

Westwood Finance and Warrant Commission
DECEMBER 06, 2023 MEETING/ PUBLIC HEARING
IN PERSON
7:00 PM
Meeting Minutes *REVISED as of 1/17/2024*

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, Seth Frederickson, George Hertz, George Maroun, Kristina Patyjewicz, Christopher Poreda and Alexander Yale. Member(s) who were authorized prior to the meeting, participated remotely via speakerphone: 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 December 06, 2023 Meeting/Public Hearing.

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.

Prior to the evening's presentations, Chairperson Hertz made some introductory comments:

- He mentioned that tonight's meeting will be the Commission's regular December meeting in addition with a Public Hearing for the Special Town Meeting. Moreover, he went over the procedures for the night and stated that Vice Chair Poreda will chair the Public Hearing Session.

Public Hearing Session:

Chairperson Hertz opened up the Public Hearing Session. Then Ms. Wong called the ROLL.

The Chair reminded members to switch their mic button to green if they wish to speak in order for viewers to hear them.

Public Hearing Presenters:

- Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Members of the Select Board, Representatives from Dore Whittier- 2024 STM Select Board Warrant Article # 1

Vice Chair Poreda introduced the evening's first presentation. Ms. Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Members of the Select Board, Mr. Chip Heitkamp & Mr. Jason Harris [Representatives from Dore + Whittier] were present. Ms. Cummings called the Select Board's

meeting to order. She then pointed out there were originally three warrant articles for the Special Town Meeting and the Select Board voted to withdraw the miscellaneous article at their Dec. 4th meeting. Ms. Cummings presented Warrant Article # 1 and specified that this article is the main focus for the Special Town Meeting. She also expressed the urgency for the construction of new Fire Station 1 due to its current conditions. Next, she went over the Public Safety Historical timeline leading up to the completion of Fire Station 1 Feasibility Study. Then Ms. Cummings introduced the Town's consultants from Dore + Whittier to speak. Mr. Heitkamp and Mr. Harris presented a high-level overview of Fire Station 1 feasibility study. They shared images of what the proposed new Fire Station 1 could look like and other photos of existing conditions of the current station. Moreover, they presented the estimated project timeline, project phase duration, design budget (of the 3.5 million request) and project budget costs. Additionally, they showed a chart of project cost comparisons with other Towns. Lastly, the consultants showed what the proposed temporary quarters at American Legion Building could look like.

After their presentation, a Q&A session with members took place. One member asked out of the \$3.5 Million cost for the design bid documents, how much is covered for the American Legion Building. The member also wanted to know the total construction cost for the building. In addition, Chairperson Hertz asked what the contingency percentage is for the project. Mr. Heitkamp stated Dore and Whittier will give a follow up response for the outstanding questions.

The Chair also asked if there were any other anticipated major capital borrowing projects in addition to the potential \$40 Million borrowing article for the Fire Station of which the Finance Commission should be made aware of. Ms. Cummings responded that Fire Station 1 is the priority right now due to its current conditions.

Next, Vice Chair Poreda asked if there were any questions from the Public and the Press. There were no questions from the Public and the Press.

The Chair and Vice Chair thanked Mr. Heitkamp and Mr. Harris for their time in presenting and answering questions.

- Marianne LeBlanc Cummings [Select Board Chair], Christopher Coleman [Town Administrator], Stephanie McManus (Asst. Town Administrator/ Finance Director), Members of the Select Board, Town Staff – 2024 STM “Select Board” Warrant Articles #2

Mr. Christopher Coleman (Town Administrator) and Ms. Stephanie McManus (Asst. Town Administrator/ Finance Director) joined Ms. Cummings to present the final article warrant. Ms. McManus presented Warrant Article # 2 and provided some background information related to the article. Afterwards, Ms. McManus and Mr. Coleman spent time answering members' questions.

The Vice Chair asked if there were any questions from the Public and the Press. There were no questions.

Ms. Cummings confirmed Warrant Article # 3 has been withdrawn.

Close Public Hearing:

Town Counsel reminded the Commission that the Select Board will need to close their meeting as well and stated there is no particular order in who goes first. The Chair asked members for a motion to close the Public Hearing. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL call vote took place. Then the Select Board closed their board meeting. Next, Chairperson Hertz thanked the Select Board, Dore + Whittier and Town officials for all of their thoughts and efforts in preparing their presentation.

Deliberation & Voting for 2024 STM Warrant Articles:

FinCom deliberated and voted on all of the 2024 STM Warrant Articles before them using the Roll Call voting method. The Commission voted unanimously recommending approval for both Select Board warrant articles.

Article No.	2024 Special Town Meeting Article Description	Sponsor
Select Board-1	Fire Station Design and Bid Document Funding (\$2,100,000) <i>FinCom voted & unanimously recommend approval</i>	Select Board
Select Board -2	Debt Housekeeping – Fire Department Multi-Purpose Vehicle (\$400,000) <i>FinCom voted & unanimously recommend approval</i>	Select Board

Town Counsel asked the Chair who will be doing the write ups for the STM warrant articles. The Chair responded that he volunteered Vice Chair Poreda to do the write ups.

Afterwards, the Chair asked members for a motion to reconvene the December Public Meeting. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL CALL vote was taken unanimously in favor.

Before the next presentation started, Town Counsel wanted to double check if the Commission closed the Public Hearing. Chairperson Hertz and Vice Chair Poreda confirmed they closed the Public Hearing.

Public Meeting Evening Presenters:

- Nora Loughnane [Director of Community and Economic Development], Ellen Larkin Rollings [Planning Board Chair], Members of the Planning Board, and Amanda Wolfe [Housing and Land Use Planner]- Initial Review of Potential 2024 ATM “Planning Board” Warrant Articles

As the Chair was about to introduce the evening's final presentation, he complimented on the Planning Board Meeting from the previous night. He stated that he was impressed with the quality of their conversation and the work being done by the Planning Board. Ms. Nora Loughnane (Director of Community & Economic Development), Ms. Ellen Larkin Rollings [Planning Board Chair] and Ms. Amanda Wolfe [Housing and Land Use Planner] were present. Ms. Loughnane mentioned that the Planning Board had their first discussion last night on the potential Zoning Amendment warrant articles for Annual Town Meeting 2024. Their presentation tonight will be an initial, brief introduction but the details of the warrant articles still remain to be discussed. The Planning Board will be spending a significant amount of time this winter working on the warrant article involving the **MUMFROD** project (Mixed-use multi-family residential overlay district). Ms. Loughnane introduced seven potential "Planning Board" articles. FinCom members asked questions throughout the presentation. Lastly, Ms. Loughnane informed the Commission that the Planning Board moved up their Public Hearing to January 9, 2024 in order to be better prepared for FinCom's Public Hearing in February. She invited FinCom members to attend their Public Hearing on Zoom. Chairperson Hertz asked Ms. Loughnane if a lot of town residents attend their meeting. He hoped there were more public participation attending the FinCom meetings. Then he thanked Ms. Loughnane, the Planning Board and Ms. Wolfe for their informative presentation.

Chair's update:

Chairperson Hertz reminded members that each subcommittee will need to submit a written report for the Annual Town Meeting book, separate from the subcommittee presentations. Members can view the previous Annual Town Meeting book as reference. The Chair also informed members that there may be four to five warrant articles coming from the Charter Review Commission. He asked members if anyone would like to join Vice Chair Poreda and himself in doing the write ups for these articles.

Old Business:

Members were asked to review and approve the meeting minutes for November 15, 2023. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL CALL took place. Eleven members approved the minutes. Three members were absent.

The Chair thanked members for attending and asked for a motion to adjourn. A motion was offered and seconded. A ROLL CALL vote was taken unanimously in favor.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:27PM

For a complete video of the 12/06/23 FinCom Meeting/Public Hearing please see the following link:
<https://westwoodmediacenter.tv/>