

# JOINT MEETING OF FINANCE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Minutes

Zoom Number 846 4925 5144

2024 MAR 19 AM 7:47

WILMINGTON, MASS

Date: March 12, 2024

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Present: Cooper, Pratt, O'Connor, O'Connell, Kuphal

Absent: Wells, Cooney

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Kuphal to open the joint meeting with the Board of Selectmen at 7:22 p.m. Unanimous.

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Kuphal to accept the minutes of March 11, 2024 as written. Unanimous.

Karyn Clark, Town Manager and Jennifer Barrett, Finance Director were also present at the meeting.

## 2nd Reading of the Reserve Policy

Jennifer Barrett: As we were putting together the draft warrant, there were several articles that we had amounts that we were questioning. So we, as a management team went back to the Reserve Policy and realized that there is some info that we felt needed to be updated. So we brought it to the Board to consider updating it as more of a general guide rather than a specific guide.

Jen O'Connell: When we first started looking at the Warrant, we were looking at the Stabilization Fund. We were mainly looking at the roads because I remember we used to put X% of Free Cash to supplement the roads and we have gotten away from that. I wondered why we weren't putting money towards the roads and spending it on other things. We even asked Keith what he felt he would need to maintain the roads. I asked how much it would take to do even 10% of the roads a year. I don't necessarily feel that we can fund that much every year, but we could get closer. There should be a specific amount put in for roads each year. My thought is that we have had very large amounts of Free Cash for the past couple of years. When you have 10% of the budget ending up in Free Cash, then we are taxing too much. I have said this for ten years, but I don't think it is right to tax to the levy.

Chris Naff: I think a lot of the Free Cash was due to unexpected growth, which I think will slow down. I don't feel we should be using Free Cash for this each year.

Katie McKenna: We just need to know where we stand. Once we have a Capital Plan in place, we will know what we have to go towards infrastructure.

Chris Naff: We are usually conservative with our receipts. I would rather see the roads funded by borrowing.

Jen O'Connell: If we have the Free Cash, why do we have to borrow for the roads. The borrowing has to stop at some point. No one wants an override. We have to make sure that we

have enough in Stabilization. We need to know what "Stabilization" is. Is it an aggregate of all of our reserves?

Chris Naff: It is a combination of our stabilization accounts. We have to set a path forward, financially.

Katie McKenna: We have to look at sustainability. The budget cannot handle all of it.

Scott Despres: I know it is not the best mechanism to use \$1million towards roads. Someone can get up at Town Meeting and request the money be used to go somewhere else.

Brian Soras: I agree with adding "whichever is greater" to the wording.

Jennifer Barrett: The past 2 years we have not had an article to fund road work. Do you want to suggest a different number than \$100,000?

Charles Cooper: My only concern is that this isn't enough to pave a road.

Katie McKenna: There are always going to be other Capital items that will come up.

Jennifer Barrett: I would like it to be worded "20% of the approved Free Cash or \$250,000, whichever is greater".

Motioned by Cooper, seconded by Kuphal to adjourn the joint meeting at 7:49 p.m. Unanimous.

*David Connell*

*Judith O'Connor*

*John P. M.*

*Renée H. H.*

*W. H. Pratt*

*Chad Cooper*