

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

April 13, 2023

**Members:** Chair: My Linh Truong Vice Chair: John Miller  
Hafiz Adamjee, Megan Blackwell, Jeff Calabrese, Stefan Carp, Yannis Evrigenis, Lauren Hermann, Patrick Matteson, Nicole Soto, Enzo Rascionato, Derek Ross, Brian Vernaglia, Kathryn Hughes

### **General Business**

Chair Truong called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

### **Roll Call:**

Brian Vernaglia  
My Linh Truong  
Patrick Matteson  
Nicole Soto  
Kathryn Hughes  
Laureen Hermann  
Enzo Rascionato  
Yannis Evrigenis  
John Miller  
Derek Ross  
Hafiz Adamjee  
Megan Blackwell

### **Late Arrivals:**

Stefan Carp

### **Missing:**

Jeff Calabrese

### **Guests-**None

**Public Comments-**No speakers present.

### **Scrivner's Error**

It was reported that there was a Scrivner's error in the Town Managers budget. The Town Managers original write up was not correct however the number voted on was accurate. The correction was made by Vice Chair John Miller.

### **IT Budget**

Vice Chair John Miller moved to re-open the IT Budget. Seconded by FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia.

A meeting was held with the Beth Rudolph (Town Manager) and Matt Griffin (IT Manager) to discuss the Full Time IT position that was removed by FinCom at the first budget review. Both agreed to do a study of the Town's IT strategy but were adamant that the eliminated position be added back into the budget.

It was contended that the study should be done first before hiring a new person. The reason for this is that the outcome of the study may dictate certain skillsets which may be required going forward. By bringing on a new employee now the opportunity to hire the right person will be lost. One idea is to hire someone now on a temporary basis until such time the study is completed.

Many felt that there is a continuity risk in the event the IT Director should leave. It was commented that whoever is hired now can be used for the future role. Furthermore, it was added that the current IT Director is overworked and overwhelmed. Benchmarked against other towns of similar size, Belmont for example has 5.25 FTE versus Winchesters 1FTE. It was felt that technology is suffering due to a lack of resources.

It was noted that any new hire will not be addressing software needs which are very often is done at the department level.

FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia motioned for favorable action adding the one FTE position for a modified FY24 IT Budget of \$814,536. (\$230,331 Personnel Services, \$562,205 Expenses and \$22,000 Equipment). Seconded by FinCom Member Enzo Rascionato.

It was thought that maybe this matter should be discussed at Town Meeting. It was questioned does FinCom really know what is needed by IT. Many FinCom members do not feel comfortable maintaining a one person department.

It was felt that we need look across the entire town which will be the objective of the study.

Vote to add the one FTE to the IT Budget was 11 yes and 1 no. (Megan Blackwell)

Vice Chair My Linh Truong motioned to approve the updated FY24 IT Budget for \$814,536. Seconded by FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia. Vote is 11 yes and 1 no. (Megan Blackwell)

#### **Treasury & Collector FY24 Budget**

Vice Chair John Miller motioned to re-open the Treasury Budget to move \$50K from Personal Services to Expenses for a revised budget total of \$552,394. Seconded by FinCom Member Nicole Soto.

The change is related to temporary labor costs. Vote is 11 yes and 1 No.

Motion to approve the revised Treasury budget of \$552,394. ( \$448,094 Personnel Services, \$104,300 Expenses and \$0 Equipment) Seconded by FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia.

Vote is 11 Yes and 1 no and is unanimous. The updated Treasury Budget passes.

#### **Chair Authority Motion**

Vice Chair John Miller motioned to give Chair My Linh Truong the authority to finalize the Yellow Sheet and FY24 Budget without final approval from FinCom. Seconded by FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia.

Vote to approve the motion giving the Chair the authority to finalize the Yellow Sheet and FY24 Budget. Vote is unanimous and motion passes.

### **Town Manager FY24 Budget**

Vice Chair John Miller moved to re-open the Town Managers Budget. Seconded by FinCom Member Nicole Soto. Vote to re-open the budget was 11 yes and unanimous.

The purpose of re-opening the budget is to add \$50K to Personal Services for the IT Strategy study.

There were many concerns regarding the study. Some of these include the estimated cost which many thought would actually be closer to \$100k. It was also felt that the Town Manager and IT Director are not fully embracing the study and as such there is no real owner. One recommendation is to bring this to the attention of the Select Board or Town Meeting. A request should be made that a working group be formed with specific goals established for the study.

It was thought that an RFT (Request Funds Transfer) could be used at a later date once the project has been vetted further and approved.

Vice Chair John Miller moved to withdraw the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### **Vocational Education FY24 Budget**

Vice Chair John Miller moved for favorable action FY24 Vocational Education Budget for \$429,774. (\$0 Personnel Services, \$429,774 Expenses and \$0 Equipment) Seconded by FinCom Member Nicole Soto.

It was stated that the budget represents pass thru costs for those students who are attending vocational programs outside of the Winchester School system.

Upon review of the supporting backup there was a discrepancy in the total dollars. (\$429,774 vs \$387,750) It was stated that the final numbers may be forthcoming and it was agreed to vote on the budget as presented. The budget can be adjusted at a later date.

Motion to approve the Vocational Education budget of \$429,774. Vote is 11 yes and is unanimous. The Vocational Education Budget passes.

### **Revenue and the Three Year Plan**

FinCom Member Megan Blackwell began with a review of Revenue. It was felt that new revenue growth is under estimated. As a result it was increased by \$50K from \$950K to \$1M. It was also

noted that State Aid is \$167K lower versus last year and Water and Sewer growth is \$247,986 higher. Overall revenue is a \$150K decrease.

FinCom Member Megan Blackwell motioned to approve FY24 revenue for the amount of \$148,847,441. Seconded by Nicole Soto.

It was mentioned that free cash will have to be recalculated due to changes in the total revenue number. Also, it was stated that ARPA is not included and would have to be approved to be added by the Select Board in an effort to balance the budget. The current budget deficit is estimated at \$321K.

Motion to approve the updated revenue number. Vote was 11 Yes and unanimous.

### **Three Year Plan**

FinCom Member Stefan Carp began by stating that the objective of the three year plan is to highlight when the town might need an operating override. Furthermore, it was recommended that median growth numbers be used.

A review was made of receipts and expenses. It was noted that turnback's are very hard to predict. The median for turnback's from 2014 to 2022 is 1.56%. On the low end it would be 1.2% while on the high side 1.6%. After discussion it was agreed to use the median.

The Town's department budgets are very predictable while Town Meeting expenses are not. Another factor is inflation which has not been factored into the plan.

Based on the current estimates no operating override is anticipated thru FY26.

A question was raised as to how do capital needs get incorporated in the plan. A suggestion was made to balance the budget using free cash and apply ARPA monies to Capital.


FinCom Member Stefan Carp motioned to approve the three year plan. Seconded by FinCom Member Yannis Evrigenis.

The vote to approve the three year plan was unanimous.

### **Adjourn**

FinCom Member Nicole Soto moved to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting and the motion was seconded by FinCom Member Brian Vernaglia. The motion passed unanimously. FinCom adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Gary Lozowski, Recording Secretary of Finance Committee

Approved by:   
My Linh Truong, Chair of Finance Committee