

Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2019
7:30 PM
Acton TV, 16 Craig Road, Acton, MA

Present: Al Vlajinac(Associate), Christi Andersen, Christine Russell, Jason Cole, Jeff Bergart, Mike Majors, Roland Bourdon , Steve Noone, Tom Farley

Absent: Dave Wellinghoff, Sahana Purohit (Associate)

1. Opening

Chair Roland Bourdon opened the meeting at 7:30 PM

This meeting was recorded by Acton TV.

2. Public Participation

None

3. Introduction of the Town Moderator

The new Town Moderator, Jo-Ann Berry, spoke before the Committee.

- She looks forward to hearing from people on how to improve Town Meeting & increase participation.
 - Email moderator@actonma.gov.
- Committee Members who are appointed by the Moderator:
 - Everyone whose term is up has now been renewed.
 - For future committee appointments she seeks diverse perspectives & experience.

4. Point of View Drafting Group

The Point of View Drafting Group will be a Subcommittee of the Finance Committee. The POV's purpose was discussed & defined as:

- An adjunct to the warrant
- Outreach to the PTSO's
- FinCom's declaration to the ALG & Board of Selectmen of its stance on issues.

The members of this year's POV Drafting Subcommittee will be:

- Christine Russell
- Jason Cole
- Christi Andersen
- Sahana Purohit, who wasn't in attendance but had previously expressed desire
- Al Vlajinac will sit in, but as an Associate Member will not count toward quorum.

The Finance Committee suggested topics for the Subcommittee to address:

- An explanation of real estate taxes owed in regard to house value & tax allocation

- Financing strategies for future School & Fire Station projects
 - Debt overrides, debt exclusions
- FinCom's disapproval of buying land with no sense of purpose
- An in depth look at OPEB
- The status of Acton attaining 40B requirements

Suggestions for the format of the POV were made in comparison to the Town Warrant. The Town Warrant isn't published early enough to be relevant to voters. FinCom could consider publishing its own report. Items like a financial dashboard, metrics & trends over time may be more relevant to readers.

- How much spent on seniors, students & transportation (but be wary of us vs. them mentality)
- Amount of taxes as a percentage of home value
- Tax burden compared to other towns
- OPEB status charts/graphs

5. **Liaison Assignments**

Finance Committee reviewed the committee liaison assignments to include members who were absent at the last meeting when the assignments were discussed.

Acton Leadership Group – Roland Bourdon & Christi Andersen

Board of Selectmen – Al Vlajinac accepted this role.

Community Preservation Committee – Dave Wellinghoff

Economic Development Committee – Mike Majors

Health Insurance Trust – Steve Noone

Kelley's Corner Steering Committee – Christi Anderson

Minuteman School Building Committee - Mike Majors

OPEB Committee – Steve Noone

School Committee - Christine Russell & Sahana Purohit

School District Budget Subcommittee – Christi Anderson

School Building Committee – Jason Cole

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee – Dave Wellinghoff

West Acton Sewer Advisory Committee – Dave Wellinghoff

6. **Finance Committee Business**

A. Approval of meeting minutes

None.

The role of minute taker & its toll on active participation in the meeting was discussed.

- Senior workers, whose hours are limited, would not be able to achieve the learning curve needed for providing minutes adequately enough.
- Assistant Finance Director/Principal Assessor for the Town, Brian McMullen will continue the role of minute-taker.

B. Committee Liaison Reports

Committee Members who are liaisons to Committees that met during the interim between last FinCom meeting and this meeting gave reports as to what occurred at those meetings.

Board of Selectmen Finance Committee Liaison, Jon Benson, addressed the Committee.

- Tentative dates for the Special Town Meeting & Special Town Election are Dec 10th & 17th. They need to be within 120 days of the MSBA's approval of the school project.
- He recognized the Finance Committees previously expressed desire to obtain Town Warrant Articles in a timely manner. The Board intends to meet with the Finance Committee early on as possible in the process.
- It will be a couple of months before a comprehensive permit can be applied for by the Powdermill Project, but then the Town will be over the 40B requirement of 10% based on the 2010 census & within distance of anticipated 2020 census numbers.
- Jon & Town Manager John Mangiaratti met with Kmart (Stop & Shop) executives & discussed the future of the parcels. They expressed the Town's interest in the future of the parcels & established a relationship with its owners. No decisions were made.

Finance Committee Member, Jeff Bergart, addressed the Committee.

- As previously mentioned, he will be traveling extensively next year.
- He had wanted to participate remotely, but it was not supported by the Moderator or Chairman.
- Tonight will be his last Finance Committee meeting. He resigned so that the new appointee will be able to participate in Pre-Town Meeting activities.
- Jeff recommends the Moderator replace him with another CPA.

7. Adjournment

At 8:52 p.m., it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

None

Respectfully submitted,

Finance Committee