

**Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2022
7:30 PM
* VIRTUAL MEETING ***

Present: Christine Russell (Chair), Adam Nolde (Vice Chair), Roland Bourdon, Steve Noone, Mike Majors, Christi Andersen, Jason Cole and Esha Gangolli

Ms. Russell called the meeting to order.

1. Citizen's Concerns

None

2. Acton Leadership Group

Members reviewed and discussed the latest ALG plan and meeting where a \$1.7m budget gap existed. Acton's assessment may be reduced to a 3.17% increase with additional cuts and use of E&D, lowering the budget gap to approximately \$1m. Reserve use and additional cuts need to be made to reduce future gaps. Mr. Nolde would like to discuss directives for the next ALG meeting along with specific votes.

ABRSD funds were discussed as a measure to close the budget gap. Members commented that ABRSD has not submitted additional asks of ARPA funding nor provided details on their current ask. However, it does seem that ARPA funds will not be used to offset budget restraints in future years. Discussions were had regarding the remaining ARPA funds that have not been assigned by the Select Board. School Committee member, Mr. Peterson, explained some of the schools ARPA ask, specifically those related to the community education fund. Finance Committee members expressed concern that the ARPA funds will not be enough to close the budget gap in future years, indicating that Covid is not the reason for the future year deficits which assume a moderate 3% increase. Mr. Noone expressed concern over unsettled union contracts and inflation on future budgets and the potential need for an override. As for the FY23 budget deficit a little more Town free cash could be used but reductions in line item budgets need to be found as well. Mr. Bourdon would like additional information on minuteman assessment. He recommended Town and School increases be limited to 3%. Mr. Majors believes ABRSD should encourage early retirement in order to reduce salary and benefit costs.

Motion made to recommend ALG to keep Acton's assessment and Town municipal budget to an increase of 3% or less while also capping E&D use to maintain the E&D balance at or above 2% of the Schools operating budget and limiting the Towns Free Cash use to \$1.2M or less. Motion moved by Ms. Andersen, seconded by Mr. Noone. Mr. Nolde took the vote by roll call. The motion passes unanimously.

3. Finance Committee Business

Mr. Cole is seeking volunteers for the POV presentations.

Mr. Bourdon announced he will be serving on the DPW building group and invited all to attend the tour.

Mr. Nolde provided an update on the reduced Asa Parlin project focusing on the historical preservation.

Ms. Gangolli moved to adjourn. Mr. Bourdon seconded. Mr. Nolde took the vote by roll call. The motion passes unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Latest ALG plan