



**ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**2/9/2022 7:30 PM**  
 Conducted by Remote Participation – Zoom Meeting

**ATTENDEES:**

Gibian	P	Padaria	A	Harmer	P	Tosti	P
Blundell	P	Migliazzo	P	LaCourt	P	Nascimento	P
Ellis	P	Wallach	P	Jones	P	Deshler	P
Healy	P	Foskett	P	Kocur	P	Carman	P
Beck	A	Crawford Pokress	P	Kellar	P	McKenna	P
						Bradley	P

P indicates Present; L indicates late; A indicates Absent

Visitors: Sean Keane (ACMI), Don Seltzer (resident), Michael Mason (Chief Financial Officer of Schools), Dr. Liz Homan (Superintendent of Schools)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Foskett read the rules for the meeting as formulated by Town Counsel based on the Governor's authorization. An important rule is that all votes, unless unanimous, must be by roll call. Attendance was taken by roll call.
2. Foskett reminds committee members that new and reappointed member swear-in takes place in person at Town Hall.

**GUEST PRESENTATIONS**

3. Update from Superintendent of Schools Dr. Liz Homan and Chief Financial Officer of Schools Michael Mason:
  - 3.1. Homan highlighted District Improvement Goals which include developing a collaborative and equity focused leadership culture to reduce access barriers to students, improving transparency and communication using data and focusing on student mental health.
  - 3.2. Homan reviewed achievement data between 2019 and 2021 and the results of the Worry Questionnaire for Children (PSWQ-C) from district 5<sup>th</sup> graders, especially as the data relates to the pandemic.
  - 3.3. Mason highlighted Operational Priorities which include student enrollment, staff salaries and per pupil spending. Mason reviewed data from a FY20 salary study which found that Masters level teachers in the district are paid up to 5.5% lower than the Town Manager 12 (TM12) average, with Teaching Assistants being paid up to 41.4% below the TM12 average. Per pupil spending in Arlington is also lower than the TM12

and state averages. Mason shared that the high school building project is close to finishing the first phase of its four-phase project.

3.4. Homan introduced the grant-funded Inclusive District Strategic Planning Process group and shared that her priorities include a continued assessment of facilities needs as enrollment changes as well as continued assessment of learning and mental health needs in response to the pandemic.

3.5. Questions from committee members centered on clarification of data from the presentation, enrollment predictions, growing mental health needs in the district, achievement gap data and the difficulty in hiring teachers and support staff.

## BUDGETS

4. Finance Committee (Budget No. 1): Pay for the Recording Secretary has been reallocated to the Executive Secretary as those roles have been consolidated.

4.1. VOTE: The committee voted unanimously to approve the Finance Committee budget totaling \$11,733.

5. Town Manager (Budget No. 3): The Town Manager signed a new three-year contract which discontinued a housing stipend following the Town Manager's move out of Arlington. "Other Benefits" include expenses related to associations, Long Term Disability insurance and expenses for similar benefits.

5.1. VOTE: The committee voted to approve the Town Manager budget totaling \$754,080 with 16 in favor and one abstention (Healy).

6. Town Clerk (Budget No. 11): Advertising costs have decreased due to the Town Clerk making shorter statements in newspaper announcements. Expenses related to printing ballots has been moved out of the Printing Licenses expense line, with the remaining budget for Printing Licenses allocated for dog tag expenses. The Election Modernization Committee is in the process of hiring a consultant, which is funded by a Warrant Article. A question of pay equity was raised in comparing salaries of Department Heads with the Town Clerk and in comparing the Director of Libraries with other Director roles. A discussion with the Director of HR will take place to address pay equity concerns related to the Town Clerk and Director of Libraries roles.

6.1. VOTE: The committee voted to approve the Town Clerk budget totaling \$273,509 with 16 in favor and one abstention (Tosti).

7. Elections: Electronic Voting Equipment includes clickers used at Town Meeting. The Town Clerk has requested a voting pad for each precinct. Voting pads are used to sign in voters and have been used during early voting. Other Purchased Services now includes the cost of Constables which were previously in another budget item. Around \$3,000 in the Other Purchased Services include services to make voting for the blind accessible. Election costs were included in budget line items inconsistently in the past. Comparing election expenses by the number of elections per year is the best way to compare election costs across years. There is a committee being formed to study the use of outside signs reminding residents about elections, which would decrease the advertising budget.

7.1. A request was made for a report on reimbursements that the State pays to Arlington to reimburse for costs related to early voting and for salaries of election staff from 7am-10am during elections. Another request was made for a breakdown of salaries to include detail on pay for election and poll workers as well as police detail.

7.2. VOTE: The committee moved to postpone the Elections budget totaling \$245,745.

8. Zoning Board of Appeals (Budget No. 16): This department is looking for a full-time employee because the workload has dramatically increased.

8.1. VOTE: The committee voted unanimously to approve the Zoning Board of Appeals budget for \$63,700.

9. Human Resources (Budget No. 4): Over half of the Training budget is allocated for facilitated training with the National League of Cities (NLC), which includes Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training. Training also pays for Civil Service Exam assessment centers and a three-year benchmark study of salaries. The Human Resources department anticipates coming to request more appropriations for Training. Office Supplies includes a new expense for the digital onboarding module in Munis. Other Purchased Services includes funds for posting job advertisements in new outlets.

9.1. There was a request to ask Human Resources why they did not include the anticipated increase in Training in their budget request.

9.2. VOTE: The committee voted unanimously to approve the Human Resources budget totaling \$364,283.

#### 10. Summary

<b>Budget #</b>	<b>Budget Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
1	Finance Committee	\$11,733	Approved
3	Town Manager	\$754,080	Approved
11	Town Clerk	\$273,509	Approved
n/a	Elections	\$245,745	Postponed
16	Zoning Board of Appeals	\$63,700	Approved
4	Human Resources	\$364,283	Approved

#### CONCLUSION

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 PM.

The next meeting is Monday, February 14, 2022 at 7:30 PM.

Tara Bradley  
2/11/2022

Reference 1: APS Update and Introduction to Finance Committee