: Tosti announced that the Long Range Planning Committee had agreed on changes (Ref 3) to the budget that the FinCom completed at the last meeting on 3/30/20. This summary had been provided to FinCom members by email last week. The background had been provided the previous week. The purpose of this meeting is to review these changes. (Appendix E will be included in the FinCom report to show how the Town plans to address the COVID-19 financial problems. The reductions listed will have been worked into the budget prepared for Town Meeting approval.)

Tosti explained that the State faces serious revenue loss but has not yet changed its revenue estimates. He stated that the reductions are intended to avoid filling new positions and then laying people off when the expected funding does not come through. The reductions are intended to be at least 10% of what would have been the FY21 increase.

Chapdelaine said his proposal is to cut all the 5 new positions for a total of 22% of the Town increase. He has discussed this with department heads. The police may consider transferring another policeman from other duties to make a 2nd school resource officer. He believes that the state aid may be reduced 15%. Other communities are making similar assumptions. If this happens, then, with Appendix E, the budget will be balanced and no override will be needed until FY24 as was the original plan. He said that Local Receipts have not been affected so far in FY20. The Long Range Plan continues to assume a conservative (low) increase. He noted that federal funds to offset the cost to the Town for COVID-19 exceed the need and they may be freed for other uses.

Bodie noted that the school reduction is 10% of the original increase. She explained that the 5 year school plan got off to a slow start in FY20 so more funds would have been available than expected in FY21. She and Mason said that school revolving accounts are healthy. Bodie discussed the plans being developed for school opening in September. One option is in person classroom teaching. There are many problems in using social distancing in the crowded school buildings. Doing health checks before entering in the AM could take a long time. Cleaning surfaces will require more manpower. A 2nd option is virtual (internet) teaching with the students at home. This requires different teaching skills. High school and some middle school students can learn this way. But elementary school students need help at home. A 3^d option is to divide the students into 2 groups. While the 1st group gets in-person teaching the 2nd group get virtual teaching. After a period of time, perhaps a week, the groups change places. This makes more classroom space available and reduces the load on family support. Bodie is concerned that the virus might surge as happened in South Korea when in-person teaching resumed. She said the planning has included the union. Members questioned whether any of these approaches could be funded within budget.

Tosti explained the Warrant Article reductions. The ACAC agrees that their original plan will be reduced by COVID-19 constraints. Town Day will probably not happen. The Water Bodies committee agreed that there is enough carry over balance to do what is most needed. The Harry Barber program is inpractable because of COVID-19.

Tosti also addressed use of reserves. He noted that so far this year the Reserve Fund has not been used. It had been built up in recent years to handle snow & ice. Now at \$1.5m, a 10% cut is modest. Members questioned this, noting the uncertainties discussed above. The Long Term Stabilization Fund is now at \$3.7m. He suggested that the Town could forgo the annual \$100k appropriation. The Overlay Surplus has a large balance. He proposed withdrawing \$200k per year for 5 years. This largely expends the fund. The Override Stabilization Fund withdrawal will balance the budget.

VOTED to approve the budget changes as listed in Ref 3. Unanimous. See Ref 2.

FINCOM PLANS: The FinCom Report will be posted, emailed to Town Meeting members, and a few copies will be printed by the Town Manager for Town Officials and made available on request. Town Meeting is scheduled for 6/15 at Pierce Field with rain dates 6/17 & 6/22. The meeting must dissolve on or before 6/22. There will be no FinCom meeting before the Town Meeting. The next FinCom meeting will be 6/17 to approve transfers and elect officers for FY21. Members should send nominations to Tosti for chair & vice chair in advance. There will be a Town Meeting in the fall.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM. Note that the start of the meeting was delayed when the Zoom connection suffered outside interference.

Ref 1 Governor's Authorization
Ref 2 Roll Call and Votes
Ref 3 APPENDIX E

Peter Howard 6/2/20



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CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

**ORDER SUSPENDING CERTAIN PROVISIONS
OF THE OPEN MEETING LAW, G. L. c. 30A, § 20**

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, acting pursuant to the powers provided by Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 and Section 2A of Chapter 17 of the General Laws, declared that there now exists in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts a state of emergency due to the outbreak of the 2019 novel Coronavirus (“COVID-19”); and

WHEREAS, many important functions of State and Local Government are executed by “public bodies,” as that term is defined in G. L. c. 30A, § 18, in meetings that are open to the public, consistent with the requirements of law and sound public policy and in order to ensure active public engagement with, contribution to, and oversight of the functions of government; and

WHEREAS, both the Federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (“DPH”) have advised residents to take extra measures to put distance between themselves and other people to further reduce the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. Additionally, the CDC and DPH have advised high-risk individuals, including people over the age of 60, anyone with underlying health conditions or a weakened immune system, and pregnant women, to avoid large gatherings.

WHEREAS, sections 7, 8, and 8A of Chapter 639 of the Acts of 1950 authorize the Governor, during the effective period of a declared emergency, to exercise authority over public assemblages as necessary to protect the health and safety of persons; and

WHEREAS, low-cost telephone, social media, and other internet-based technologies are currently available that will permit the convening of a public body through virtual means and allow real-time public access to the activities of the public body; and

WHEREAS section 20 of chapter 30A and implementing regulations issued by the Attorney General currently authorize remote participation by members of a public body, subject to certain limitations;

NOW THEREFORE, I hereby order the following:

(1) A public body, as defined in section 18 of chapter 30A of the General Laws, is hereby relieved from the requirement of section 20 of chapter 30A that it conduct its meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body for interested members of the public through adequate, alternative means.

Adequate, alternative means of public access shall mean measures that provide transparency and permit timely and effective public access to the deliberations of the public body. Such means may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body while those activities are occurring. Where allowance for active, real-time participation by members of the public is a specific requirement of a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, pursuant to which the proceeding is conducted, any alternative means of public access must provide for such participation.

A municipal public body that for reasons of economic hardship and despite best efforts is unable to provide alternative means of public access that will enable the public to follow the proceedings of the municipal public body as those activities are occurring in real time may instead post on its municipal website a full and complete transcript, recording, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as practicable upon conclusion of the proceedings. This paragraph shall not apply to proceedings that are conducted pursuant to a general or special law or regulation, or a local ordinance or by-law, that requires allowance for active participation by members of the public.

A public body must offer its selected alternative means of access to its proceedings without subscription, toll, or similar charge to the public.

(2) Public bodies are hereby authorized to allow remote participation by all members in any meeting of the public body. The requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at a specified meeting location, as provided in G. L. c. 30A, § 20(d) and in 940 CMR 29.10(4)(b), is hereby suspended.

(3) A public body that elects to conduct its proceedings under the relief provided in sections (1) or (2) above shall ensure that any party entitled or required to appear before it shall be able to do so through remote means, as if the party were a member of the public body and participating remotely as provided in section (2).

(4) All other provisions of sections 18 to 25 of chapter 30A and the Attorney General's implementing regulations shall otherwise remain unchanged and fully applicable to the activities of public bodies.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until rescinded or until the State of Emergency is terminated, whichever happens first.

Given in Boston at 6:40 PM this 12th day of
March, two thousand and twenty.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles D. Baker". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR
Commonwealth of Massachusetts

APPENDIX E

FY2021 Budget Changes

Town Manager Original Increase (\$1,200,397)

Budget Number	Position	Amount	
3	Records Access Coordinator	\$32,200	
17(a)	Systems Innovation Manager	\$79,088	
17 (b)	Permits Engineer	\$69,319	
19	Police Officer (School Resource)	\$59,557	
23	Senior Clerk and Typist	\$21,683	
	Total		\$261,847

School Department Original Increase (\$4,603,392)

Administrative Salaries	\$52,500	
Teacher and Professional Salaries	\$402,500	
Other Expenses	\$5,000	
Total		\$460,000

Warrant Articles

Article 62 Arts and Culture	\$5,000	
Article 63 Town Day	\$5,000	
Article 65 Water Bodies	\$10,000	
Article 68 Harry Barber Program	\$7,500	
Total		\$27,500

Use of Reserves

Reduced Appropriation

Budget 27 Reserve Fund (10%)	\$172,672	
Article 76 Long Term Stab. Fund (100%)	\$100,000	

Increased Use of Funds

Article 73 Overlay Surplus	\$200,000	
Article 77 Override Stabilization Fund	\$2,024,197	

Total **\$2,496,869**

Total Changes **\$3,246,216**