

JOINT FINANCE COMMITTEE AND SELECTMEN'S MEETING MINUTES
UPSTAIRS MEETING ROOM
1 AVENUE A, TURNERS FALLS, MA
April 5, 2017

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Chairman John Hanold opens the meeting

- Meeting was opened at 6:00 PM in the Upstairs Meeting Room
- **Finance Committee Members Present:** John Hanold, Fred Bowman, Michael Naughton, Greg Garrison and Patricia Pruitt. Chris Menegoni was absent
- **Selectmen Present:** Michael Nelson and Chris Boutwell. Richard Kuklewicz was absent.
- **Others Present:** Town Administrator Steven Ellis, Accountant Carolyn Olsen, GMRSD Director of Business and Operations Joanne Blier, Library Trustees Nancy Cowles and David Harmon, and Director of Libraries Linda Hickman.
- The Finance Committee Chair announced that the meeting is being recorded by MCCI, and asked if anyone else was recording the meeting. There was no one in the audience.

Minutes -

Selectmen Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 29, 2017.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To approve the minutes of March 29, 2017.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Hillcrest Stage Information

Ms. Blier presented information regarding the requested increase in the appropriation for the Hillcrest stage renovation project.

- The initial appropriation was based on quotes, but when the project went out to bid, two things had changed which resulted in a higher cost. The first was a change in the placement of the ramp, which must now be removable. The second change is that the stage must be extended by a foot to allow for the turning radius for wheelchairs.
- 3 bids were received, and the winning contractor is willing to hold the bid price until after the Annual Town Meeting.
- The Sheffield boiler project is completed, so the balance of that article will be allocated to this project as well as some money from the security project.

Carnegie Roof

The ledge around the roof has a membrane that has failed, and some of the trim underneath has rotted.

- It is unclear from the ground how much trim and decking must be replaced.
- The roof has several levels and is very high, so no one has been able to survey the condition of the main roof.
- The next step will be to paint the building.

Libraries Buildings Study Information

Ms. Hickman presented information regarding the original request for \$50,000 for a study of the library buildings. The request has been reduced to \$45,000.

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- The study was triggered by air quality issues in the Carnegie library. All employees working 20 or more hours a week have complained of respiratory issues. In looking at that problem it was discovered that there are many intertwined issues.
- There is a need to not only identify all of the issues, but determine the priorities and the best order in which to do the work. An architect with historical building experience will do this, which will also make us more competitive for grants. The architect would assist in grant applications by providing necessary technical drawings.
- Mr. Naughton wants to go in with his eyes open. The study will tell us how to keep the libraries functional for 15 years, but he thinks we should be prepared to find that the study will show we can't afford to make all of the repairs. Mr. Garrison hopes to get a tiered structure that we can use as guidance on how best to spend town money most effectively and efficiently.
- Ms. Hickman noted that, given grant requirements, it may be less expensive for the town to make repairs to the existing buildings without grant assistance.

Capital Improvements Committee Final Report

New actions by the CIC include:

- The CIC revisited the \$100,000 request for DPW equipment, and voted to recommend the entire amount.
- The CIC voted to recommend \$30,000 for the Carnegie roof and soffits.
- The CIC voted to recommend \$45,000 for a building study and assessment for all three libraries.
- The CIC voted not to recommend the request for \$65,000 for Dry Hill Cross Road. In general, they felt that there was not enough information presented to make an informed decision.
 - The request was to provide access to the Dry Hill Cemetery. This is a town cemetery with 31 graves. The last grave was dug in the 1940's. There is currently access through a foot path that runs through an abutter's field, but there is no access for maintenance equipment or visitors who are not able to walk the foot path.
 - The 2007 estimate was outdated, and a new one has not yet been submitted. It was noted that building an access road in this area would be especially difficult because there's a lot of ledge, but blasting is not possible due to the presence of wells and Native American artifacts.
 - The purpose of creating access and what it would be used for was unclear.
 - There was no information on why this particular means and location of access was selected.
 - Long-term questions about access through an abutter were not addressed.
 - There was no information on how the improvements would be made.
 - There's no plan of the end product.
 - There's only one member on the Cemetery Commission, and that member was not able to attend the CIC meetings.
 - It was generally agreed that there do need to be improvements in access to the Dry Hill cemetery, but the request needs to provide a great deal more information before it can be supported.

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Capital Articles

Hillcrest Electrical Upgrades

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$80,000 to for electrical upgrades at the Hillcrest School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$80,000 to for electrical upgrades at the Hillcrest School, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Hillcrest Stage

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$22,850 to increase Article #8 of the 9/29/16 Special Town Meeting, which appropriated \$60,000 for the purpose of restructuring the stage to add classroom space at Hillcrest Elementary School, said sum to be raised by transferring the unexpended balance of \$17,362.79 from Article #23 of the 9/13/12 Special Town Meeting, which appropriated funds for the Sheffield boiler, and transferring \$5,487.21 from the balance of Article #22 of the 5/3/14 Annual Town Meeting, which appropriated funds for school security improvements.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$22,850 to increase Article #8 of the 9/29/16 Special Town Meeting, which appropriated \$60,000 for the purpose of restructuring the stage to add classroom space at Hillcrest Elementary School, said sum to be raised by transferring the unexpended balance of \$17,362.79 from Article #23 of the 9/13/12 Special Town Meeting, which appropriated funds for the Sheffield boiler, and transferring \$5,487.21 from the balance of Article #22 of the 5/3/14 Annual Town Meeting, which appropriated funds for school security improvements.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Carnegie Roof

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$30,000 to repair and or replace roofing and wood trim at the Carnegie Library, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$30,000 to repair and or replace roofing and wood trim at the Carnegie Library, to be funded from Taxation.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Library Buildings Study

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$45,000 to fund a study of building needs at the three town libraries, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$45,000 to fund a study of building needs at the three town libraries, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Sewer Lines

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$385,000 for lining, cleaning and inspection of sewers and GIS sewer layer development, to be funded from long term sewer borrowing.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$385,000 for lining, cleaning and inspection of sewers and GIS sewer layer development, to be funded from long term sewer borrowing.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Flail Mower

- Mr. Bergeron had told Mr. Bowman that he expects to be able to get through the summer with the current mower, but if the article is not approved at the Annual Town Meeting, he will need it to be on the fall Special Town Meeting warrant.
- It is more critical to Mr. Bergeron that the dump truck be approved in May, as a delay to the fall would mean the truck would not be available for the next snow season.
- Given that the expected balance of the Town General Stabilization Fund is below the minimum balance, there was hesitation in approving an additional \$110,000 reduction to fund this article.
- Mr. Naughton is still interested in the option of leasing the flail mower.

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend delaying the appropriation of \$110,000 to purchase a flail mower until the fall Special Town Meeting.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend delaying the appropriation of \$110,000 to purchase a flail mower until the fall Special Town Meeting.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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One Ton Dump Truck

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$76,000 to purchase a one ton dump truck, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$76,000 to purchase a one ton dump truck, to be funded from Free Cash.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Dry Hill Cross Rd

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$65,000 to improve a section of Dry Hill Cross Road.

Vote: 0 In Favor 2 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$65,000 to improve a section of Dry Hill Cross Road.

Vote: 0 In Favor 5 Opposed 0 Abstained

WPCF Articles

Mr. McDonald is still waiting to hear whether the town will receive a \$120,000 grant for the pilot test study. It was decided to be optimistic and assume receipt of the grant for the purpose of making tonight's recommendations. If the grant is not received, some of the articles will need to be revisited.

SCADA

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$35,000 for valve automation, relocation of VFD's, and to complete the SCADA Alarm system, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$35,000 for valve automation, relocation of VFD's, and to complete the SCADA Alarm system, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Feasibility Study

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$85,000 for a Feasibility Study for a Final Clarifier Upgrade/Raw Influent Bypass, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$85,000 for a Feasibility Study for a Final Clarifier Upgrade/Raw Influent Bypass, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Sewer User Fees to WPCF Capital Stabilization

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$200,000 to increase the WPCF Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$200,000 to increase the WPCF Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

WPCF Discretionary Account

The request is for \$20,000, but the estimated revenues do not support the full request.

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$15,000 for a WPCF Discretionary Account, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$15,000 for a WPCF Discretionary Account, to be funded from Sewer User Fees.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Pickup Truck

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$48,500 to purchase a utility truck for the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$48,500 to purchase a utility truck for the WPCF, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Boiler

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$10,000 to replace a boiler in the WPCF Operations Building, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$10,000 to replace a boiler in the WPCF Operations Building, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Sewer Retained Earnings to WPCF Capital Stabilization

The ability to fund this article is contingent on receiving a grant for the Pilot Test. Ms. Olsen also expressed concern that the current year's actual revenues may not be sufficient to cover all expenses and suggested that only \$50,000 be recommended.

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$50,000 to increase the WPCF Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Finance Committee Moved:

To recommend appropriating \$50,000 to increase the WPCF Capital Stabilization Fund, to be funded from Sewer Retained Earnings.

Vote: 5 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Non-Money Articles

The Board of Selectmen made the following recommendations for the non-money articles on the warrant.

Tax Agreement with First Light

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend Article 23, which authorizes the Board of Selectmen and Board of Assessors to negotiate the terms of a tax agreement with FirstLight Hydro Generating Company and to approve said agreement.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Ground Lease Agreement with Kearsage

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend Article 24, which authorizes the Board of Selectmen to enter into a ground lease agreement with Kearsage Solar LLC for a period of up to 25 years for a solar generation system.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

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Tax Agreement with Kearsage

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend Article 25, which authorizes the Board of Selectmen and Board of Assessors to negotiate the terms of a tax agreement with Kearsage Solar LLC and to approve said agreement.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Transfer Station Attendant Position

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend amending the Town's classification plan by adding the position of Transfer Station Attendant at Grade A.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

Group Leader of Grounds Maintenance Position

Selectmen Moved:

To recommend amending the Town's classification plan by adding the position of Group Leader of Grounds Maintenance at Grade D.

Vote: 2 In Favor 0 Opposed 0 Abstained

The Board of Selectmen adjourned at 7:24 PM

Finance Committee Report to Town Meeting

Mr. Hanold prepared part of the first draft, but was unable to complete it. The handout is the current version and he invited members to review it and suggest changes.

Topics not anticipated within in the 48 hour posting requirements - None

Next Meeting Dates:

April 12, 2017	Revise Finance Committee Report and Policy Actions
April 19, 2017	Final votes, reconsiderations, approve Finance Committee Report
May 3, 2017	Any pre-Town Meeting actions needed
May 10, 2017	Any post-Town Meeting actions needed

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM

List of Documents and Exhibits:

- March 29, 2017 Minutes
- Summary of requests and potential sources
- CIC Final Report

Minutes Approved April 12, 2017

John Hanold, Finance Committee Chair

Richard Kuklewicz, Selectboard Chair