



# Town of Sterling

**Joint Finance and Capital Budget  
Committee**  
BUTTERICK MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
1 PARK STREET, Room: 205  
Tuesday, March 19, 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**

- All Present. (E. Ayala, Remote)
- Unanimous Approval: 3/12/2024 meeting minutes.

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

1. Review and approve FinCom wording for the expected Fire Fighter warrant article:  
**Approved motion:** By G. Handy and 2<sup>nd</sup> to accept the wording and to not recommend Article 5: Lashua abstained, Gauthier no, 5 approved. Wording, as presented, was updated to reflect the comments made by Mark regarding the first meeting of the newly formed fireman staffing committee.
2. Review and approve content and wording for April Meetinghouse News article:  
**Approved motion:** By L. Sheppard and 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous approval. To accept and proceed with the submission of the article to the Meetinghouse News. Discussion was held and met with a few edits of the article as presented.
3. Follow up on Select Board comments/approval of the Superintendent letter and discuss/approve next steps: Joe relayed his brief discussion with the SB chair. His belief is there will be a favorable outcome at their 03/27/24 meeting. Upon receipt of the signed document from the SB, the Finance Committee will counter-sign and have it delivered via e-mail.
4. Conduct follow up review and discussion of the 3/13/2024 joint Select Board/Fincom/WRSD meeting:  
**Approved motion:** By G. Handy, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous approval. Recommend Article 2 of the FY25 Warrant.  
**Approved motion:** By G. Handy, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous approval. FinCom does not recommend Article 3 of the FY25 Warrant (WRSD discretionary spending).  
**Approved motion:** By G. Handy, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Unanimous approval. FinCom recommends Article 4 (Monty Tech) of the FY25 Warrant.
5. Review recently received (3/13/2004) Warrant, markup corrections for return to Bill Caldwell. The Omnibus Budget briefly discussed.  
**Approved Motion:** By J. King, 2<sup>nd</sup>. To hold out Board of Health budget request at ATM for separate discussion and FinCom recommendation. L. Sheppard abstains. Remainder approved.  
Discussion regarding the requested wage and salary figures presented by the BOH ensued. P. Austin had requested an explanation for the 64.9% increase over the past 5 years at their stand and present. No explanation has been received. A wage salary Budget figure of \$139,543, which represents a growth of 7.6%/year (commensurate with the overall municipal wage and salary growth) was discussed.  
**Approved Motion:** By G. Handy, 2<sup>nd</sup>. To recommend a Board of Health FY25 Omnibus Budget figure of \$139,543. L. Sheppard abstains. Remainder approved.  
Some discussion ensued and as this was a draft, the committee would await the release of the TA's next draft for further discussion at the 03/26 joint meeting.

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6. Conduct FinCom vote on non-CIF funded items on the Capital Budget funding worksheet. Make any final adjustments and align the warrant to funding decisions.

**Approved motion:** By G. Handy 2<sup>nd</sup>. Accept the funding source matrix as presented. Unanimous approval.

A member voiced disagreement regarding further funding of the OPEB reserve fund.

7. Next meeting: 03/26/2024 to review and vote on articles and to finalize the Finance/CB Committees' FY25 Warrant introductory message. This is in preparation for the joint meeting with the Select Board on 03/27/24.
8. Other/new/old business – J. King would like to see a long-range spending plan from the historical commission. He also suggests that the historical commission use fund raising as a new source of revenue.