

Finance Committee Meeting

September 22, 2021 7:00 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building – Room #229
Millis, MA 02054

Zoom Remote Platform

In Attendance:

Pete Berube, Chair
Doug Riley, Clerk – Remote
Joyce Boiardi
Jim Borgman – Remote
Jodie Garzon – Remote
Cathy MacInnes
Sara Reyes
John Steadman – Remote
Peter Underhill – Remote

Invited Guest:

Michael Guzinski, Town Administrator
Carol Johnston, Finance Director
Peter Jurmain, Select Board Chair
James McKay, DPW Director

Pete Berube called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

Welcome New Finance Committee Member:

Pete Berube welcomed Sara Reyes and thanked her for stepping up to volunteer her time as a Finance Committee Member. All members introduced themselves, where in town they live and their years of service as a Finance Committee Member.

PFAS Update:

Jim McKay outlined the steps the town is taking to address the PFAS situation. Wells #1 & 2 have been offline for over a year. Well #3 is tested monthly and Wells #4, 5 & 6 are tested quarterly. The Design for a PFAS Water Treatment Plant is underway; sixty percent complete and will be a November Town Meeting Warrant Article. The site for the Treatment Plant for Wells #1 & 2 has been selected and the buildings at the site have been demolished. Kleinfelder will have the design of the Treatment Plant 100% complete for the November Town Meeting. In order to fully understand the Warrant Article for the PFAS Water Treatment Plant, he suggested a joint meeting with Kleinfelder, the Select Board and Finance Committee. Cathy MacInnes and Kathy Lannon will be conducting an informational program on Millis Community Media to inform residents of PFAS and the town's steps toward mitigating its levels in the town's drinking water. Once the design phase is approved at the November Town Meeting, the project will be put out to bid in January or February with the hopes to break ground in the Spring of 2022. The recent heavy rain has not impacted the PFAS levels at the town's wells. The DPW has a dedicated PFAS page on their webpage which provides a wealth of information on the topic.

<https://www.millisma.gov/public-works-highway-department/pages/pfas-drinking-water-information>

The Select Board has sent a request to State Representatives requesting funding relief in mitigating the PFAS Levels in the town's drinking water. Pete Jurmain made the committee aware that several inquiries have not been responded to and he has followed up with Representative Jake Auchincloss. The Select Board and DPW Director will endeavor to minimize the financial impact to residents.

Road Paving Update:

Jim McKay outlined the FY22 Chapter 90 Fund projects that have been completed:

- Farm Street from Acorn Street to Brandywine Terrace
- Main Street from Plain Street to Park Road
- Main Street from Exchange Street Park Road
- Ridge Street from Union Street to Auburn Road

Toll Brothers, developer of the Regency at Glen Ellen has completed the paving work from the town line to the stone arch bridge.

It is anticipated Spring Street from Main to Plain Street will be paved in the upcoming weeks. The cost to do so totals \$125,435.20 which includes \$109,712.00 to Lorusso Corporation for paving materials and labor, \$4,320.00 for Police Details and \$11,403.00 in contingencies.

If there are remaining funds, Plain Street would be a priority for crack sealing. The cost to pave Route 109 from the Medway town line to Hammond Lane would be approximately \$750,000.00.

Mr. McKay thanked the residents for their support approving additional funds for road maintenance. While Route 109 is believed to be a State Road, it is town owned.

The Stormwater Management Project at Birch and Village streets is being designed. Test borings have been complete and the project will go out to bid soon. Construction should begin in the Spring of 2022.

CARES (Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security) Act and Marijuana Revenue Update:

Carol Johnston made the committee aware the balance of the town's CARES Act is \$78,000.00 which will be used before the December 31, 2021 deadline. She has consulted with Chief Barrett – Fire and Rescue to ensure any anticipated costs the department should incur before December 31st will be filed under the CARES Act.

The town could potentially see \$800,000.00 in funding for the PFAS Water Treatment Plant following a certified vote of approval for the project at the November Town Meeting.

In FY21, the town received \$488,000.00 in HCA Marijuana Revenue which is matched in Sales Tax Revenue. In the first quarter of FY22, the HCA Revenues are approximately \$125,000.00 which will also be matched in Sales Tax Revenue.

Pete Berube clarified that HCA Revenues are a five-year agreement; the agreement is in its second year. He thanked the Finance Director for her hard work in optimizing on the CARES Act.

Braun Property Purchase Update:

Mike Guzinski explained 61A Properties are sold as is. The town will address any issues and costs with the structures on the property at the 2022 Spring Town Meeting. The closing should take place in the next couple of weeks.

Review Draft November Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

Mike Guzinski made the committee aware that the Select Board will be closing the November Town Meeting Warrant at their meeting on Monday, September 27, 2021. He outlined the Draft Warrant Articles:

Article #1 Unpaid Bills – this is a standard article at the Spring and Fall Town Meetings, it approves payment of invoices from prior Fiscal Years.

Article #2 FY22 Operating Budget Adjustments – this article adjusts the Town's Operational Budget and will apply Marijuana HCA (Host Community Agreement) Revenues that have been certified as Free Cash for the School Resource Officer's Salary and Police Department Marijuana Stipends as well as adjustments from the Ambulance Revolving Fund or any other unexpected additional expenses.

Article #3 Capital Items – this too is a standard article at the Spring and Fall Town Meetings and funds town-wide capital needs for several departments. The Capital Planning Committee will prioritize the needs and make their recommendations at an upcoming meeting.

Article #4 PFAS Water Treatment Plant – this article will fund a treatment facility which will mitigate the PFAS levels at Wells #1 and 2. The project is expected to cost approximately \$5.4 million and includes a large contingency.

Article #5 Senior Work Program Abatement Adjustment – this article would increase the tax relief program amount from \$1,350.00 to \$1,500.00. Eligible Seniors have the opportunity to offset their Real Estate Taxes by volunteering time for the town in several Town Departments.

Article #6 Sewer ByLaw Amendment – this article would amend the ByLaw. The Enterprise Fund Advisory Committee is meeting tomorrow tonight to finalize the amendment. The town's sewer capacity is limited with the CRPCD (Charles River Pollution Control District). The amendment's goal is to encourage residents who have the capability to connect to town sewer but are not currently to either tie-in or forfeit their right to.

Article #7 Stormwater ByLaw Regulation Amendment – this article will address the Board of Health's concerns with homes built too close to the water table.

Article #8 Request Special Act – Town Charter Changes – this article will amend the Town's Charter with recommendations from the Charter Review Committee. The Select Board will review and consider the changes at their upcoming meeting. The process to change the Charter is an arduous process. If approved at Town Meeting, the State Legislature then makes a decision on the changes. All changes would then require a Town Election Ballot Vote for the changes to be put in place.

Article #9 FY21 Snow and Ice Deficit – this article will fund the deficit from the prior Fiscal Year. Snow and Ice is the only budget line item that can run in deficit. In previous years, the deficit was included in the Tax Recap.

Article #10 Unemployment Account Funding – this article would add additional funds to the account for additional unemployment expenses.

Article #11 OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) Actuarial Study – this article will fund the mandated study in the amount of \$7,300.00.

Article #12 Establish Workers Compensation Reserve Fund – this article would approve a Reserve Fund for Workers Compensation Claims.

Free Cash has been submitted for certification and the amount will be disclosed after October 1, 2021.

Capital Planning Committee Update:

Pete Berube is the Finance Committee liaison to the committee. Erin Underhill is the Select Board liaison and Kerri Roche is the School Committee liaison. Jonathan Barry is the Chair, James McCaffrey is a Member at Large and John Corcoran is a member. Mike Guzinski is an Ex-Officio and Maureen Canise is the committee's Administrative Assistant. The committee has started the process to review and prioritize the Capital Item requests Department Heads have made. The committee makes recommendations for consideration at the Town Meetings; ultimately the Town Meeting Residents make the final decision on what items are approved with a vote at Town Meeting.

Nominate/Vote Finance Committee Vice Chair:

Doug Riley made a motion to recommend Jodie Garzon as Vice Chair; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Jodie Garzon accepted the nomination. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Discussion of Improved Finance Committee Information Dissemination to the Public:

Pete Berube would like input on ways to make the Millis residents aware of Town Meeting Warrant Articles and ideas on ways to better advertise Pre-Town Meeting. Possible options are social media, Instagram for example, Police Department Signboard listing key dates, etc. or the Town's Facebook Page. He reminded the committee to abide by Open Meeting Laws; discussion cannot take place if a quorum, five members, is present or emailing without a posted meeting.

Old Business/New Business:

The committee's next meeting will be Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 7:00 PM. The Capital Planning Committee will present their recommendation at the October 13, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting.

Bills Payable Approval:

Joyce Boiardi made a motion to recommend approval of payment to W.B. Mason in the amount of \$29.38 for Finance Committee Members John Steadman and Peter Underhill's nameplates; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Pete Berube – aye, Doug Riley – aye, Joyce Boiardi – aye, Jim Borgman – aye, Jodie Garzon – aye, Cathy MacInnes – aye, Sara Reyes – aye, John Steadman – aye, Peter Underhill – aye. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Joyce Boiardi made a motion to recommend approval of payment to W.B. Mason in the amount of \$14.69 for Finance Committee Member, Sara Reyes' nameplate; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Pete Berube – aye, Doug Riley – aye, Joyce Boiardi – aye, Jim Borgman – aye, Jodie Garzon – aye, Cathy MacInnes – aye, Sara Reyes – aye, John Steadman – aye, Peter Underhill – aye. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Joyce Boiardi made a motion to accept the July 14, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes as written; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Roll Call Vote: Pete Berube – aye, Doug Riley – aye, Joyce Boiardi – aye, Jodie Garzon – aye, Cathy MacInnes – aye, John Steadman – aye, Peter Underhill – aye. Vote: 7/0 2 abstained motion carries.

Adjourn Meeting:

Joyce Boiardi made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:26 PM; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore