

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2020
7:30 PM
Acton TV – Studios
16 Craig Rd, Acton, MA 01720

Present: Christi Andersen, Roland Bourdon, Tom Farley, Mike Majors, Adam Nolde, Steve Noone, Sahana Purohit, Christine Russell, Dave Wellinghoff

Absent: Jason Cole, Al Vlajinac (Associate)

1. Opening

Chair Roland Bourdon opened the meeting at 7:30 pm.

This meeting was recorded by Acton TV.

2. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

3. Continuation – Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles Discussion & Recommendation

Article 5 – Town Capital, Infrastructure, Studies and Improvements

A statement from Jason Cole was read:

- A lot of work has been done to scale back & obtain grants
- Water Resources study may be the start of slippery slope
- Believes there should be a public listing of the asks & a timeline of when they will be addressed with the final resulting costs

There was no further discussion. Christine Russell moved to recommend this article on Jason Cole's behalf. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 6 – Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Assessment

Christine Russell moved to recommend this article. The revised total assessment for FY 21 is \$66,012,542 and the ALG Spreadsheet will be corrected. Christi Andersen expressed her dismay that the School Committee chose to lower the tuition for all-day kindergarten. The motion to recommend was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 9 - Real Property Disposition – 3 School St

Dave Wellinghoff made a motion to defer the vote on article 9, as the Board of Selectmen has yet to review the property bid. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 11 - Home Rule Petition – Use of Lease Proceeds to Offset Debt Payments

The Board of Selectmen has yet to vote on this article. Selectman David Martin wants the language of the article changed. It should specify that the proceeds go directly into the enterprise fund because the debt will someday be retired. Steve Noone moved to defer the vote on article 11. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 12 - Home Rule Petition – Fund Collective Bargaining Agreements

There has been no update on this article and there is not enough information to vote on. Steve Noone moved to defer the vote on article 12. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 14 – Budget Transfers

The Board of Selectmen has voted to defer this article. There was no further discussion. Roland Bourdon moved to defer the vote on article 14. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 15 – Firefighters’ Relief Trust Fund

Steve Noone moved to recommend this article. Trustees are seeking flexibility in the payees and amounts paid from the trust. It will be a legal process to make the changes, but Town Meeting must authorize first. It is a self-funded trust so it won’t add any financial burden on the taxpayers. His motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 16 – Commuter Lot & Station Maintenance

The Committee had previously voted to recommend this article. Brian McMullen advised that they revisit the article because the figures had been updated. An expense for the lease agreement has been added so the total budgeted expense for FY 21 changed. The Committee made suggestions to make the article more reader-friendly such as adding a section for debt service payments and adding an actual beginning balance. Dave Wellinghoff made a motion to recommend article 16 as updated for cosmetic changes. His recommendation to recommend was seconded and approved.

Article 23 - Change to Selectboard

Steve Noone asked an estimate of the costs, which Selectman David Martin responded to. It would just be paid within the normal legal fee amount set aside for the town. It was decided that the article has no significant financial impact, but in the spirit of diversity & inclusivity the Committee will vote. Mike Majors moved to recommend this article. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 24 - Amend Zoning Map – 32 Weatherbee St

A statement from Jason Cole was read:

- Could result in more housing.
- Proponent of article did not show up to special hearing.
- Jason would make a motion to not recommend.

The planning board made no recommendation. Christi Andersen does not believe it would contribute towards the goal of developing a walkable village in East Acton. Board of Selectman

Jon Benson said the Board will be hearing from the developer at the next Board meeting. Christine Russell moved to defer the vote on article 24. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 25 - Amend Zoning Map – 525 Main St

A statement from Jason Cole was read:

- No risk for more housing.
- Clear plan of what owner plans to accomplish.

There was no further discussion. Christine Russell moved to recommend this article on Jason Cole's behalf. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 26- Amend Zoning Bylaw – Electric Vehicle Charging Stations in Parking Lots

Selectman David Martin also spoke regarding the article. The article would set a minimum number of EV charging stations on new or revamped commercial parking lots. Sahana Purohit made a motion to recommend the article. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 27 - Amend Zoning Map – Consumption of Alcoholic Beverages

Steve Noone made a motion to recommend the article, which would allow the Board of Selectmen to issue a one-day liquor license anywhere in Town. There was no further discussion. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 28 – Amend General Bylaws – Animal Control Bylaw Violations

Mike Majors moved to defer the vote on article 28 because the article language is missing and the Board of Selectmen has not voted on it yet. The motion to defer was seconded and approved unanimously.

Article 29 – Accept Statutory Speed Limits & Regulatory Safety Zones

Selectmen David Martin explained that this article would allow the Board to set a town-wide speed limit on roads where no limit is posted. Christine Russell moved to recommend this article. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 30 – Accept Legislation for Saturday Office Hours

Town Hall would not need to be open on a Saturday to accommodate voter registration deadlines. Roland Bourdon moved to recommend this article because not having to open up the building or have employees work on Saturdays will save the Town money. The motion was seconded. The motion to recommend the article passed unanimously.

Article 31 – Housekeeping Corrections, Personal Wireless Facility

Jason Cole researched this article and did not find any issues with it. It was moved and seconded to recommend the article.

Article 32 – Accept Sight Easement – 127 Strawberry Hill Rd

Adam Nolte reviewed this article and was concerned with the lack of language in the warrant. Adam moved to defer it until there is further clarification. The motion to defer was seconded and approved.

Article 33 - Hear and Accept Reports

Jon Benson explained that this article is regarding the Town Report. Christi Andersen motioned to recommend the article. The motion was seconded and approved.

Article 34 – Authorize Easements

This is a blanket statement that is in the Warrant every year. Christi Andersen motioned to recommend the article. The motion was seconded and approved.

Article 35 – Highway Reimbursement Program, Article 36 – Insurance Proceeds, Article 37 – Gifts or Grants, Article 38 – Federal & State Reimbursement Aid, Article 39 – Performance Bonds, Article 40 – Sale of Foreclosed Properties

These are standard articles that are reauthorized every year. Christi Andersen motioned to recommend the articles. The motion was seconded and approved.

There was a question as to whether Town Meeting would be postponed due to current state of emergency. Jon Benson said the Board of Selectmen has not made any changes to the date but is monitoring the situation closely. Town Meeting approvals need to be made before July 1st.

4. Finance Committee Business

A. Approval of meeting minutes

There were no meeting minutes available for review.

B. Committee Liaison Reports

Steve Noone gave a report on the last meeting of the Health Insurance Trust.

5. Adjournment

At 8:47 pm, it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

Draft Warrant

Revised ALG Spreadsheet

Email – Dave Verdolino

5 Year Plan

Respectfully submitted,

Finance Committee