



Budget-Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2024 at 6:30pm

At Broadcast Studio & Via Zoom

Committee Members Present: Chris Hanson, Karen Lockwood, Deanna Lee, Frank McDermott, Shawn McKillop, Cliff Small, Don Willard

Committee Members Absent: none

Town Staff Present:

Melanie Fernald (Town Clerk); Cathy Gosselin (Deputy Treasurer); Sue Look (Town Manager)

1. **Called meeting to order** at 6:30pm by Chair Lockwood with a quorum present
2. Approval of Minutes
 - July 24, 2024
Motion to approve as presented by Mr. McKillop. Seconded by Mr. McDermott
Unanimously approved
3. Discussion of the Expense/Revenue Reports for June and July
Deputy Treasurer Gosselin noted for the record that the June report had some errors/missing information, due to a technical glitch with the software. She is still working on correcting that report.

Mr. Willard asked if there was anything of note so far this fiscal year.

Ms. Gosselin noted that insurance has been moved to each department. This was done at the request of the Select Board.

Ms. Lee stated that for the sake of transparency, it had been requested that those costs were divided by department.

Mr. McKillop thought that the budgeted amount for Milfoil should be increased, thought that had been agreed upon last year. Asked about the grant.

Ms. Gosselin noted this is the second year of a 2-year grant. We also bill 3 Raymond entities for the costs – Indian Point, the condos, Goodhue Marina.

Town Manager Look noted for the record that these reports are usually run by the Finance Director, so Cathy has done well in stepping in to run them while we're without a Finance Director.

4. Discussion of a joint meeting with the Select Board

Chair Lockwood asked Select Board Member Sadak to ask for direction on how to proceed with making that meeting happen.

Ms. Sadak suggested reaching out to Select Board Chair Rolf Olsen with a suggestion for date/time.

Chair Lockwood suggested that this joint meeting happen immediately following the next regular Budget-Finance Committee meeting.

Vice Chair McKillop said he would like to ensure there is plenty of time to discuss whatever needs to be clarified.

5. Discussion regarding options on how to spend the money received from the Sebago Lake Settlement

Vice Chair McKillop noted that he wanted to just brainstorm ideas, without necessarily knowing whether those are viable/allowable uses. He doesn't feel that the money would be effectively used as tax relief, after being distributed so widely among all the property owners. He would like to set the money aside in a protected account to cover any incurred costs for any future violation.

Mr. Willard wanted to clarify that his is not a windfall, as some have said, since it's a reimbursement for actual costs paid out from past years' budgets. Suggested it be used for on major non-recurring capital expenditures versus tax relief. Could the money be put into a CD for the next three years to gain interest for funding some renovations for the future use of the school?

Mr. Hanson felt some should be used for future protections against violations. LD 2101 new law, allows the Town to put a lien on a property after a violation like this, that allows the recoup for legal fees and not issue any permits until the issue is resolved and possibly even revoke any existing permits. There will also be some State funds for use eventually. Setting money aside to pad our legal budget will protect us until the State fund is set up. Legal costs add up very quickly.

Raymond has a growing population, which increases the likelihood for more violations. He's seeing out of staters moving in and renovating/tearing down & rebuilding bigger homes, which opens us up for more violations.

Mr. Hanson noted that we're having stronger storms, warnings of "thousand year storms" are looming. Roads will wash out, maybe we should be prepared ahead of these big storms.

Mr. Willard suggested using the fine amount for protection, while the reimbursement of legal fees go towards tax relief.

Ms. Lee believes we should be proactive, as opposed to relative to flooding. It would be less expensive to be proactive, but the money we're talking about will not cover the costs.

Mr. Small agrees that the legal fees reimbursement should likely go back to the taxpayers, as they're the ones who shouldered the initial expenses.

Select Board Vice Chair Sadak noted that the joint meeting wouldn't be specific to this issue, it would be more about procedures and differences among departments. She has been taking notes of their suggestions and will share those thoughts with the Select Board.

Mr. Willard voiced that we should put the recommendation to a motion and vote.

Motion to set up a municipal environmental protection legal defense fund with the actual fine money from the Sebago Lake land use violations, return all monies that were withdrawn from fund balance for associated legal fees back to fund balance, and when appropriating fund balance to lower the FY 24-25 property tax rate, the historical Level of (\$200,000) should be used by Mr. Willard. Seconded by Mr. Small

Mr. McKillop asked if specific dollar amounts should be used in the recommendation. Mr. Hanson felt like the description of the monetary portions was sufficient.

Unanimously approved

6. Public Comment

Chair Lockwood opened the floor for public comment, no one spoke.

7. Budget-Finance Committee Comment

Chair Lockwood opened the floor for Committee Member comments, the following members spoke:

Mr. McKillop – reminder of the workshop with Comprehensive Plan Committee and Select Board at 6:30pm in the Jordan-Small Middle School gym. Updates to the Comprehensive Plan will be shared and discussed.

8. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:19pm by Mr. McDermott. Seconded by Mr. Small

Unanimously approved

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Fernald, Town Clerk