

# Town of Sterling



## Joint Finance and Capital Budget Committee BUTTERICK MUNICIPAL BUILDING 1 PARK STREET, Room: B12 Tuesday, February 13, 2024, 6:30 pm MINUTES

### **Finance Committee (7):**

George Handy, Chair (FinCom)

Joseph King, Vice Chair (FinCom)

Members: Paul Austin, Ezequiel Ayala, Mark Gauthier, Christina Lashua, Lynne Sheppard

### **Capital Budget Committee (7):**

Lynne Sheppard, Chair (CBC)

Liz Pape, Vice Chair (CBC)

Members: Paul Austin, Ezequiel Ayala, Mark Gauthier, Joseph King, Christina Lashua

Recording Secretary: Valerie Handy

## **I. PRELIMINARIES**

### **Meetings called to order 6:30pm. Roll call**

**Attendees:** G. Handy, J. King, L. Sheppard, L. Pape, E. Ayala, M. Gauthier, P. Austin (Zoom)

**Absent:** C. Lashua

**Other Attendees:** Bill Caldwell, Town Administrator (Zoom), Fred Aponte, Town Accountant (Zoom)

**Approved: Minutes from 02/06/2024 without attachments:** motion by Joe King: Until discussed and agreed upon, Chapter 90 and Fair Share Funding spreadsheet will not be included with the minutes of 02/06/2024. One abstention, motion carries.

## **II. AGENDA ITEMS (time permitting)**

**Follow up discussion on setting Capital Budget Target Levels:** The 5% of Operating Budget target, as stated in the CBC charges, was discussed and it was decided to continue the discussion after the UMASS consultant's presentation scheduled for 02/15/2024.

**Review and discuss latest municipal Omnibus budget with respect to \$400K municipal goal:** It was mentioned that the TA has been working hard to satisfy this target. There is still some work to be done as we continue discussions.

**\*Conduct department by department review to determine if we need more input from department heads:** A vote was taken for each separate budget request in the latest rendition of the FinCom Omnibus Budget Worksheet. A unanimous vote would preclude the item from further discussion unless a member brings forth a reason to continue discussion. A nay vote from any member would identify a request that would demand further discussion. The nay votes were: Board of Health, DPW, Fire and Ambulance, Insurance, Worcester Retirement Assessment, Debt Service and Schools. These will be further discussed in coming meetings.

**\*Propose any revisions or further investigations needed:** Committee members were asked to formulate any questions regarding each "nay" request.

**\*Review the need to invite selected department heads to subsequent meetings for further budget review:** Committee decided to invite the Fire/Ambulance, Board of Health, School Committee members and Historical Society to our 02/20 meeting. The DPW and Police Department would be invited for our 02/27 meeting.

**Discuss draft letter to legislators regarding school funding and review draft for posting to Meetinghouse News:** Draft letters to the local newspaper, legislators and school committee members were discussed. Liz asked if there were any further requests for edits, they be sent to her to include for further discussion. It was reminded that the newspaper article needed to be submitted by March 1 and the school committee members would be invited to attend our 02/20/2024 meeting.

**Review FinCom and CBC Roles and Responsibilities with respect to Sterling Financial Policy:** Summation of the Roles and Responsibilities, abstracted from the Bylaws and Sterling Financial Policy Manual, were discussed and adopted as reflective of the charges of the Finance Committee and the Capital Budget Committee.

## Town of Sterling

**Old/New Business:** Joe King discussed modifications to the Capital Budget Page on the web. Chapter 90 and Fair Share are deficit spending, reimbursed by the State. Joe also reviewed a bonding strategy of every other year; replacing Omnibus budget spending. **Approved Motion by Joe King: 2<sup>nd</sup> and unanimously approved: Add two lines to the Capital Budget Item for Roadwork; one line showing cross-funding by Chapter 90 and another line showing cross-funding for Fair Share Funding. Also add another line item showing "Town Contribution".**

**Next Meeting: March 20, 2024, 6:30**