

1/3/2024 -- Oakham, MA. Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

FinCom meeting called to order at 6:03 pm. BOS meeting also called to order at 6:03pm for this joint meeting. Attending for the FinCom are Alan Flagg and Steve Dollinger and Corey Packard attending for the BOS are Don Haapakoski, Lucy Tessnau and Aaron Langlois.

The purpose of the meeting is for the FinCom to review proposed Articles for the 1/22/24 STM to determine if the FinCom will recommend approval of each Article at the STM. BOS will meet on 1/8/24 to approve the Articles.

BOS chair advised that legal council is still reviewing the Articles and they will correct any grammatical errors and approve final language. Tonight's review process is being discussed and the FinCom will vote to endorse (or not) each Article based on the current version. If material changes are made by legal counsel FinCom may need to change its position on a given Article.

There currently are 20 Articles. BOS Chair comments that a few may move from the STM to being funded by ARPA and that at least one may no longer be necessary.

FinCom chair then reads each Article followed by a discussion of the Article by members of the FinCom and BOS. After the reading of each article a motion was made to approve or not approve the Article for endorsement by the FinCom at the STM. All 20 Articles are below.

FinCom voted to endorse Articles 1 -5. Article 6 was tabled at the request of the BOS. FinCom voted to endorse Articles 7 – 14. No vote was taken on Article 15 as it does not have budgetary implications. FinCom members did speak in favor of the 15th Article. FinCom then voted to endorse Articles 16 – 20.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:20pm.

DRAFT VERSION of Proposed Articles as Discussed at Meeting is shown below.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Worcester County

To either of the Constables of the Town of OAKHAM in the county of Worcester,

In the name of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, you are hereby directed to notify

and warn the inhabitants of said town, qualified to vote in elections and in Town Affairs,

to meet at the Oakham Fire Station, Barre Road in said Oakham, on Monday January 22, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. then and there to act on the following articles:

Article 1: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury by transferring from available funds the sum of \$6,000 from free cash, to fund the Assessors Stabilization account #8814-000-0-1040-0000 or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by FINCOM)

Explanation: To fund revaluation expenses.

Article 2: To see if the Town will appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, the sum of \$5,000 for the Parks & Recreation Department to maintain Wright Field and Town Common to Parks & Recreation Acct.# 0100-630-7-5471-0000.

(submitted by Parks & Recreation Dept).

Explanation: To pay for the cost of maintenance and landscaping.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$1,611.52 from Acct# 0100-910-7-5713-0000 Treasurer's Unemployment Account, to the Board of Assessors Wages Acct # 0100-141-2-5114 or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by the Board of Assessors).

Explanation: To compensate Assessors employee for leave time not previously compensated.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury the sum of \$16,000 from the PEG Charter Funds into a new line-item account named Cable Access Account in order to maintain the town's cable access channel and other Town media access or take any action thereto.

(submitted by the Board of Selectmen).

Explanation: To maintain the equipment used to produce video/audio public meetings.

Article 5: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, by transferring \$2,000 into the Cemetery Commission Expense Account # 0100-491-7-5701-0000 to pay engineering costs for the replacement arch at the Green Hollow Cemetery.

or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by the Cemetery Commission)

Explanation: The arch at the cemetery needs replacement. The Commission needs the funds to hire an engineer as required by the building regulation. The arch cost, \$20,000, is being paid with ARPA funds.

Article 6: To see if the town will vote to establish a revolving account pursuant to MGL

Ch.44 Section 53E1/2 and Town by-law section #23 to receive fees from Police Pistol Permits that are paid to the Treasurer beginning on July 1, 2024 or take any action relative thereto. The account shall have a limit of \$5,000.

(submitted by Board of Selectmen)

Explanation: To defer costs of wages and expenses in issuing firearm licenses. License fees are shared with the State. The State receives 75%, the town receives 25% of the fees.

Article 7: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury by transferring \$1,850 from the Treasurer's Unemployment Account # 0100-910-7-5713-0000 to the Board of Health Part Time Wage Account # 0100- 510-2-5114-0000 or take any action relative

thereto.

(submitted by Board of Health)

Explanation: To increase the work hours from three (3) hrs. per week to five (5) hrs. per week as the workload has increased.

Article 8: To see if the town will vote to vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury by transferring from Free Cash the total sum of \$6,000 to the Town Clerk's Election Wages and Expense accounts by placing \$3,000 in Wages/Salary Acct.# 0100-162-2-5115-0000; and \$3,000 in Election Expenses Acct. # 0100-162-7-5701-0000, or take any action relative thereto. (Submitted by Town Clerk)

Explanation: To cover additional State and Federal Elections expenses.

Article 9: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the Treasury by transferring \$7,342.44 from the Treasurers Unemployment Account # 0100-910-7-5713-0000 and place it in Library Part Time Wages Account # 0100-2-5114-0000, or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by the library)

Explanation: To fund wage cola increases left out at ATM and maintain two (2) employees in the building during hours of operation.

Article 10: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury by transferring \$ 6,249.28 from the Treasurer's Unemployment Account # 0100-910-7-5713-0000 to Police Part Time Wages Account # 0100-210-2-5114, or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by Police Department)

Explanation: These funds are needed to fund part time police coverage and were inadvertently left out of the budget at the ATM.

Article 11: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, the sum of \$2,290.97 to Accountant Expense Account; Software Expense Account #0100-135-7-5222-0000 to pay for a prior year's expense; or take any action relative thereto.

(submitted by Board of Selectmen)

Explanation: To fund an expense that occurred in FY23 to place the billing cycle consistent with the town's fiscal year.

Article 12: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, the sum of \$102.10 to balance the Ambulance Stabilization Account # 8812's deficit; or take any action related thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Explanation: When the Ambulance stabilization account was closed at the Town Meeting, the incorrect amount was used in a prior fiscal year's closeout. As a result, the account shows a deficit amount of \$102.10

Article 13: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, \$10,000 to fund the Highway Department Snow & Ice Contracted Services Account # 0100-423-7-5201-0000, or take any action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Highway Dept.)

Explanation: To fund the new line item for contracted services. FY 23 was funded as a special article.

Article 14: To see if the town will vote to amend Article 23, Revolving Funds, of the general bylaws as authorized by Mgl. Ch. 44, Sect, 53-E 1/2 to increase the cap on the Council on Aging from the current \$5,000 to a \$10,000 cap, or take any action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Council on Aging)

Explanation: The Council on Aging has increased their programing and feel the fees collected may exceed \$5,000 per year.

Article 15: To see if the town will adopt the following Flag Bylaw:

"No person shall fly or display a Commemorative or Organizational Flag other than; (a) The United States flag; (b) The Massachusetts State flag; (c) The official Town of Oakham flag; (d) The official flags of all branches of the U.S. military and armed forces; and / or; (e) The POW flag on a Town flagpole."

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Article 16: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from available funds in the treasury, free cash, in the amount of \$4,956.16 and placed into Emergency Management grant account fund #2362, or take any action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Emergency Management Director)

Explanation: These were funds secured by a state grant, but were credited to the wrong account. This article places the funds in the correct account.

Article 17: To see if the town will vote to place \$100,000 of free cash into the General Stabilization account, or take any action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Article 18: To see if the town will vote to place \$75,000 of free cash into the Capital Stabilization Account, or take any action relative thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Article 19: To see if the town will vote to place \$11,000 of free cash into the Police Cruiser Stabilization Account, or take any action related thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Article 20: To see if the town will vote to appropriate from the treasury, free cash, in the amount of \$15,000 to conduct a financial audit for Fiscal year 2023, or take any action related thereto.

(Submitted by the Board of Selectmen)

Explanation: This is the cost of the audit of the town's finances needed to determine financial health, as well as, for borrowing and seeking bond ratings.

And you are directed to serve this warrant by posting the attested copies thereof at the

Oakham Town Hall and On the Town's Website

In said town, fourteen (14) days at least before the time of holding said meeting.

HEREOF FAIL NOT, and make sure due return of this warrant, with your doings thereon, to

The Town Clerk, at that time and place of meeting, as aforesaid. Given under our hands this

Eighth day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-one.

Selectmen:

Donald Haapakoski, Chairman

Lucy Tessnau, Vice Chairman

Aaron Langlois, Clerk

A True Copy, Attest:

Date

Constable
