

Town of Sterling
Joint Finance and Capital Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2023

Joint Meeting called to order at 6:30pm by Chris Paquette and Lynne Sheppard.

Finance Committee Attendees: Chris Paquette (Chair), Lynne Sheppard, Joe King George Handy, Christina Lashua, Paul Austin

Capital Committee Attendees: Lynne Sheppard (Chair) Liz Pape (Remote), Paul Austin, Chris Paquette, Joe King, Christina Lashua

Other Attendees: Bill Caldwell, Town Administrator; Fred Aponte, Town Accountant, Valerie Handy, Recording Secretary

Approval of prior meeting minutes of 3/7/2023. Motion by Chris Paquette, 2nd Lynne Sheppard. Unanimous approval.

Agenda Items:

Review of latest revision of draft warrant provided by Bill Caldwell. Discuss any comments and recommended edits. Hold roll-call vote on each Article item requiring Finance Committee and Capital Committee recommendation approval. Results as follows:

Motion to include roll call vote on non-anonymous approval of Warrant Articles. Motion by Christina Lashua, 2nd George Handy. Unanimous approval.

Finance Committee Votes:

Approved: ARTICLE 1: FY2024 TOWN OPERATING BUDGET: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, 86 \$13,295,903.00. Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Christina Lashua. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 2: WACHUSETT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ASSESSMENT: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, \$13,135,104. Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Lynne Sheppard. Roll call vote: 4-Aye, 2-Nay.

Approved: ARTICLE 3: MONTACHUSETT VOCATIONAL REGIONAL SCHOOL ASSESSMENT: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds, \$1,018,231. Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Joe King. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 4: SNOW & ICE DEFICIT (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Free Cash, \$225,000. Motion by Joe King, 2nd by Lynne Sheppard. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 5: ELECTED OFFICERS COMPENSATION (Consent). Motion by George Handy, 2nd Christina Lashua. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 6: MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD COMPENSATION (Consent). Motion by George Handy, 2nd Christina Lashua. Unanimous approval.

Approval: ARTICLE 7: STABILIZATION FUND (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$250,000. Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Christina Lashua. Unanimous Approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 8: CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$400,000 Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Christina Lashua. Roll call vote: 4-Aye, 2-Nay.

Approved: ARTICLE 9: OPEB TRUST FUND (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer \$217,000. Motion by George Handy, 2nd Christina Lashua. Roll-call vote: 4-Aye, 2-Nay.

Approved: ARTICLE 10: RESERVE FUND FOR FY24 (Consent). Motion by George Handy, 2nd Christina Lashua. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 11: AMBULANCE RECEIPTS TO CAPITAL INVESTMENT FUND (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer from Ambulance Receipts the sum of \$150,000 to the Capital Investment Fund. Motion by George Handy, 2nd Christina Lashua. Roll-call vote: 5-Aye, 1-Nay

Approved: ARTICLE 12: PRIOR YEAR WARRANT ARTICLES (Consent) To see if the Town will vote to transfer remaining funds from previous Town Meeting warrant articles or other active accounts listed , to the Capital Investment Fund. Motion by Joe King, 2nd Lynne Sheppard. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 13: FY2024 WATER OPERATING BUDGET To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$1,311,286. Motion by George Handy, 2nd Chris Lashua. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 14: WATER DEPARTMENT CAPITAL To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, \$980,000

Approved: ARTICLE 15: CAPITAL PROJECTS AND FUNDING SOURCES To see if the Town will vote to transfer a total of \$1,682,200 from the following funding sources: From Free Cash (FC) a total of \$682,200 from the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) \$865,000, Sale of Used Equipment (SUE) \$40,000, Cemetery Lot Sales (CLS) \$45,000; or take any action in relation thereto. Item Number Department Request Cost Funding Source. Motion by Lynne Sheppard, 2nd Christina Lashua. Roll-call vote. 4-Aye, 2-Nay

Approved: ARTICLE 16: DPW FACILITY FEASIBILITY STUDY To see if the Town will vote to appropriate \$50,000 from the Capital Investment Fund for the purpose of studying the Town's options of the DPW facility. Motion by Christina Lashua, 2nd by George Handy. Roll-call vote: 5-Aye, 1-NayU.

Approved: ARTICLE 18: COMPENSATION SCHEDULE To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 201 Personnel Bylaw to update Attachment 2 – Compensation Schedule as updated by the Compensation Study completed in FY 2023 and funded by previous Town Meetings; or take any action in relation thereto. Motion by Christina Lashua, 2nd George Handy. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 19: COMPENSATION SCHEDULE – CALL FIRE FORCE To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 201 Personnel Bylaw to update Attachment 3 – Compensation Schedule Call Fire Force. Motion by Joe King, 2nd by Lynne Sheppard. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 20: STIPEND POSITIONS To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 201 Personnel Bylaw to update Attachment 4 – Stipend Positions; or take any action in relation thereto. he General Bylaws, Chapter 201 Personnel Bylaw to update Attachment 3 – Compensation Schedule Call Fire Force; or take any action in relation thereto. Motion by Joe King, 2nd Lynne Sheppard. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 21: MISCELLANEOUS POSITIONS To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws, Chapter 201 Personnel Bylaw to update Attachment 6 – Miscellaneous Positions. Motion by Christina Lashua, 2nd by George Handy. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 22: LONGEVITY SCHEDULE To see if the Town will strike the language of Sterling Personnel Bylaw Chapter 205-5 section C as follows and replace it with the proceeding language. Motion by George Handy, 2nd by Joe King. Unanimous approval

Approved: ARTICLE 26: GENERAL BYLAW TRASH USER FEES To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town's General Bylaws Chapter 136 Section 6, No user fee for Town Collection, and additions shown in bold/underline; or take any action in relation thereto. Residential property owners and tenants shall not be charged any user fee for the Town's collection and disposal of residential trash up to a maximum weekly volume established by the Board of Public Works. The Board of Public Works may assess a reasonable user fee for the purchase of excess volume by any residential customers through the sale of bags or other mechanism. Motion by Joe King, 2nd by George Handy. 4-Aye, 2-Nay.

Not Approved: ARTICLE 31: WEST STERLING SCHOOLHOUSE REFERENDUM To see if the Town should continue to keep, maintain, and update the West Sterling Schoolhouse located adjacent to the intersection of Route 62 and Route 140. Motion by Christina Lashua, 2nd by Lynne Sheppard. Non-approval unanimous.

Not Approved: To reconsider Finance Committee previous vote on ARTICLE 16: Motion by Lynne Sheppard, 2nd Joe King. 4-Nay, 2-Aye.

Capital Committee Votes:

Approved: ARTICLE 14: WATER DEPARTMENT CAPITAL To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, borrow, or transfer from available funds, 309 \$980,000. Motion by Christina Lashua 2nd Chris Paquette. Unanimous approval.

Approved: ARTICLE 15: CAPITAL PROJECTS AND FUNDING SOURCES To see if the Town will vote to transfer a total of \$1,682,200 from the following funding sources: From Free Cash (FC) a total of \$682,200 from the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) \$865,000, Sale of Used Equipment (SUE) \$40,000, Cemetery Lot Sales (CLS) \$45,000; or take any action in relation thereto. Item Number Department Request Cost Funding Source. Motion Chris Paquette, 2nd Christina Lashua. Roll-call vote. 5-Aye, 1-Nay

Not Approved: ARTICLE 31: WEST STERLING SCHOOLHOUSE REFERENDUM To see if the Town should continue to keep, maintain, and update the West Sterling Schoolhouse located adjacent to the intersection of Route 62 and Route 140. Motion by Chris Paquette, 2nd Christina Lashua. Non-approval unanimous.

Next Meeting: April 26, 2023 6:30 pm

Meeting adjourned 8:30pm. Motion George Handy, 2nd Chris Paquette. Unanimous approval.