



ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
1/30/2023 7:30 PM  
O'Neill Community Room, 112 Mystic St

ATTENDEES:

Remy	P	White	P	Griffin	P	Bliss	A
Blundell	P	Younkin	P	Harmer	P	Tosti	P
Susse	P	Lobel	P	LaCourt	P	Deshler	P
Migliazzo	P	Gibian	A	Jones	P	Carman	P
Beck	A	Foskett	P	Heigham	P	McKenna	P
						Bradley	P

P indicates Present; L indicates late; A indicates Absent

Visitors: Sean Keane (ACMI), Gordon Jamison (resident)

INTRODUCTION

1. The group made introductions and Deshler thanked the Orientation Team and Communications Working Group.

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

1. Policies & Procedures Working Group: the Efficiencies Analysis proposal document was discussed
  - a. Al Tosti will serve as the Warrant Review Officer and will prepare a list of Warrant Articles to propose that the FinCom should hear to report on to Town Meeting
2. Communications Working Group: the group's goal is to raise visibility in the town. They developed a job posting and created an Op Ed which were both published
3. IT Working Group: the group's goal is to create some longitudinal data for the committee
4. Operations Working Group: this group has created several reports including one on the Police Department and another on Solid Waste which was shared with Town Meeting
5. Long Range Plan Committee: major priorities include the encroaching need for an override – how big and for how many years a proposed override would last, the looming solid waste issue (new contract needed in 1 year) and how competitive the town wishes to be in terms of school salaries
6. Capital Planning Committee: this committee works with an \$8-9 million per year budget for significant repairs/purchases (police cruisers, DPW building, etc.)

MINUTES

1. 6/22/2022 Meeting Minutes as revised were approved unanimously

**BUDGETS**

- 1. Position Reclassifications
  - a. In 2022: 17 reclassification requests were received. Nine of those 17 were denied (with seven of the denied appealing and none of the appealed were approved. Eight reclassification requests were approved.
- 2. Finance Committee
  - a. VOTE: 11,848 - unanimous

3. Summary

<b>Budget Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Status</b>
Finance Committee	\$11,848.00	Approved

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- 1. Announcement: New Deputy Town Manager/Finance Director Alex McGee was appointed for a March start date
- 2. Policy: FinCom members to stay out of any electioneering for any candidate for a town position. Okay to campaign for a referendum
- 3. Meetings: will be held via Zoom for rest of February with hope of return to in person in late February/early March

**CONCLUSION**

The meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM.

The next meeting is Wednesday, February 1, 2023 at 7:30 PM.

Tara Bradley  
1/31/2023

Reference 1: Efficiencies Analysis

Reference 2: 2022 Positions Reclassification

Reference 3: Waste Analysis

**REPORT ON EFFICIENCY MEASURES**  
**FINANCE COMMITTEE POLICY & PROCEDURES WORKING GROUP**  
**Annie LaCourt (Chair), Shane Blundell, Darrel Harmer, Alan Jones**

## Summary

The Policies & Procedures Working Group of Arlington's Finance Committee has been asked to recommend strategies to increase the efficiency of the annual budget process, focusing on strategies to reduce the time members spend in the Committee meetings and meetings with department heads, and the overall length of the budget review and recommendation process. These strategies may also provide guidance for new members.

Five strategies are recommended:

1. Use an outline or worksheet of questions to help organize budget meetings with department heads and budget presentations.
2. Invite department heads to meet with the full committee as needed to shorten the question/answer cycle.
3. Provide an outline to be used by Town committees, commissions or warrant article sponsors when presenting budget requests to the Finance Committee.
4. Create a working group to review the warrant for articles of interest and present recommendations to the full committee as a "consent agenda".
5. Encourage members to review department budgets as early as possible and provide questions to the responsible the Committee member before meeting with each department head. The same for warrant article requests and their proponents. ("John Ellis Rule").

Each strategy is discussed in more detail below.

### Strategy #1 – baseline questions for department budgets

The Committee members responsible for recommending department budgets should be provided with an outline of questions or topics to discuss with department heads. A general outline or checklist is provided below as Appendix I, but should be amended for the specific concerns of specific departments, and with additional questions asked by other the Committee members (see Strategy #5).

This should help focus department budget meetings for better efficiency and completeness, and be especially helpful for new members, or members dealing with a department for the first time. It might also reduce the need for follow-on meetings. The outline can also organize the presentation to the full Committee.

In some cases, the questions could also be given to the department heads in advance, especially when an answer may require some preparation.

### Strategy #2 – when to invite a department head to the meeting

A complex department budget discussion could be more efficient if the department head was available during the full Committee presentation, especially if prepared to respond to any complex or controversial questions. A department head could be invited in the following cases:

- Any new department
- A major change in staffing or organization
- A major change in department operations or services
- Any controversial topic likely to generate much discussion at Town Meeting (e.g., body cameras)
- Any department that has had a major problem in the previous year

The following department heads are always expected to present to the full Committee:

- School superintendent and school committee
- Minuteman superintendent

### Strategy #3 – guidelines for budget request presentations

Committees, commissions and warrant article sponsors presenting to the full Committee in person or in writing should be prepared to provide specific information and answer specific questions in their presentations or written budget requests. A general outline or checklist is provided below as Appendix II, but should be amended for the concerns of each committee or warrant article, and with additional questions asked by other Committee members (see Strategy #5), and provided to the committee or sponsor in advance.

Materials, such as a slide deck, budget document or letters of recommendation, must be shared with the Executive Secretary not less than 48 hours before the scheduled meeting of the Committee. The 48-hour requirement aligns with the open meeting law, which requires agendas to be posted at least 48 hours beforehand. If the documents are not shared within that time period, then the committee should wait until a subsequent meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Live presentations are normally expected for new committees and commissions, and for warrant article requests, or any committee with a large requested increase. Written presentations should be sufficient for committees with a track record and stable requests. These committees will normally present live:

- Capital Planning Committee
- CPA Committee

### Strategy #4 – warrant question pre-review:

The Committee Chair should appoint a warrant review “officer” or small working group to review the draft warrant articles to identify those which should be considered by the Finance Committee, mainly any which include phrases like “determine how the money shall be raised and expended” or “appropriation”. The full Committee might also review any warrant article which might impact future budgets, for example a new employee holiday or new inspection requirements.

The pre-review should also recommend if a committee, commission or article sponsor should make a live presentation or if a written presentation is sufficient.

The pre-review officer or working group would provide its recommendations in the form of a “consent agenda” prior to the full Committee meeting, giving other members an opportunity to object or request additional articles for review.

## Strategy #5 – preliminary review of budgets:

Committee members should be expected to review all budgets as soon as the Manager's preliminary budget becomes available, and forward any questions to the member responsible before they meet with the department head. The Chair must assign departments to members as early as possible.

Likewise, every other appropriation request for a committee, commission or warrant article should be reviewed as early as possible so that the chairs or proponents can be prepared with answers in their presentation.

The goal is to reduce any "I'll have to get back to you on that" during the full Committee budget reviews, so that most budget recommendations may be voted immediately following the first presentation.

## Appendix I – Department budget meeting outline

This is a list of topics and questions to address with a department head when discussing their budget. Not all items are relevant for every budget.

- Understand the department’s key functions and priorities, and check for consistency with the Town Manager’s budget message.
- Understand the department’s management structure and organization chart.
- Ask about any significant changes to services, programs or objectives or new initiatives.
- Ask about the status of collective bargaining and contracts. Identify the relevant bargaining units or unions.
- Ask for justification or reasons for any significant increases or decreases in any line item compared to previous years’ budgets.
- Ask for justification or reasons for any increase or decrease in staffing, any new or eliminated positions.
- Ask about position vacancies, impact on the ability to meet the department’s objectives, service and response time, impact on overtime, and the likelihood of filling the vacancies in this budget year.
- Clarify any ambiguous or confusing line items, like “miscellaneous expenses”.
- Ask for an explanation of any line items not directly tied to the department’s function, such as “training”, “advertising”, “clothing allowance”, and stipends.
- Ask about any outsourced services, such as consulting, contract labor. Is the outside service needed permanently or only once or infrequently? Why is it outsourced rather than being staffed?
- Ask about funding sources other than the General Fund, such as grants, and if they are one-time or expected to continue. Watch for “one-time revenue” used for ongoing expenses or long-time personnel commitments.
- Ask about major upcoming projects requiring appropriation from the capital budget, CPA or CDBG funding.
- Look for one-time expense items that might be appropriate for funding from the Capital plan instead of the operating budget.
- Describe two to three challenges the department is facing.
- Ask what could be done if the department had a higher personnel or expense budget.
- Ask if the Finance Committee should recommend the Manager’s recommended department budget, or if not, what should be changed?

## Appendix II – Guidelines for committee, commission and warrant article presentations

Live presentations should be limited to 10 minutes before questions. Copies of the presentation should be provided to the Executive Secretary no less than 48 hours before the Committee meeting, whether presented live or not.

The following information and questions should be included, whether live or in writing:

- What is the purpose, goal, mission or objective?
- Why should this be funded with taxpayer money? What is the public benefit?
- Does this preferentially benefit a specific demographic (e.g. seniors, teens, low income)?
- If the committee already exists, what are the main accomplishments in recent years?
- What are the expected tasks and accomplishments for the new fiscal year covered in this budget request? Are they different than previous years?
- For existing committees, present your budget history, with sources and uses of funds.
- Present your requested budget, with specific sources and uses of funds, identifying one-time and ongoing revenues and expenses. Ongoing revenues and expenses should include a 5-year projection.
- Explain any major increase or decrease from any previous requests and appropriations.
- Are alternative funding sources available (grants, CPA, CDBG, service fees) and have they been explored, with what result?

## 2022 Town Meeting Request – Positions Reclassification

### 1. By reclassifying the following positions

<b>A. Administrative Assistant – Planning and C.D.</b>	AFSCME OA6 to ATP4	FTE 1	\$1,644
Planning and Community Development			
<b>B. Principal Clerk - COA</b>	AFSCME OA4 to ATP4	FTE 1	\$1,839
Council On Aging/Health and Human Services			
<b>C. Energy and Project Manager</b>	MTP8 to MTP11	FTE 1	
Planning and Community Development			
<b>D. HVAC Technician</b>	AFSCME ATP4 to ATP7	FTE 1	
Facilities			
<b>E. Watchman/Laborer</b>	MC1 to MC4	FTE 1	
Public Works			
<b>F. Recycling Coordinator</b>	MTP5 to MTP7	FTE .8571	\$897
Public Works			
<b>G. Assistant Director of Human Resources</b>	MTP8 to MTP9	FTE 1	\$2,847
Human Resources			
<b>H. Park Maintenance Supervisor</b>	SEIU7 to SEIU8	FTE 1	\$2,769
Public Works			
<b>I. Electrician</b>	MC8 to ATP5	FTE 2	
Facilities			
<b>J. Plumber</b>	MC8 to ATP5	FTE 1	
Facilities			
<b>K. Street and Sewer Account Manager</b>	MTP8 to MTP9	FTE 1	\$2,847
Public Works			
<b>L. Green Building Coordinator - Street</b>	MTP8 to MTP9	FTE 1	\$2,847
Public Works			
<b>M. Senior Account Manager</b>	MTP8 to MTP9	FTE 1	\$2,847
Human Resources			



## 2022 Town Meeting Request – Positions Reclassification

### 2. By adding the following positions:

<b>A. Office Manager – Planning and C. D.</b>	AFSCME ATP4		
Planning and Community Development			
<b>B. Office Manager – COA</b>	OA4 to AFSCME ATP4		
Council on Aging			
<b>C. Sustainability Manager</b>	MTP11		
Planning and Community Development			
<b>D. Lead HVAC Technician</b>	AFSCME ATP7		
Facilities			
<b>E. Public Works Dispatcher</b>	MC4		
Public Works			
<b>F. Recycling/Zero Waste Coordinator</b>	MTP7		
Public Works			
<b>G. Parking and Collections Manager</b>	AFSCME ATP5		
Treasurer			
<b>H. Director of GIS/Project Manager</b>	MTP12		
Information Technology			
<b>I. Add Waste Compliance Inspector</b>	MTP1		
Public Works			
<b>J. Mental Health Clinician</b>	AYCC MTP7		
Arlington Youth Consultation Center/Health and Human Services			
<b>K. Water and Sewer Account Manager</b>	SEIU ATP5	FTE 1	\$2,002
Public Works			
<b>L. Senior Building Custodian – Grounds</b>	MC6		
Facilities			
<b>M. Public Health Nursing Manager</b>	MTP10	FTE 1	\$2,662
Health and Human Services			

## 2022 Town Meeting Request – Positions Reclassification

### 3. By deleting the following positions:

**A. Administrative Assistant – P&CD** AFSCME OA6

Planning and Community Development

**B. Principal Clerk** AFSCME OA4

Council On Aging/Health and Human Services

**C. Energy and Project Manager** MTP8

Planning and Community Development

**D. HVAC Technician AFSCME** ATP4

---

**E. Watchman/Laborer** MC1

Public Works

**F. Recycling Coordinator** MTP5

Public Works

**G. Delete Office Manager –Treasurer (Data Input)** AFSCME ATP5

Treasurer & Collector

**H. Systems Analyst/Director of** GIS MTP12

Information Technology

**I. Medical Reserve Coordinator** MTP6

Health and Human Services

**J. L1 Adult Services/Tech Services Librarian** \_\_\_\_\_

Libraries

**K. Delete Assistant Director – Recreation** MTP9

Recreation

<b>TOWN OF ARLINGTON WASTE DISPOSAL PROJECTION</b>
--

02/28/2022  
FILE:WASTEDISPOSAL

	FISCAL 2020	FISCAL 2021	PROJECTED FISCAL 2022	PROJECTED FISCAL 2023	PROJECTED FISCAL 2024	PROJECTED FISCAL 2025
<b>DISPOSAL COSTS</b>						
TIP FEE	\$ 69.54	\$ 77.00	\$ 79.39	\$ 81.35	\$ 84.39	\$ 87.00
TRASH TONAGE	12,211	12,480	12,750	12,750	12,500	12,500
TOTAL DISPOSAL COSTS	\$849,153	\$960,922	\$1,012,223	\$1,037,213	\$1,054,875	\$1,087,500
HAULING COST	2,263,868	2,309,145	2,569,450	2,800,000	2,884,000	2,970,520
TOTAL HAULING AND DISPOSAL COSTS	\$ 3,113,021	\$ 3,270,067	\$ 3,581,673	\$ 3,837,213	\$ 3,938,875	\$ 4,058,020
<b>RECYCLING COSTS</b>						
YARD WASTE	\$ 90,977	\$ 113,216	\$ 115,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 115,000
SOLID FILL	\$ 142,001	\$ 93,843	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000
HAZARD WASTE	\$ 30,417	\$ 35,777	\$ 35,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000
COMPOST	\$ 31,170	\$ 15,839	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
REC. COOR. + W.D. + BENEFITS(25%)	\$ 100,746	\$ 101,504	\$ 104,239	\$ 112,770	\$ 112,770	\$ 112,770
OTHER RECYCLING COSTS	\$ 44,641	\$ 50,468	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000
MINUS REVOLVING FUND OFFSET	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,000
TOTAL RECYCLING COSTS	\$ 404,952	\$ 375,647	\$ 499,239	\$ 512,770	\$ 512,770	\$ 512,770
<b>TONS OF WASTE RECYCLED</b>						
CURBSIDE RECYCLING	5272	5028	5028	5028	5028	5028
YARD WASTE	3045	3435	3435	3435	3435	3435
SOLID FILL	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
HAZARD WASTE	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
FOOD SCRAP TO COMPOST	207	70	70	70	70	70
OTHER RECYCLING	160	184	184	184	184	184
TOTAL TONS WASTE RECYCLED	8684	8717	8717	8717	8717	8717
RECYCLING DISPOSAL SAVINGS (TONS X TIP FEE)	\$ 603,885	\$ 671,209	\$ 692,043	\$ 709,128	\$ 735,628	\$ 758,379
RECYCLING COSTS (FROM ABOVE)	\$ 404,952	\$ 375,647	\$ 499,239	\$ 512,770	\$ 512,770	\$ 512,770
TOTAL RECYCLING SAVINGS(COSTS)	\$ 198,933	\$ 295,562	\$ 192,804	\$ 196,358	\$ 222,858	\$ 245,609

SOURCE: TOWN OF ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE.