

Finance Committee Meeting

September 28, 2022 7:00 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building – Room #229
Millis, MA 02054
Participation Available Via Zoom Remote Platform

Committee Members In Attendance:

Pete Berube, Chair
Jodie Garzon, Vice Chair
Peter Underhill, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Patrick Gatto
Jonathan Loer
Cathy MacInnes
Sara Reyes
John Steadman

Invited Guest:

Michael Guzinski, Town Administrator
Carol Johnston, Finance Director
Ellen Rosenfeld, Select Board Clerk
Patty Kayo, Council on Aging Director
Lisa Hardin, Town Clerk

Pete Berube called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Pete Berube welcomed Patrick Gatto and thanked him for volunteering his time serving as a Finance Committee Member.

November 2022 Town Meeting Draft Warrant Articles:

Mike Guzinski:

The Select Board will meet on Monday, October 3, 2022, to focus on the November Town Meeting Warrant Articles; a more solidified Warrant Article List will be available next week. Town Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 10, 2022 at the request of the Election Warden.

Article #1 Unpaid Bills

This is a standard article which funds bills incurred in previous Fiscal Years. A final list and funding sources will be available soon.

Article #2 FY23 Operational Budget Adjustments

This article will appropriate Marijuana Impact Fees included in Free Cash. The May 2022 Town Meeting appropriated a percentage of the necessary funds for the School Resource Officer, Social Worker as well as other programs and positions through December, this article would fund those positions and programs through June 2023.

Article #3 Capital Items

The Capital Planning Committee is meeting Thursday, September 29, 2022. The Chair of the Capital Planning Committee will present a detailed list of Capital Items at the October 12, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting.

Article #4 Feasibility Study – Middle/High School Renovation

This article will fund a study in the amount of \$1,300,000.00; the School Department will present this article at the October 12, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting.

Article #5 New Senior/Community Center

The Council on Aging Director and members of the Council on Aging Board will present this article to the Finance Committee at the October 5, 2022 Meeting.

Article #6 Adoption of MGL C 59, 5, Clause 22H Gold Star Families

This article will adopt the MGL (Massachusetts General Law) for Veteran Families whose immediate family members lost their life during Military Service. It offers a 100% Tax Exemption. The State will reimburse 100% for the first five years and 50% thereafter.

Article #7 Reduce Veterans Residency Requirements for Local Tax Exemptions/Abatements

The current requirement is residency for two years prior to Veterans eligibility for Local Tax Exemptions/Abatements. This article would reduce the requirement to one year.

Article #8 Personnel Plan Changes

Changes to the Personnel Plan that were not included in the May 2022 Town Meeting Warrant will be effective January 1, 2023.

Article #9 12-14 Exchange Street – Environmental Impact Settlement

Contaminants, primarily petroleum, from town owned property have flowed onto private property. This article in the amount of \$46,000.00 would cover any necessary environmental cleanup. The Town's Environmental Consultant has confirmed the town has liability in this matter.

Article #10 Repayment to Advesa for Cannabis HCA (Host Community Agreement) Deposit

Due to Zoning Restrictions, the owners of the former Colt Manufacturing Plant have opted to rescind their HCA and have requested reimbursement of their deposit in the amount of \$25,000.00. This article would be funded from Marijuana Impact Fees included in Free Cash.

Article #11 Funding for FY22 Snow and Ice Deficit

This article would fund the FY22 Snow and Ice Deficit in the amount of \$128,721.70. Snow and Ice is the only line item in the Operating Budget that is allowed to be in deficit at the close of the Fiscal Year. In previous years, the deficit was included in the Tax Recap.

Article #12 Lead Line Service Inventory and Replacement Plan

The town has obtained a grant for this article, however the \$139,000.00 grant requires a borrowing to be eligible for the grant. Funding for this program was appropriated at the May Town Meeting through Water Enterprise Reserves. Once the borrowing has taken place and the grant is received, the funds will flow back to the Water Enterprise Reserves.

Article #13 Unemployment Account

This article would fund the town's Unemployment Claims. The amount necessary to fund the Unemployment Account should be available next week.

Article #14 FEMA Flood Plain Zoning ByLaw

The Zoning ByLaw is required by the Federal Government; more definitive language will be available next week.

Article #15 Acceptance of Hickory Hills Subdivision

The Hickory Hills Subdivision is located off of Acorn Street and includes Debrah Lane, Pearl Street and Teresa Drive. The Select Board is requesting the acceptance of this subdivision, making it town owned. Once a street is accepted by the town, the town is obligated to maintain it including snow removal and road maintenance.

Article #16 OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits)

At their upcoming meeting, the Select Board will discuss the amount they seek to fund this large obligation. The town does meet any current obligations.

Article #17 MGL Ch. 41 Section 111F Injury Leave Indemnity Fund

The 111F Injury Leave Indemnity Fund was established at the May 2022 Town Meeting however funds were not appropriated. The intent of the fund is to cover 100% of Public Safety Staff Salaries while out on injury. This article would appropriate funds but will not eliminate overtime costs to cover shift coverage.

Article #18 Establish Stabilization Account under MGL Ch. 40 Section 5B for the Purchase and Operation of Town Ambulances

This article will establish the fund; appropriations to the fund will follow at the Spring 2023 Town Meeting from the Ambulance Revolving Fund. The Ambulance Revolving Fund consists of receipts from Ambulance Services. Establishing this fund will eliminate the need to use General Funds to purchase an ambulance; it establishes a Savings Account. In FY23, \$412,000.00 was needed from the General Fund to cover the cost of the town's Paramedics. In FY24 the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant will expire resulting in the need to fund Fire and Rescue Personnel.

Article #19 Stabilization Fund

Funding for this article will be more defined next week. The Stabilization Fund is a fund designated to accumulate monies for capital and unforeseen and emergency purposes. Millis' current Stabilization Fund Policy requires having at least 5% of General Fund Budget Expenditures available as of June 30th of each Fiscal Year.

Article #20, #21 and #22 are Citizen Petitioned Articles

A fourth Citizen Petitioned Article was received and will be presented at the October 5th Finance Committee Meeting. The first three will be presented at the October 12th Finance Committee Meeting. Should any of the Citizen Petitioned Articles pass at the November Town Meeting, the Select Board would have to authorize borrowing. It was noted, the Select Board decide the numbering/order of the Warrant Articles.

Certified Free Cash is \$2.9 million, the detailed information will be provided to the committee by the Finance Director.

Finance Committee Liaisons to Boards and Committees:

Pete Berube, Finance Committee Liaison to the Capital Planning Committee, is not seeking to continue; Jon Loer and Cathy MacInnes are interested in serving as his replacement. It was agreed to defer a nomination until after the November Town Meeting. Pete Berube outlined the duties of the Capital Planning Committee: how they deliberate department requests, their prioritization methodology and the final determination of their recommendations. Cathy MacInnes is the Finance Committee's liaison to the Community Preservation Committee and noted it offers a wealth of knowledge into how the funds are appropriated; John Steadman is interested in serving as her replacement. A Finance Committee Member should attend meetings of the Select Board, Capital Planning Committee, Community Preservation Committee and School Committee in order to keep to Finance Committee abreast of topics of discussion. Liaisons will be finalized prior to the 2023 Spring Town and Tri-Board Meetings.

Approve Bills Payable

Jodie Garzon made a motion to recommend approval of payment to Clear Gov in the amount of \$5,665.00; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously. It was noted the information is up to date and provides a wealth of information to residents regarding the town's finances. <https://cleargov.com/massachusetts/norfolk/town/millis>

Jodie Garzon made a motion to recommend approval of payment to the Association of Town Finance Committees in the amount of \$184.00; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously. <https://www.mma.org/members/finance-committees/finance-committee-handbook/>

Old Business/New Business:

Pete Berube asked the committee to email the Chair of the Finance Committee and/or Deirdre Gilmore to request an Agenda Item to be discussed at a future meeting.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to approve the July 12, 2022 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes; Peter Underhill seconded. Vote: 7/0 2 abstained motion carries unanimously.

Adjourn Meeting:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 8:20 PM; Cathy MacInnes seconded. Vote: 9/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore