

*Westwood Finance and Warrant Commission*  
**JANUARY 17, 2023 REMOTE MEETING**  
**ZOOM WEBINAR**  
**7:00 PM**  
*Meeting Minutes*

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Finance Commission Chairperson George Hertz called the meeting to order at 7:00PM. He read the Open Meeting Law pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021.

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

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 January 17, 2023 meeting.

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

The Finance Commission administrator, Ms. Wong then called the ROLL.

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

***The Evening's Presenters:***

***- Louis Rizoli (Chair of Westwood Housing Authority & President of Westwood Affordable Housing Associates, Inc.), Jane O'Donnell (Housing Coordinator) - Informational Overview of WHA/WAHA***

The Chair introduced the evening's first presentation. Louis Rizoli (Chair of Westwood Housing Authority & President of Westwood Affordable Housing Associates, Inc.) and Jane O'Donnell (Housing Coordinator) were present. Mr. Rizoli gave a brief history of WHA/WAHA on how it was established. He also referenced the WHA/WAHA webpage for more detail on their history. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Rizoli spent considerable time answering members' questions. The Vice Chair asked Mr. Rizoli if they could provide a breakdown on the expenditures for the WAHA units. Ms. O'Donnell will gather this information for FinCom

members. Chairperson Hertz thanked Mr. Rizoli and Ms. O'Donnell for attending and for giving a wonderful presentation.

***- Marianne LeBlanc Cummings (Select Board Member), Chris Coleman (Town Administrator), Pat Ahearn (Town Counsel) – Summary Preview of 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles***

Next, the Chair introduced the evening's second presentation. Marianne LeBlanc Cummings (Select Board Member), Chris Coleman (Town Administrator), Pat Ahearn (Town Counsel), Molly Kean (Asst. Town Administrator/HR Director) and Tish Healey (Assistant to Town Administrator) were present. Marianne presented a summary preview of 2023 Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles. She mentioned there are seven miscellaneous placeholders for warrant articles. Towards the end of her presentation, Ms. Cummings, Mr. Coleman and Mr. Ahearn spent considerable time answering members' questions. Chairperson Hertz thanked Ms. Cummings, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Ahearn, Ms. Kean, and Ms. Healey for their excellent work and time on answering members' questions. He then suggested to members to watch the Select Board's January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting for more specifics on initial warrant article requests.

***- Nora Loughnane (Director of Community & Economic Development), Christopher Pfaff (Planning Board Chair) – Summary Preview of 2023 Annual Town Meeting "Planning Board" Warrant Articles***

The Chair introduced the evening's final presentation. Nora Loughnane (Director of Community & Economic Development) and Christopher Pfaff (Planning Board Chair) were present. Ms. Loughnane gave a general overview of the five Annual Town Meeting "Planning Board" warrant articles for 2023. She answered member's questions after presenting each warrant article. Ms. Loughnane mentioned the Planning Board is going to file a plan of compliance that shows the town adopted a reasonable district in size that allows by right use for multi-family housing within ½ mile of a MBTA train station. Chairperson Hertz thanked Ms. Loughnane and Mr. Pfaff for attending and look forward to seeing them at the future FinCom meetings. Ms. Loughnane welcomed members to attend the Planning Board Public Hearing on February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Member Discussion:

- Chair's update: Chairperson Hertz attended three budget steering committee meetings. He reported that the town and school are facing some real challenges. The town and school are putting their best effort in bringing the budgets within the available funding.
  - School Challenges - In reference to Chapter 766, transportation costs increased significantly and are out of the town's control. The Chair mentioned Ms. Wong sent out an email asking members to pick up the School's proposed budget booklet at Town Hall. He then advised the Education Subcommittee to pick up these books. Members may request Ms. Wong to mail out a copy if for any reason they are not able to pick it up. Lastly, the Chair stated school contracts for teachers are not resolved yet.
  - Municipal Challenges- They are also dealing with inflation of fuel costs. In addition, they are waiting for group insurance commission and MWRA assessments. For the public safety side, fire department and police contracts are also not resolved yet.
  - Other towns are also facing the same challenges as the Town of Westwood.
- Chairperson Hertz assigned a mentor for each new member. One member made a recommendation in putting together an onboard manual for new members. The Chair asked members to send thoughts or suggestions to Ms. Wong for the onboard manual.
- One member asked when the subcommittees will receive all the budget information. The Capital Budget Subcommittee will gather budget information during their Feb. 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Also, the School proposed budget information is available at Town Hall. The Municipal and School Budget presentations will be at FinCom's Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- FinCom Subcommittee reports are due on Mar. 14<sup>th</sup>.
- One member proposed to reschedule the Feb. 14<sup>th</sup> meeting date. The Chair will look into rescheduling.
- There were two questions that require follow up. Chairperson Hertz will reach out to the Finance Director to find out information on how other towns are facing their financial challenges. Secondly, Vice Chair Poreda will reach out to Town Counsel to see if members are allowed to approve meeting minutes if they are late to the meeting and have watched the meeting afterwards. The Chair and Vice Chair emphasized members' input on meeting minutes is extremely important even if the member is not allowed to vote.

- Members were asked to review and approve the meeting minutes for December 07, 2022. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL call took place. Thirteen members approved the minutes. One member abstained. One member was not present for the vote.

Chairperson Hertz then entertained questions from the public and the press.

- A resident expressed concern about the funding for Westwood's Fire Department's staffing and equipment. The resident is also concerned about how the funds were distributed to the school building project.

The Chair thanked members for attending and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was offered and seconded. Fourteen members were in favor. One member was not present for the vote.

### **Meeting Adjourned at 8:18PM**

For a complete video of the 01/17/23 FinCom meeting please see the following link:  
<https://westwoodmediacenter.tv/>