

Finance Committee Meeting

October 4, 2023 7:00 PM EST
Veterans Memorial Building – Room #229
900 Main Street Millis, MA 02054

Committee Members In Attendance:

Pete Berube, Chair
Jodie Garzon, Vice Chair
Peter Underhill, Clerk
Joyce Boiardi
Jonathan Loer
Cathy MacInnes
Sara Reyes
Jen Zarutskie

Invited Guest in Attendance:

Carol Johnston, Finance Director

Pete Berube called the Finance Committee Meeting to order at 7:01 PM.

Further Discussion on the Finance Committee's Position on the October 24, 2023 Ballot Questions and Information to the Public:

At their last meeting, the Finance Committee voted 5/4 not to support the Tri-County Regional High School Construction Project and intended to send the residents of Millis a mailing outlining the opinions of those in the Majority and Minority. However, since then, Town Counsel, confirmed under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Office of Campaign and Political Finance, regulations prohibit the use of Municipal Funds to advocate for or against any Tax Override Ballot Question. The Finance Committee may distribute materials at their meeting describing the Minority and Majority positions on the matter. Any member of the Finance Committee may use their personal funds for a mailing to convey their position on the matter to residents.

At the October 11, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting both the Majority and Minority Reports will be read which will be documented in the Meeting Minutes. Residents in attendance will have the opportunity to ask questions and the committee will have the opportunity to convey their positions on the upcoming Ballot Questions which will be voted on October 24, 2023 between 12:00 PM – 8:00 PM.

As a Finance Committee, Pete Berube and other members believe it's up to the committee to advise Millis Residents of upcoming financial impacts. The results of the October 24th Election if supported, which is most likely amongst the eleven communities, will eventually be a Town Meeting Warrant Article and the committee will have to make a recommendation at a future Town Meeting.

Carol Johnston reminded the committee that an email was sent by the Assistant Town Administrator to Board and Committee Chairs regarding Ethics Training required by November 3, 2023.

November 6, 2023 Town Meeting Warrant Article Discussion:

Carol Johnston made the committee aware that the November Town Meeting Warrant Articles are unchanged and will be discussed at the Select Board Meeting on October 12, 2023; funding amounts will be determined at that time.

FY24 Operating Budget Adjustments include funding \$219,785.03 for Marijuana Impact Fee Programs and Positions. In FY23, the town received \$44,000.00 in OPIOD Fund Mitigation which is included in Free Cash and could be appropriated at the November Town Meeting or appropriated into a separate fund for future use. The funding is expected to be \$218,000.00 over a twenty-year period based on the town's population; the Annual OPIOD Funding is expected to be between \$8,000.00 - \$10,000.00. The HCA Marijuana Impact Fees will expire in early FY25 and Town Officials will need to make a decision on what Programs and Positions will be terminated or funded at that time. Grant Funding for the positions and programs would be initiated by each department; Recreation, Police and School departments.

Bills Payable:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to recommended payment in the amount of \$1,157.40 to the Millis Postmaster for postage to mail the Finance Committee's Report; Peter Underhill seconded. Vote: 8/0. Motion carries unanimously.

Finance Committee Meeting Minutes Approval:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to approve the September 27, 2023 Finance Committee Meeting Minutes as written; Joyce Boiardi seconded. Vote: 8/0. Motion carries unanimously.

Board and Committee Liaison Updates:

Jon Loer, Capital Planning Committee Liaison, made the committee aware of the six potential Capital Items for consideration at the November Town Meeting which will be presented to the Select Board on October 12th:

- Antenna on Norfolk Road to improve communications to Fire & Rescue Personnel. The estimated cost is \$89,373.00.
- HVAC Repairs for Town Buildings estimated at \$75,000.00.
- Library Phase II Lighting System estimated at \$110,000.00.
- DPW Pickup Truck estimated at \$84,906.00.
- DPW Vactor Truck estimated at \$573,559.00.
 - The equipment would be used to clean catch basins which is currently outsourced and could potentially be shared with surrounding towns.
 - DPW Staff are licensed to use the equipment
- DPW PFAS Treatment Facility at Well #3 estimated at \$7.1 million.
 - A Federal Grant of \$3.4 million has been obtained however, the Finance Director does not have a formal grant agreement and therefore, at this point the borrowing authorization at Town Meeting will be for the full \$7.1 million.

The Capital Planning Committee will present their recommendations to the Finance Committee on October 18, 2023. The Finance Committee's Final Recommendations to Town Meeting will be voted on at that time. Recommendations at Town Meeting are an option.

Jodie Garzon, 3A MBTA Committee Member, wanted to notify the community that a survey is available online:

https://mapc.az1.qualtrics.com/ife/form/SV_1HM3M5RDEL3PKT4

There have been approximately 150 responses and she encouraged residents to take the survey which will determine what steps the town will take in terms of Multi-Family Housing and future Zoning ByLaws required by the State.

Adjourn Meeting:

Jodie Garzon made a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:28 PM; Peter Underhill seconded. Vote: 8/0 motion carries unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Gilmore