

**Finance  
Committee  
MEETING  
MINUTES**

**March 26, 2025**

**Upton Town Hall, Room 203**

**Paul Flaherty, Stephen Bern, Shawn Craig, Nick Ensko and Rick McGuire  
Joe Laydon and Lyn Haggerty**

1 The Finance Committee meeting was opened at 7:05pm by Paul Flaherty.

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3 **Review and approving meeting minutes:**  
4 Paul Flaherty made the motion to approve the previously distributed and updated versions of the  
5 Finance Committee meeting minutes for November 12, 2024, February 4, 2025, February 11,  
6 2025, February 25, 205 and March 4, 2025, seconded by Nick Ensko. Unanimous approval.

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8 **Review current status of budget, budget line items and warrant articles:**  
9 Mr. Flaherty provided a brief overview of recent budget related activities. Steve Bern then  
10 walked through the current status of the budget line items and reviewed the Town Manager (TM)  
11 Budget Reconciliation one pager dated 3/15/25 that was distributed for review. The document  
12 shows the TM Recommendation values by Department, along with the proposed adjustments, to  
13 tie back to the balanced total TM Budget Recommendation. The next column shows the  
14 adjustments that have been communicated or discussed with the Finance Committee since the  
15 publication of the TM Recommendation. The proposed adjustments for discussion include  
16 reversing most of the proposed reductions by the TM to balance the recommendation, along with  
17 adjustments for Assistant Planner, Land Use & Inspectional Services and revised figures for  
18 MURSD, BVT and Norfolk Aggie. A few of the adjustments were not accounted for. Those  
19 included the Public Safety Director reduction, Library wages (submitted a revised budget) and  
20 Recreation Director being included in the General Fund (based on previous discussions to revisit  
21 that after the summer programs were accounted for). The total adjustments accounted for an  
22 increase of \$354,003. To offset these expenses, Local Receipts were proposed to be increased  
23 based on a comparison of the TM Recommendation, the past 3 year averages and input from the  
24 Finance Director. Mr. Bern explains that this is one scenario and it will need to be reviewed and  
25 vetted by FC, TM and FD. At this time, the budget has a variance of ~\$37k.

26 The Finance Committee discusses the line items and how the variance could be resolved. Mr.  
27 Laydon confirms that he will follow up with the FD for some outstanding questions and balances  
28 (i.e. overlay). The FC will continue the discussion about line items at the next meeting.

29 Mr. Bern then starts to discuss Draft V8 of the ATM Warrant. The intent is to review the items  
30 and get any questions, comments or concerns from the FC to ensure that we cover the items at  
31 the next meetings. Mr. Ensko mentions that the Capital Budget Committee met last night and  
32 approved the relevant articles for them to recommend with the exception of Article 32 – Fire  
33 Department – Apparatus Bay Floor Drain Repair for \$200,000. The Fire Department is still  
34 gathering details to support the article, and the CBC intends to join a future FC meeting to  
35 review details, discuss and vote on the article. For the remaining articles, the FC members and  
36 the TM discuss funding options, possible values for stabilization articles and how to account for  
37 the proposed Assessor certification (add line item in budget, similar to Treasurer/Collector). The  
38 next set of articles are related to the Schools. Mr. Laydon discussed BVT's request for a  
39 stabilization account and that he heard that some other towns have expressed concerns about  
40 transparency, etc. The FC discusses and asks questions about the similar MURSD account and  
41 transparency concerns. The trio of MURSD articles are then discussed and need some follow up  
42 to confirm values and approach. The remaining financial-related articles were discussed and

43 explained. Article 27 – Funding for Holy Angels Building Study is questioned. It is explained  
44 that the last minute article from last year related to placing the utility wires underground in the  
45 amount of \$25,000 is being repurposed to this effort along with additional Free Cash. The  
46 building itself may be proposed as an entertainment venue. Members of the FC expressed  
47 concerns about condition and potential cost to refurbish the building. The remaining articles are  
48 highlighted. Mr. Bern will reach out to Lakes, Ponds and Streams to discuss Article 37 at the  
49 April 9 meeting.

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51 **Discuss remaining budget process and meetings:**

52 The next Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 1 at 6:30 pm as a joint  
53 meeting with the Select Board. Along with budget updates, the main topic of this meeting will be  
54 year-end transfers and whether or not the FC and SB want line-item transfers to take place  
55 between wage and expense line items without any FC or SB review or approval. The FC also has  
56 meetings scheduled for Wednesday, April 2 and 9 at 7pm. April 2 will be the review sessions  
57 with MURSD and BVT, while April 9 could be the final review and recommendation meeting.  
58 Mr. Laydon mentions that the April 11 deadline is flexible if we need more time to complete the  
59 FC Recommendation.

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61 **Motion to adjourn** is made by Paul Flaherty at 9:25pm, seconded by Nick Ensko. Unanimous  
62 approval.

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64 Respectfully submitted,  
65 Stephen M. Bern, co-chair of the Finance Committee