

## Lenox Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: February 10, 2022

Members Present: Dave Carpenter (DC), Kristine Cass (KC), Michael Feder (MF), Mindi Morin (MM), David Neubert (DN), Blaise Gregory (BG)

Guests: Clarence Fanto (CF), Chris Ketchen (CK)

Absent:

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Meeting called to order at 6:00

KC kicked off the meeting with our agenda items being; plan for the department budget meetings, review budget variances and discussion around the residential tax bill letter

DC reported out as the liaison for the building committee, that Bob and Mark are working hard to start the process for work to be completed through the building authority for potential future funding for work. This is a process that can take 10-years. An engineering firm will also need to be hired, and it was voted to go ahead with this work, given there are safety and environmental issues. It has been suggested that we as a committee continue to understand the budget for this meeting.

MM communicated to the group that from a previous school committee finance meeting that MSBA funds between 20%-80% with Dalton being funded around 55%.

DC explained this being based on size of school and many various data points

KC recapped that in previous years we have split up to meet with each department. She opened it up to see what the group thought on who we should meet with.

MM agreed with this approach with the focus being schools and public safety

MF felt that we should start with the \$750K that CK previously mentioned and where these come from.

DN suggested that we meet with schools and possibly the library

MM suggested the capital projects also be reviewed so this can be highlighted to the town on the impact this will have on taxes

DC reiterated the importance of focusing on the areas that will get us ready to make our statement and articulate the findings. He feels that having Chris review the discretionary and what we can impact at this point of the process.

KC summarized schools, public safety, and Chris on the discretionary

MF suggested we look at discretionary first and then decide what other departments we should meet with

KC recommended that we do just that but need to plan this as efficiently as we can, with the time allotted. Start to schedule the schools at the end of March

BG and DN agree with the approach of the schools and not needing to meet with police and fire given the questions already asked and what CK has provided

MM mentioned the next school committee (finance) meets March 3, 2022; therefore, mid-March is a good time to meet with them

CK provided binders for each member with the DRAFT budget

MF asked various questions on consultant fees, police benefits, tri town health, electricity etc. in the public works budget and salaries under the library

KC asked questions related to ambulance billings and KC explained this line item

CK answered these questions, and that tri town evaluates based on town and did speak to the group touching on MF's questions that were asked

MM mentioned additional positions that have assisted via COVID KC asked about the structure and CK explained the three chairs for each town and governors between the three towns

CK spoke in detail answering questions regarding the library

MF referenced items on the capital sheet to KC and if these would be a warrant at the town meeting. KC mentioned this might potentially be a special meeting. MF brought up that if this is the case, we should still review this as part of our communicating at the town meeting

DC will volunteer to draft a capital outline for the group

KC will schedule a meeting with the schools once it is finalized and for us to review the document

DC motioned to approve the minutes from February 3, 2022 and 2<sup>nd</sup> by MF. Minutes approved

Meeting adjourned at 6:52pm

Respectively Submitted,  
Mindi Morin, Secretary