

Westwood Finance and Warrant Commission
OCTOBER, 12, 2022 REMOTE MEETING
ZOOM WEBINAR
7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes
Approved – please see amendment below.

Finance Commission Chairperson George Hertz called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Finance and Warrant Commission members who were present: William Bruce Jr., John Carey, James Ferraro, Rene Gauthier, Mike Gay, George Hertz, Angeila Hughes, Caitlyn Jurczak, George Laham, George Maroun, Kristina Patyjewicz, Christopher Poreda , Sean Weller and Alexander Yale.

Chairperson Hertz then granted permission to Westwood Media Center to live stream and record the meeting. He also asked if anyone else would like to record this meeting.

He then welcomed all participants, members, presenters and members of public and press to the FinCom October 2022 meeting.

The Finance Commission administrator, Ms. Wong then called the ROLL. Chairperson Hertz hopes the next meeting will be an in person meeting. He then stated that he will make a Herculean effort to make the voting meetings to be all in person.

Afterwards, Chairperson Hertz led members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Members were provided with the final agenda and all other related material prior to the meeting.

The Evening's Presenters:

- Robert Gotti- Select Board Chair, Christopher Coleman- Town Administrator and Pam Dukeman- Finance Director/Asst. Town Administrator: Budget Update and Planning

The Chair introduced the evening's first presentation. Robert Gotti (Select Board Chair), Christopher Coleman (Town Administrator) and Pam Dukeman (Finance Director/ Asst. Town Administrator) were present. Chairperson Hertz gave an honorable mention to Ms. Dukeman for her tremendous service for the town. Mr. Gotti and Mr. Coleman gave a detailed presentation on the town's status, this year's budget update, the 5 year Capital planning and the build of next fiscal year budget planning. Mr. Gotti stated that Ms. Dukeman will send the Finance Commission members additional documents that referenced their Select Board meeting the previous night. During their presentation, Mr. Gotti mentioned they will reinstate the Long Range Financial Planning Committee and the FY24 budget will be presented to Finance Commission members in February 2023. Mr. Gotti, Mr. Coleman and Ms. Dukeman spent

considerable time answering members' questions at the end of their presentation. Chairperson Hertz thanked Mr. Gotti, Mr. Coleman and Ms. Dukeman for their excellent work and answering all questions on the town budget planning.

Mr. Gotti announced there will be a public thank you for Pam Dukeman next Thursday, October 20th, 4PM at the Westwood Public Library.

-Emily Parks – Westwood Public Schools Superintendent and Abigail Hanscom – District's Director of Student Services: Update on Westwood Public Schools

Next, the Chair introduced the evening's second presentation. Emily Parks, WPS Superintendent and Abigail Hanscom, Director of Student Services were present. Also present were some members of the School Committee. Ms. Parks went over the schools' budget development process and the annual budget drives. She then provided specific examples that explains their school budget increases and capital needs. Ms. Hanscom highlights that one of their budget increases are driven by special education costs. After their presentation, they spent considerable time answering member's questions. Chairperson Hertz thanked Ms. Parks and Ms. Hanscom for their wonderful presentation. He then paused the Q&A to allow Ms. Parks to move on with the next presentation.

-Emily Parks – Westwood Public Schools Superintendent and Maya Plotkin – SBC Chair, School Committee Member: Hanlon Deerfield Elementary School Building Project Update

Ms. Emily Parks led this presentation with SBC Chair, Maya Plotkin. They were joined by John Cummings, Roberto Fitzgerald (D+W), Bryan Jarvis, Chin Lin, and Donald Walter (D+W). Ms. Parks gave an overview of how the Hanlon Deerfield School Project started and what processes occurred throughout. Then Ms. Parks shared some animated previews of the upcoming school building. Ms. Plotkin provided an update on their budget costs and a timeline of when the Hanlon Deerfield Elementary School will be completed. Towards the end of their presentation, a Q& A took place. Chairperson Hertz thanked Ms. Parks, Ms Plotkin, and Mr Cummings for attending and giving a wonderful presentation.

Amendment: There was a budget follow up question for Ms. Dukeman – what is the difference in interest rate for what was executed versus what was projected for the new school? What was the impact over the 30 years in financing?

Member Discussion:

- There will be a separate capital budget group this year. The chair hopes that the members will have a role in long range financial planning even with the restrictions that the Town Charter has in place. Then the chair requested members to decide which sub-committee they would like to participate in and inform the Ms. Wong on their decision.
- Chairperson Hertz clarified the difference between remote participation vs. Zoom meetings. A member is only allowed to call in by phone as there is no Zoom option for an in person meeting. If a member has a reasonable excuse and wishes to participate remotely, they will need to submit a request form to Ms. Wong. The form will need to be approved and signed off by the Chair and then submitted to the Town Clerk for recording purposes.
- A town resident emailed the Finance and Warrant Commission members in regards to a letter sent to the Fire Department. The letter included a response from Chief Decker. This issue will be addressed with the Public Safety Committee.
- Members were asked to review and approve the meeting minutes for Sept. 08, 2022. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL call took place. Eight members approved the minutes and five members abstained. Two members were not present for the vote.

Chairperson Hertz asked if there were any questions from the public and press. There were no questions from the public and the press.

Chairperson Hertz thanked members for attending and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was offered and seconded. Hands were raised in place of the ROLL CALL vote and the Chair declared a unanimous vote in favor of adjourning.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:21PM

For a complete video of the 10/12/22 FinCom meeting please see the following link:
<https://westwoodmediacenter.tv/>