



Town of Concord
Concord Finance Committee

AGENDA

June 20, 2024, at 6:30 PM

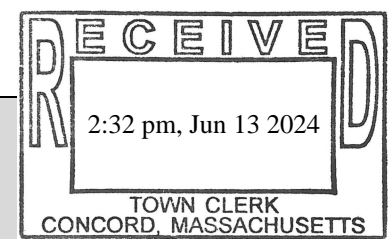
Town House, 22 Monument Sq., 2nd Fl. Select Board Conference Room

Notice of public meeting as required by M.G.L. Chpt.30A §18-28

HYBRID IN-PERSON AND VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM

Join the meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87351301283?pwd=BSM29M0ZuLd0cWO29D8RHyKOMhMcSg.GdKdWZWPYbC7jPs>

Meeting ID: 873 5130 1283 Passcode: 790640 Dial in Toll-Free: 833-548-0282



Please be advised that this open meeting is being broadcast live via Zoom and MMN and recorded for playback online, video-on-demand viewing at <https://concordma.gov/2409/Government>. The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before said meeting, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may be addressed. Items may be taken out of order and at times differ from those listed below. Other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. **Video or call will be muted upon joining meeting please use the "raise your hand" feature in the zoom meeting to ask to speak. ATTENDEES ARE REMINDED THAT BY ATTENDING THIS MEETING THAT YOU CONSENT TO YOUR LIKENESS AND AUDIO BEING USED AND REBROADCAST BY MMN.**

6:30 PM	1. Call to Order
6:30 PM	2. Public Comment Public Comment is limited to up to 15 minutes, with no more than 3 minutes allocated to any one speaker. Public Comment is limited to items that are not on the agenda.
6:45 PM	3. Liaison Updates
6:55 PM	4. Updated Finance Committee Goals and Milestones/Schedule
7:05 PM	5 Guidelines Process: FY25 Debrief
7:25 PM	6. Guidelines Process: FY26 Kickoff
7:45 PM	7. Correspondence <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review and discussion as applicable
7:50 PM	8. Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none">Approve the minutes of (as available):<ul style="list-style-type: none">March 7, 21, and 28, 2024April 25, and 30, 2024May 1, and 23, 2024
8:00 PM	9. Recap of Action Items/ Adjournment

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 18, 2024 @ 6:30 PM and Thursday, August 22, 2024 @6:30 PM



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

June 20, 2024

3

Liaison Updates

Finance Committee liaisons to provide updates

Requested by: Chief Financial Officer

Action Sought: to provide update

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Attached is a list of Finance Committee liaisons to various Town committees. Liaisons will provide a verbal update, if any, to their assigned committees.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

Liaison Updates

Board/Committee	Assigned Liaison(s)
2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force	Kathy Cuocolo
Board of Assessors (new for FY25)	Pat Geyer
Community Preservation Committee	Kathy Cuocolo
Concord 250 th Committee (new for FY25)	Eric Dahlberg
Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust	Lois Wasoff
Concord Municipal Light Plant	Karlen Reed
Economic Vitality Committee	Quazi Sadruzzaman
MCI Concord Advisory Board (new for FY25)	Don Kupka
Middle School Building Committee	Suresh Bhatia
Minuteman Vocational Technical HS	Paul Rodriguez
Planning Board	Sri Tupil
Public Works Commission	Karlen Reed
Recreation Commission	Peggy Briggs
Schools (CPS and CCRSD)	Dee Ortner & Pat Geyer
Select Board	Eric Dahlberg
Warner's Pond Task Force (new for FY25)	Karlen Reed



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

June 20, 2024

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Finance Committee FY25 Goals and Milestones/Schedule

Discuss Finance Committee FY25 Goals and Milestones/Schedule

Requested by: FC Chair

Action Sought: discussion dependent

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

The Finance Committee Chair Eric Dahlberg has requested this agenda item. The Finance Committee will be reviewing a updated schedule for May 2024 through FY25 leading up to the 2025 Annual Town Meeting. There will also be a discussion about updated goals, including Operations, Capital Budget, Revenue, Financial Policies, Liaisons, Communicating with Taxpayers, and any other item(s).

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

FY25 Schedule and Milestones | Version 2 (1 of 2)

May 2024

Priorities:

- Kick-off FY25
- ATM debrief
- Review mission, roles and responsibilities
- Make liaison assignment picks
- Start goals and key issues discussion

Meeting date(s):
Thu 5/23

Jun 2024

Priorities:

- Finalize liaison assignments
- Finalize goals and key issues to monitor
- Recap FY25 guidelines process and preview FY26

Meeting date(s):
Thu 6/20

Jul 2024

Priorities:

- Draft FY26 informational request letters to Town, CPS, CCRSD, and Minuteman to be sent in August.
- Notify Town, CPS, CCRSD, and Minuteman that FY26 requests are coming.

Meeting date(s):
Thu 7/18

Aug 2024

Priorities:

- Review FY26 guideline inputs/metrics
- Finalize and send FY26 informational request letters to Town, CPD, and CCRSD

Meeting date(s):
Thu 8/22

Sep 2024

Priorities:

- Approve FY26 guideline inputs/metrics
- Review estimated FY26 revenue
- Review five-year revenue and cost projections

Meeting date(s):
Thu 9/12
Thu 9/26

Oct 2024

Priorities:

- Review preliminary Town, CPS, CCRSD (with Carlisle FinCom), and Minuteman FY26 budgets
- Review estimated tax impact of preliminary FY26 guidelines
- Approve FY26 preliminary guidelines
- Kick-off planning for annual report

Meeting date(s):
Thu 10/10
Thu 10/24

Nov 2024

Priorities:

- Review revised five-year revenue and cost projections
- Review tax impact of final FY26 guidelines
- Approve final FY26 guidelines
- Review long-term capital plan (public hearing)

Meeting date(s):
Thu 11/7
Thu 11/21

Note: For planning purposes only. All dates are tentative at this time.

FY25 Schedule and Milestones | Version 2 (2 of 2)

Dec 2024	Jan 2025	Feb 2025	Mar 2025	Apr 2025	May 2025	Jun 2025
<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review revised Town, CPS, CCRSD FY26 budgets	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review FinCom-relevant warrant articlesDraft annual report	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Prepare for public hearingsContinue drafting annual report	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Conduct public hearings:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Town, CPS, CCRSDCPC and MinutemanEnterprise fundsContinue drafting annual report	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Vote on FinCom-relevant warrant articlesFinalize annual report	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Mail annual reportFinal preparations for ATM	<p>Priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participate in ATM
<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 12/19</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 1/16</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 2/13</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 3/6, Thu 3/20, Thu 3/27</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 4/3 Thu 4/17</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Thu 5/8 Thu 5/22</p>	<p>Meeting date(s): Mon 6/2 (ATM begins)</p>

Note: For planning purposes only. All dates are tentative at this time.

FY25 Goals | Version 2

Updated based on 5/23 discussion and follow-up input from Finance Committee members

Operations

- Hit all target dates for key Finance Committee milestones detailed in big picture schedule (preliminary and final guidelines, 5-year tax projection, annual report, etc.)

Capital

- Develop unified long-term capital plan (Town and Schools)
- Treat capital similarly across budget units

Revenue

- Work with key stakeholders (Select Board, Economic Vitality, 2229 Task Force, MCI Task Force, etc) to identify and prioritize opportunities for revenue generation (outside of the property tax).

Financial Policies

- Support staff initiative to update and document financial policies

Liaisons

- Prioritize areas we flagged for additional attention in FY25 (Minuteman Tech, 2229 Main Street, CPC, etc)

Communications

- Continue focus on communications (with Dee as our liaison)
- Collaborate with Carlisle Finance Committee (especially on CCRSD)
- Make 5-year tax projection and annual report more interactive – allow taxpayers to adjust/estimate impacts

Others?

- Others?



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

June 20, 2024

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Guidelines Process

Guidelines Overview and FY25 Debrief

Requested by: FC Chair

Action Sought: discussion dependent

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

The Finance Committee Chair Eric Dahlberg has requested this agenda item. The Finance Committee will discuss the Guidelines overview and the goals, which are:

1. Consider Town and School cost growth
2. Reflect Taxpayers' ability to pay for services
3. Strive for a balanced approach
4. Identify potential cost savings measures, efficiencies, and where additional funding may be necessary.

FY25 Final Guideline for increases in spending subject to guidelines were a 3.66% aggregate YOY increase: 4.45% for the Town (including Tier 1 capital), 3.26% for CPS, and 3.26% for CCRSD

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

The guideline process, the output of which are **recommendations for budget increases for the next fiscal year**, is central to the Finance Committee’s duties.

Guidelines overview

- **Established annually** by the Finance Committee in close collaboration with the Town and Schools.
- Defined as the **Finance Committee’s recommended increase over the prior year for “spending subject to guidelines.”**¹
 - Published for each of the town’s primary budgeting entities: Town Government, Concord Public Schools, and Concord’s portion of the Concord Carlisle Regional School District.
 - For State Fiscal Year 2025 (SFY25), 75% of planned operating spending was subject to guidelines, as follows:

	Total spending plan for SFY25	Subject to Guidelines	Non-guidelines ¹
Town	\$64,467,947	54%	46%
Schools	\$74,389,428	94%	6%
Total	\$138,857,375	75%	25%

Guidelines goals

- 1** Consider Town and School **cost growth**.
- 2** Reflect taxpayers’ **ability to pay** for services.
- 3** Strive for a **balanced approach**.
- 4** Along the way, **identify potential cost-savings measures, efficiencies**, as well as areas **where additional funding may be necessary** to meet community needs.

(1) Spending for items such as debt service, Town and CPS non-teacher employee benefits and retirement, Minuteman Tech Regional HS appropriation, and liability insurance are not included in the guideline process. The guideline specifies the amount of the increase over the prior year’s “spending subject to guidelines” available to each unit for the next fiscal year.

For FY25, the Finance Committee employed a three-pronged approach to the guideline process to assess sustainable tax growth, budgetary needs, and public sentiment: **Top Down, Bottom Up, and Community engagement**

Guidelines approach for FY25

- **(a) Top Down: Developed range of sustainable tax growth**
 - Developed and aligned on metrics to inform guidelines (*details to follow*).
 - Calculated Desired Levy¹ and compared to agreed-upon metrics.
 - Also accounted for other revenue and “fixed” non-guideline expenses and long-term financial sustainability.
- **(b) Bottom Up: Understood budgetary needs of Town and Schools**
 - Obtained budget increase requests from Town and Schools. Also aimed to gather 5-year projections to gauge long-term needs and sustainability.
 - Compared to calculated guidelines, as well as to historical increases, and to peer communities.
- **(c) Engaged with the community**
 - Aimed to understand concerns and priorities of residents.
 - Strove to provide clear and ongoing documentation of rationale and analysis.

Notes:

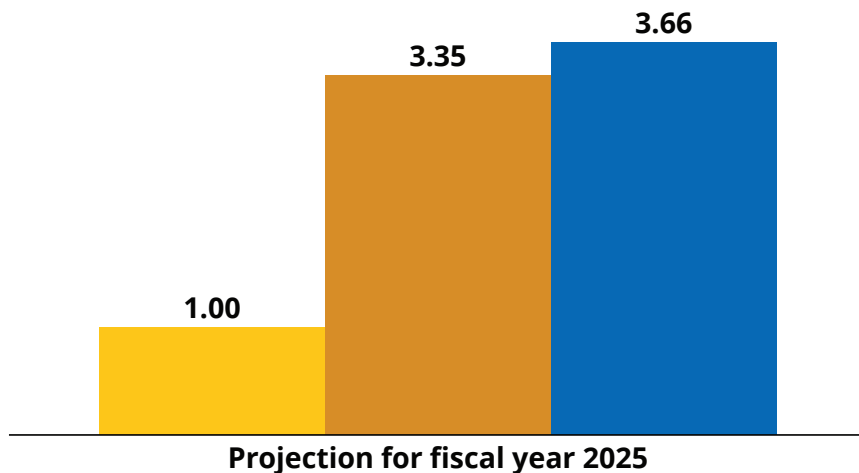
(1) Levy Limit less Retained Capacity (i.e. rainy-day cushion, typically 4-5%). Levy Limit = Prior year levy limit + 2.5% + New growth estimate from Town.

Concord, Massachusetts Finance Committee 6/20/24

(a) Top Down: In FY25, the Finance Committee aligned on three metrics to inform the guideline process: **(1.) projected real personal income growth per capita, (2.) nominal personal income growth per capita, and (3.) projected inflation relevant to Concord's expenses**

Metrics to inform guidelines for fiscal year 2025, %

- Projected real personal income growth per capita
- Projected nominal personal income growth per capita
- Projected inflation relevant to Concord's school and town expenses



Sources and notes: All data sourced from Congressional Budget Office Budget and Economic Outlook projections as of July 2023 (most recent available). Quarterly data converted to state/town fiscal year.

- Projected real personal income growth per capita: Projected growth in personal income growth per capita net of projected inflation.
- Projected nominal personal income growth per capita: Projected growth in personal income growth per capita unadjusted for projected inflation.
- Projected inflation relevant to Concord's town and school expenses: Blended rate (to reflect Concord's projected cost breakdown) of Employment cost index (ECI), private wages and salaries (80%) and chained weighted consumer price index urban (CPI-U) for goods and services (20%).

Metrics detail

- **Metrics aim to reflect residents' ability to pay as well as inflation for Concord's expenses, as follows:**
 - **Ability to pay recognizes projected growth in residents' personal income:**
 - (1) Projected nominal personal income growth per capita; *and*
 - (2) Projected real personal income growth per capita.
 - **Inflation for Concord's expenses recognizes projected cost growth of School and Town budgets:**
 - Projected employment cost index (ECI), private wages and salaries.
 - Projected chained weighted consumer price index urban (CPI-U) for goods and services.
 - (3) Blended rate (80% ECI / 20% CPI-U) to reflect projected cost breakdown for Concord.
- **Metrics are not guidelines.** Metrics and guidelines are separate but the metrics are objective measures that should inform the final overall guidelines. Metrics are a tool to inform the establishment of a guidelines number(s).

The **FY 2025 Final Guideline** for increases in **spending subject to guidelines** were: a 3.66% aggregate YOY increase: 4.45% for the Town (including Tier 1 capital), 3.26% for CPS, and 3.26% for CCRSD

Spending subject to guidelines, FY19-24 approved and FY25 guideline

Subject to guidelines	Approved spending subject to guidelines						FY25 Guideline
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	
Town Operating	\$24,050,513	\$26,761,648	\$26,949,809	\$28,492,894	\$29,735,045	\$31,711,833	\$32,745,639
Town Tier 1 Capital	\$1,945,000	\$1,945,000	\$1,081,855	\$800,000	\$1,509,700	\$1,725,000	\$2,180,000
TOWN total	\$25,995,513	\$28,706,648	\$28,031,664	\$29,292,894	\$31,244,745	\$33,436,833	\$34,925,639
CPS	\$38,461,880	\$39,390,163	\$40,777,193	\$41,708,424	\$43,010,486	\$45,047,176	\$46,515,714
CCRSD	\$19,544,198	\$19,996,874	\$20,436,322	\$21,135,593	\$21,782,979	\$22,302,834	\$23,029,906
SCHOOLS total	\$58,006,078	\$59,387,037	\$61,213,515	\$62,844,017	\$64,793,465	\$67,350,010	\$69,545,620
GRAND TOTAL	\$84,001,591	\$88,093,685	\$89,245,179	\$92,136,911	\$96,038,210	\$100,786,843	\$104,471,259

	Year-over-year % change						FY25 Guideline
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	
Town Operating		11.27%	0.70%	5.73%	4.36%	6.65%	3.26%
Town Tier 1 Capital		0.00%	-44.38%	-26.05%	88.71%	14.26%	26.38%
TOWN total		10.43%	-2.35%	4.50%	6.66%	7.02%	4.45%
CPS		2.41%	3.52%	2.28%	3.12%	4.74%	3.26%
CCRSD		2.32%	2.20%	3.42%	3.06%	2.39%	3.26%
SCHOOLS total		2.38%	3.08%	2.66%	3.10%	3.95%	3.26%
GRAND TOTAL		4.87%	1.31%	3.24%	4.23%	4.94%	3.66%

(1) COLA: Cost of Living Adjustment.

Detail and rationale

- **3.66% was the highest rate of the three metrics agreed upon** by the Finance Committee.
- **All operating units (Town, CPS, and CCRSD) were provided with the same 3.26% increase as budgets were in early stages**, and it was not definitively clear that any unit had greater or lesser needs than others.
- **3.66% was a weighted average of a 3.26% for each of the operating units and a 26.38% increase for Town Tier 1 Capital.** This means that the weighted average for the Town was 4.45%. Town Tier 1 capital spending was still recovering from large cuts made during the COVID 19 pandemic.
- The Committee considered that **Tier 1 Capital is treated differently for the Town than it is for the Schools.** For the Town, Tier 1 Capital is included in the spending subject to guidelines and for the Schools it is not.
- 3.26% increase for the Schools operating **budget allowed for an approximate 2.3% COLA increase for school personnel** based on the Fiscal Year 2025 estimate provided by the Schools, all else equal.

Discussion: What went well? What could be improved for the FY26 process?

What went well?

- (1) **Showed town residents the impact of current spending on future tax increases.**
- (2) Guideline accounted for the fact that **Tier 1 capital being treated differently** for the Town versus the Schools.
- (3)
- (4)

What didn't go well? What are ideas for improvement?

▪ What didn't go well?

- (1) Due to timing, Guidelines committee **did not have enough information to present a preliminary guideline.** Only a final guideline was presented.
- (2) Guidelines committee did not have information on **Concord-Carlisle enrollment shifts**, so we did not adjust school guidelines to account for enrollment shifts.
- (3) Because **capital is treated differently** for Town and Schools, the Town had the appearance of receiving a higher guideline.
- (4) Communication of **how Town and School budgets differ.**
- (5)
- (6)

▪ What are ideas for improvement?

- (1) Encourage adjustment to **treat Tier 1 capital the same** across Town and Schools.
- (2) In addition to showing the percentage change in future taxes (i.e., 7.8% per year), **put more emphasis on the absolute change and on the total taxes** residents can expect to pay in future years.
- (3)
- (4)



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

June 20, 2024

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Guidelines Process

FY26 Kickoff

Requested by: FC Chair

Action Sought: discussion dependent

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

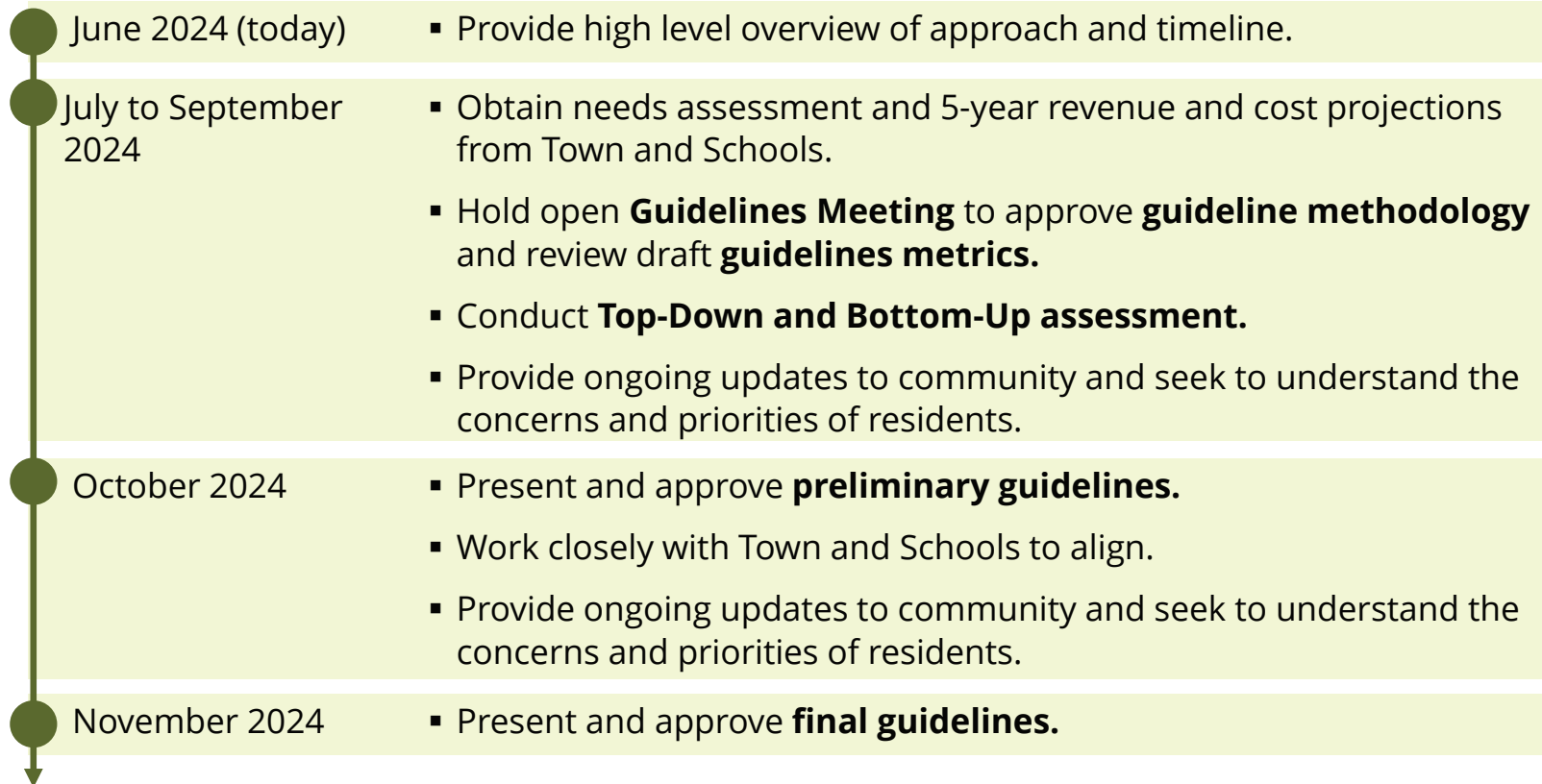
The Finance Committee Chair Eric Dahlberg has requested this agenda item. The Finance Committee will discuss FY26 Guideline Process with a high level overview at tonight's meeting, followed by the expectations from July through November where the final guidelines will be recommended and voted.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

The guideline process starts in July and concludes at the end of November

Finance Committee guideline process timeline





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Correspondence

Mail, letters, emails, presentation, etc.

Requested by: Chief Financial Officer

Action Sought: to provide update

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Since the last Finance Committee meeting on May 23rd, the Finance Committee Chair shared two emails with the rest of the Finance Committee recapping action items from the May 23, 2024, Finance Committee meeting and another including updated liaison assignments.

The Recreation Commission offered to make a presentation to the Finance Committee to present their final strategic plan. It was decided by the Select Board and Finance Committee Chairs that they could do so at a joint meeting of both committees on July 8, 2024, at 6:30 pm. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

From: [Eric Dahlberg](#)
To: [Dee Ortner](#); [Don Kupka](#); [Greg Guarriello](#); [John Garofalo](#); [Kathy Cuocolo](#); [Suresh Bhatia](#); [Lois Wasoff](#); [Lyndsey Lis](#); [Peggy Briggs](#); [O. Sadruzzaman](#); [sri tupili](#); [Paul Rodriguez](#); [Pat Geyer](#); [Karlen Reed](#)
Cc: [Anthony Ansaldi](#); [Elizabeth Rourke](#)
Subject: 5/23 FinCom meeting: Our action items
Date: Friday, May 24, 2024 1:19:07 PM
Attachments: [FinCom Slides - Post-Meeting Update 2024-05-23.pdf](#)

Hi everyone:

Thank you for a productive and efficient meeting last night - and welcome again to our new colleagues Pat, Paul, and Sri.

Here are the action items we identified, with some additional details and requested turnaround times:

#	Item	Owner(s)	Description and notes	Response requested by
1	Review updated liaison assignments	All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the updated list of liaison assignments (Slide 7 in the attached set of updated meeting slides) and let me know if you have any last concerns. Once we're aligned on the final list, we'll get it posted and communicate assignments to appropriate boards/committees. Note that we still have two entities without liaisons - let me know if you're interested. 	Noon on Tue 5/28
2	Review tentative schedule	All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the big picture tentative schedule (Slides 8-9) and share your proposed changes. This schedule will evolve as we go during the year, so no need to get it fully baked at this early point in our process. 	5 PM on Fri 6/7
3	Review goals	All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our very preliminary goals (Slide 10) and share your proposed additions. These are priorities we'd like to tackle over and above the responsibilities in the schedule on Slides 8-9. 	5 PM on Fri 6/7

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We'll discuss and finalize the list at our June meeting. 	
4	Send holds for and post next meetings	Anthony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send calendar holds and post meeting dates/times for our next three meetings: Thu 6/20, Thu 7/18, and Thu 8/22. • As discussed, we'll try the 6:30-8:00 timeslot and see how it works. 	5 PM on Fri 5/31

Please respond only to me with your inputs on the action items above - to avoid any issues related to Open Meeting Law restrictions on deliberating via email.

Thank you and have a great holiday weekend,
Eric

From: [Eric Dahlberg](#)
To: [Dee Ortner](#); [Don Kupka](#); [Greg Guarriello](#); [John Garofalo](#); [Kathy Cuocolo](#); [Suresh Bhatia](#); [Lois Wasoff](#); [Lyndsey Lis](#); [Peggy Briggs](#); [O. Sadruzzaman](#); [sri tupil](#); [Paul Rodriguez](#); [Pat Geyer](#); [Karlen Reed](#)
Cc: [Anthony Ansaldi](#); [Elizabeth Rourke](#)
Subject: Re: 5/23 FinCom meeting: Our action items
Date: Tuesday, May 28, 2024 2:56:57 PM

Colleagues:

I hope everyone had a nice Memorial Day weekend. Two follow-ups for you:

- Below is a table listing our finalized liaison assignments. We'll get this posted on the [Finance Committee member page](#) and communicated to relevant chairs. Please proceed to reach out to the chair of your assigned board/committee on your own as well - all town boards and committees are listed [here](#). Please let me know if you have any questions (please direct your questions to me only to avoid issues related to Open Meeting Law restrictions on deliberating via email).
- At our 5/23 meeting, Kathy shared that the 2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force will host a site visit and that Finance Committee members are welcome to attend. That visit will take place tomorrow - Wed 5/29 - at noon. Visitors are asked to meet at the trailer/office parking lot (take a hard left as you enter the property). Please coordinate directly and one-on-one with Kathy, who is included in this distribution.

Thank you,
Eric

Board/Committee	Assigned Liaison(s)
2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force	Kathy Cuocolo
Board of Assessors (new for FY25)	Pat Geyer
Community Preservation Committee	Kathy Cuocolo
Concord 250 th Committee (new for FY25)	Eric Dahlberg
Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust	Lois Wasoff
Concord Municipal Light Plant	Karlen Reed
Economic Vitality Committee	Quazi Sadruzzaman
MCI Concord Advisory Board (new for FY25)	Don Kupka
Middle School Building Committee	Suresh Bhatia
Minuteman Vocational Technical HS	Paul Rodriguez
Planning Board	Sri Tupil
Public Works Commission	Karlen Reed
Recreation Commission	Peggy Briggs
Schools (CPS and CCRSD)	Dee Ortner & Pat Geyer
Select Board	Eric Dahlberg
Warner's Pond Task Force (new for FY25)	Karlen Reed

On Fri, May 24, 2024 at 1:16 PM Eric Dahlberg <ericdahlberg@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi everyone:

Thank you for a productive and efficient meeting last night - and welcome again to our new

colleagues Pat, Paul, and Sri.

Here are the action items we identified, with some additional details and requested turnaround times:

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1	Review updated liaison assignments	All members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review the updated list of liaison assignments (Slide 7 in the attached set of updated meeting slides) and let me know if you have any last concerns.• Once we're aligned on the final list, we'll get it posted and communicate assignments to appropriate boards/committees.• Note that we still have two entities without liaisons - let me know if you're interested.	Noon on Tue 5/28
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4	Send holds for and post next meetings	Anthony	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send calendar holds and post meeting dates/times for our next three meetings: Thu 6/20, Thu 7/18, and Thu 8/22.• As discussed, we'll try the 6:30-8:00 timeslot and see how it works.	5 PM on Fri 5/31

Please respond only to me with your inputs on the action items above - to avoid any issues related to Open Meeting Law restrictions on deliberating via email.

Thank you and have a great holiday weekend,
Eric

--
Eric

Eric R. Dahlberg
cell: (617) 461-2737
email: EricRDahlberg@gmail.com

From: [Jessica Porter](#)
To: [Kerry Lafleur](#)
Cc: [Leigh Jackson](#); [Anthony Ansaldi](#)
Subject: Recreation Strategic Plan Presentation
Date: Wednesday, May 29, 2024 7:54:11 PM

Kerry:

The Recreation Commission would like 15 minutes on an upcoming BOS agenda to present the final strategic plan and summary of the public comments received.

Anthony: They are also willing to do a similar presentation to FinComm if they want their own.

-Jess

Jessica Porter, M.P.A.
Assistant Town Manager/Interim HR Director
Town of Concord
55 Church Street
West Concord, MA 01742
T: 978-318-3028
F: 978-318-3393
E: jporter@concordma.gov



Concord Finance Committee
AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

June 20, 2024

8

Minutes

Approve minutes of March 7, 21, & 28, April 25, & 30, and May 1, & 23, 2024

Requested by: Don Kupka, Clerk

Action Sought: Seek Approval

Proposed Motion(s)

None anticipated.

Additional Information

Attached are the Finance Committee meeting minutes from March 7, 21, & 28, April 25, & 30, and May 1, & 23, 2024

Board Action

<i>Motion</i>	<i>Second</i>	<i>In favor</i>	<i>Opposed</i>	<i>Disposition</i>

**Town of Concord
Minutes of the March 7, 2024
Finance Committee Public Hearing
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present: Suresh Bhatia (7:05pm), Peggy Briggs, Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Greg Guarriello, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Karlen Reed, Chris Reynolds, Lois Wasoff.

Members Absent: Kathy Cuocolo, Amrith Kumar and Quazi Sadruzzaman.

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Kerry Lafleur (Town Manager), Elizabeth Rourke (Assistant CFO), Carmen Reiss (Town Moderator), Terri Ackerman (Select Board)

Item 1: Call to Order of the Finance Committee by Mr. Patel at 7:00 p.m.

Item 2: Finance Committee Annual Town Meeting Public Hearing

Mr. Patel gave a brief overview of the three public hearings this month. Mr. Ansaldi provided several slides (also provided in Finance Committee packets) to give some context for the public hearings.

Article 3: Meeting Procedure

Mr. Patel began the discussion on this Article, in which the Town would adopt a “Rule of the Meeting” resolution as printed in the handout applicable to this Article. This Article is sponsored by the Finance Committee. The purpose of this article is to hold spending within the constraints of those rules. This is a routine article adopted since 1992, all appropriation articles will remain open and may be amended until the meeting adjourns. Appropriations – any motion to increase any spending must specify the amount of increase and the source of funding.

Article 7: Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Line-Item Adjustments

Ms. Lafleur stated if this article is needed it would seek town meeting approval to make certain that line-item adjustments to the fiscal 24 budget would be approved under Article 9 of the 2023 Annual Town Meeting. The motion would state that the total of the adjustment would note that this action would only transfer funding between lines, thus keeping the total bottom line at the same original appropriation.

Article 8: Fiscal Year 2025 Town Budget

Ms. Lafleur requested that the Town’s FY25 budget request is \$59,674,465 for the operation of town departments and joint accounts. The recommended budget meets the Finance Committee guidelines and for the first time since the covid pandemic does not anticipate carrying forward any prior funding appropriation to close the budget gap.

Select Board Member Question:

- Ms. Ackerman asked about the \$500,000 error? The Town Manager Lafleur explained because of timing it was booked against general government and still is. The Town is working on this rectifying this matter.
- Ms. Ackerman asked if we will know the answer by Town Meeting? Ms. Lafleur responded that only if action is required at the Town Meeting.

Article 9: Capital Improvement & Debt Plan

This Article requests that town meeting appropriate funds and authorize debt for the FY25 Capital Improvement Plan as printed in the warrant. The Town separates its capital spending into three categories. Spending authorization sought for Tiers 1 and 2 are included in this article; no request for Tier 3 funding is anticipated. Tier 1 spending is funded through an outlay of cash, while Tier 2 funding is funded through the issuance of debt. Total request for Tier one is \$2,180,000. The Proposed plan requests \$268,000 for capital items for divisions under the general government, and finance cost centers, all of which are earmarked for technology, including replacement of approximately 25% of our laptop computers. Additional products include security improvements to purchase a suite of cybersecurity, hardware, and software to better protect the town's assets and data.

The plan also includes \$120,000 for the Department of Planning and Land Management to replace one vehicle and purchase an additional vehicle for that fleet. Currently four inspection staff members share two vehicles and adding a third vehicle will assist with transportation to inspections. \$20,000 in Natural Resources, of which \$10,000 thousand dollars is for conservation and land improvements and \$10,000 for pond and stream management. And, \$1,500 for Human Services to support the replacement of public use computers at the library and upgrade other technology. The budget also includes funding for an electric vehicle to replace our Veterans aging 2002 vehicle.

For the Public safety cost center \$509,700 is proposed for replacement vehicles and equipment. In FY25 the town intends to replace police tasers, cruiser laptops and 3 marked vehicles. \$90,500 is being allocated to purchase and replace fire safety equipment and vehicles including the programmed replacement for firefighter turnout gear in the amount of \$1,129,300.

A total of \$1,129,300 is included in the plan for the Public Works cost center, of which \$461,100 is proposed for maintenance of roads and bridges. Another \$186,000 is allocated to the Tier 1 completion of the new tree inventory and additional tree plantings. Additional information on all spending will be included in the FY25 budget book.

The total request for Tier 2 Debt Finance projects is \$4.1 Million, in compliance with the town's capital spending policy. \$350,000 set aside to upgrade the Public Safety records management system, the software associated with that program and \$418,200 for communications systems upgrade. In FY25 a total of \$2,120,300 is being sought for the annual pavement management plan. Finally, in the current year plan the Town allocated funding for the design of an improved intersection at Main Street and Baker Ave.

Looking ahead, additional funding is needed toward the end of FY25 next year. The Town will advance a standalone Tier 3 warrant article requesting a significant financial commitment on a multi-year basis.

Questions from FinCom:

- Mr. Kupka asked to point him toward any capital that's going toward the buildings. The Town Manager responded that such funding was not allocated for such in the FY25 plan for additional facilities' funding. Currently, the Town has enough to get started.
- Mr. Kupka's second question focused on the replacement of vehicles and how the Town handles the residual value of the old vehicles sold. Ms. Lafleur responded that when vehicles are traded, typically the vehicles tend to have minimum value.
- Mr. Dahlberg inquired about the \$2.1 Million spent on the roads and its impact on the PCI score. Mr. Cathcart responded that the PCI is a general measure for the entire system. When we are not spending at a level to maintain roads, our recommendation is

to try and improve. The last couple of years our score degraded from 68 to 66, meaning we are not spending the amount of money needed to recover. While we are spending money, we are not improving or getting back to where we need to be.

- Mr. Patel asked at what point those items go onto the 10-year plan. Ms. Lafleur responded that with our roads the Town needs a large chunk of money. Furthermore, the Town would like to incorporate the work that the transportation advisory committee and town staff are doing on the transportation plan so we can have a comprehensive request, which is expected to be in the capital plan beginning with the 10-year plan in FY26. Mr. Patel encouraged Ms. Lafleur to include all Tier 3 potential capital projects (i.e., public safety building, public works sites, etcetera) on the capital plan that is developed for FY26 (starting in September 2024).

Questions from public:

- Mark Gailus, Chair of the Transportation Advisor Committee, speaking on behalf of the Committee, is strongly supportive of all entities that constitutes the town getting together to figure out how to make the necessary investments.
- Wendy Rovelli thought that the equipment limit for Tier 1 was \$100,00 and in the Town Manager's presentation it is shown as \$250,000. When did the change in the amount occur? Ms. Lafleur responded that in the Capital Planning Task Force changing the amount to \$250,000 was deliberate and intentional. not necessarily approved by anybody but how we have to be able to manage Tier 2 funding.
- Ms. Rovelli's second question pertained to the stairs at Harvey Wheeler that still have not been repaired. She asked for a status update.
- Mr. Cathcart responded we have a consultant who's working on the design and moving to putting the design out for bid soon.
- Dean Banfield inquired if any participation from the State regarding the intersection Baker Avenue/Route 62 project is pending.
- Steve Dookran responded that technically this project is not part of a state highway and thus it is Town owned and maintained. Therefore, the State would not be participating in this project.

Article 10: OPEB Trust Fund Appropriation

This article seeks town meeting appropriation of the annual contribution to the town's other post-employment benefits trust fund for FY25. The Town of Concord was one of the first communities in the Commonwealth to establish an OPEB Trust Fund. In 2008 the State adopted a special act granting this fund. For FY25 a total of \$1,467,851 is requested to be appropriated across all major funds.

Questions from FinCom:

- Ms. Reynolds stated that she thought we were to be done with funding by 2030.
- Ms. Lafleur responded that there was an adjustment in the census due to a notable shift between teachers that are split between CCRSD and CPS.

Questions from public:

- Ms. Rovelli asked why the sewer and water fund didn't contribute to the OPEB and why is that?
- Town Manager replied that their OPEB liabilities are current.

Article 11: OPEB Trust Fund Expenses

For FY25 the request is for an appropriation of up to \$275,000. \$25,000 will be used for the actuarial valuation and up to \$250,000 which can be used for investment and banking fees. This is standard investment and banking for investment fees under Massachusetts general law.

Article 12: Appropriation to the Opioid Prevention Programs Fund

To seek Town Meeting approval to transfer from free cash the sum of \$76,870.49 of unspent Opioid settlement funds to the Opioid Prevention Program Special Revenue Fund. Based upon guidance from the Massachusetts Attorney General's office the town expects to receive approximately a total of \$661,463 through calendar year 2038. Acceptable Municipal use of the Funds, Opioid use Disorder Treatment, Support People in Treatment and Recovery, Connections to Care, Harm Reduction, Address the needs of Criminal-Justice-Involved Persons, Support Pregnant Parenting Women and their Families, Prevent Misuse of Opioids, and Implement Prevention Education. This is the first year Concord will start to use these funds. Two initiatives beginning next week include Narcan distribution boxes in both the Main Library and West Concord branch. In addition, the Town will enter into agreement with six or seven surrounding communities for a regional substance abuse council position.

Question for Fincom:

- Ms. Reed asked why the two library locations were selected for the Narcan and not somewhere else.
- Ms. Smith, Library Director, responded that working with Public Health, the goal was to make it available in a place where the public would feel more comfortable walking up to and was not in the direct line of sight necessarily of staff.
- Ms. Reynolds stated that she is not a fan of hiring people using grant money because it goes away. What is the thinking behind getting ahead on this case?
- Mr. Ansaldi responded that with the funds we are able to be a part of this consortium and the funds go out to 2038 so it is hoped the budget would be available by then to replace grant funding.

Article 14: Use of Free Cash

To seek Town Meeting approval to transfer \$1 million from free cash for the purpose of reducing the tax rate. Free Cash is the town's undesignated fund balance. It is generally generated when actual revenue collections exceed estimates and or when actual expenditures are less than appropriated. Free cash is certified each year by the Department of Revenue. At the time of this meeting, the best estimate for free cash is \$7,300,000. The amount may be higher, yet will not be certified until the end of May or, more probably, June.

Article 20: Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Budget

FY25 Budget Summary presented by Dr. Laurie Hunter, which is not a final budget yet. This is year 1 of a five-year strategic plan. Breakout of the budget indicates that salaries are 2.46% of the increase and non-Salary growth is 4.11% of the overall total operating budget increase this year of 3.08%. An unknown yet potential risk is that state revenue may be less than expected.

Article 21: Amenities Building at Concord-Carlisle High School

Ms. Marano provided an update from the last meeting, which was a joint meeting with the Carlisle Finance Committee. Feedback from the Select Board was also mentioned. Ms. Marano reiterated that the article would go back to the regional school committee for further discussion. Three options were discussed.

First option - Dr. Hunter recommended the School Committee fund a feasibility study that would also produce a recommended design that could be used to secure bids for the amenities building. The study would be funded using the \$153,000 remaining from the CCHS road paving project. These funds can only be used towards Capital expenses and cannot be allocated towards operating budget. Second option - a school committee member suggested that instead of using the \$153,000 in unspent capital funds we amend article 21 to ask only for the funds necessary to complete the feasibility study and further recommended that the design of the amenities building we could then use the \$153,000 in unspent capital funds to offset the project. The third option - proceed as planned with the original warrant article requesting a total of \$2.3 Million to be split between both towns per the original agreement which would assess \$1.8 Million to Concord and \$600,000 to Carlisle. In this case the \$153,000 would be used to offset the cost of the project.

The first two options would delay the project a year, which would allow the School Committee to seek grant funding to offset the cost of both towns. Other intentions included applying for CPC funding and pursuing the Municipal Americans with Disabilities Act Grant Program. Another option looked at renting an upgraded option with electricity and running water for which the rental and maintenance fee would be approximately \$7,700 per month compared with the current rental fee of \$900 per month. This approach is not viable as the operating budget cannot be increased by \$77,000. A prefab building was another alternative, yet finding a company that could handle a building with the number of restrooms required by Mass Building Code was not feasible.

Question from FinCom members:

- Mr. Patel asked how the risks discussed over the past several months have been addressed and mitigated. Ms. Marano responded there is no alternative to what we can do, we have what we have. We have three portable toilets that we currently rent, that is what we're doing, no alternative. Neither mitigation nor risk has been addressed.
- Ms. Briggs asked if the facility would be open to the general public all day, every day. Ms. Marano responded that a process for that would have to be developed.
- Ms. Ortner asked with regards to option 3, if brought to the town meeting and it fails what is your backup plan?
Ms. Marano responded that we would proceed in the fashion that we have been for the past nine years, which is three porta potties.
- From the audience, Dean Banfield, stated that this project has been overlooked for a long time. He would like to see option 1 or 2. Further, he suggested that before the School Committee spends money, they should go to the Plumbing Board and ask for 25% capacity.

Article 23: Concord Public Schools Operating Budget

Dr. Hunter started by saying they are within the guidelines (3.26% increase to the budget) and moves that the Town appropriate \$46,515,714. Further, Dr. Hunter requested an additional sum of \$76,308 be transferred from free cash. The sum representing the specific amount received by the Town, on behalf of Concord Public Schools through the Commonwealth's School of Origin Transportation Pilot Program for the purpose of reimbursing additional transportation expenses. When the refund came in November/December went to the general fund for CPS kids instead of the schools. The needed change is being worked through.

Questions from FinCom:

- Mr. Patel asked with \$2 Million, how many FTEs did we end up hiring?
Mr. Conry responded - two FTE.
- Mr. Patel stated that Dr. Hunter mentioned that the State is not subsidizing pre-school. How many students are we taking on?
Dr. Hunter responded by stating that 6 4yr olds at Ripley, 12 at the shelter and 15 3yr olds currently not being serviced.
- Mr. Patel asked what effort is ongoing to obtain more funding.
Dr. Hunter replied that pursuit is relentless.
- A question from the audience was asked regarding whether student numbers are going up or down.
Dr. Hunter responded that some decline in enrollment is happening. Currently, there are about 2,200 students with about 100 down from last year.

Article 24: Concord Public Schools Capital Budget

Dr. Hunter started by saying we are in the late stages of a full facility study of the three elementaries and Ripley. Because of that we reduced our request from the \$900,000 earlier in the budget season to \$446,000 with three projects targeted, Thoreau Campus Improvements, Alcott Fire Alarm System Replacement and Dump Truck Replacement.

Questions from FinCom:

- Mr. Patel asked about the Facility Study and the plan for taking the recommendations there and developing a true 10-year Capital Plan that includes Tier One, Two and Three for the CPS.
Dr. Hunter responded that will be the next conversation we have with the School Committee as we process the report and study what the recommendations are and to do it collaboratively with the Finance Committee.
- Mr. Patel asked about the restroom facility and the resistance to doing a study there and incorporating it now versus waiting until the building hits 10 years of age.
Dr. Hunter responded - best practice is to wait 10 years. We are trying to be thoughtful as the study cost is considerable and didn't want to do it too early.

Article 25: Appropriation to Middle School Stabilization Fund – \$600,000 from free cash to the Middle School stabilization fund.

In FY21 the Town established a Middle School Stabilization Fund to help smooth the debt associated with the Middle School Project. Initial deposit was \$2 million from free cash. Deposits that were appropriated at Town meeting in the various years were established as a separate fund to track interest. Including interest, there is about \$4.7 Million in the Middle School Stabilization Fund. The Finance Committee recommended \$5 Million. With the \$600,000 we would be over the \$5 Million due to the interest earned on unspent project bond proceedings. Even though we are not legally required to do that, it makes the most sense to allocate those to the middle school stabilization fund.

Questions from FinCom:

- Mr. Patel asked if you are not required to do what?
Ms. Lafleur responded that the interest earnings on bond proceeds are general fund revenues so there is no legal requirement. They do not belong to the stabilization fund.
- Ms. Reed inquired as to when we start using the stabilization fund.
Ms. Lafleur replied that our expectation would be in FY26.

- Mr. Patel asked if we could use the \$600,000 to reduce the borrowing we are going to do for the school.
Ms. Lafleur stated that the funds have to be appropriated to be used for any purpose including reducing what we borrow.

Item 3: Close the Finance Committee Annual Public Hearing – Mr. Patel motioned to close the meeting, Ms. Ortner second @ 9:33 PM.

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link: [March 7, 2024 Concord Finance Public Hearing and Committee Meeting \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk

***Town of Concord
Minutes of the March 7, 2024
Finance Committee Meeting
Hybrid Meeting***

Members Present: Suresh Bhatia, Peggy Briggs, Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Greg Guarriello, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Karlen Reed, Chris Reynolds, Lois Wasoff.

Members Absent: Kathy Cuocolo, Amrith Kumar, and Quazi Sadruzzaman.

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Kerry Lafleur (Town Manager), Elizabeth Rourke (Assistant CFO), Carmen Reiss (Town Moderator), Terri Ackerman (Select Board), Tracey Marano (School Committee), Alexa Anderson (School Committee)

- 1. Call to Order of the Finance Committee by Mr. Patel at 9:34 p.m. Roll call was taken.**
- 2. Discuss and vote on the following articles (all votes unanimous unless otherwise noted):**
 - Article 3 – Meeting Procedure
VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Briggs moved, Ms. Wasoff seconded)
 - Article 7 – Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Line-Item Adjustments
VOTE: Hold recommendation to floor of Town Meeting (Mr. Kupka moved, Ms. Briggs seconded).
 - Article 8 – Fiscal Year 2025 Town Budget
VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Ortner moved, Ms. Reynolds seconded)
 - Article 9 – Capital Improvement and Debt Plan
VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Reynolds moved, Mr. Kupka seconded)

Article 10 – OPEB Trust Fund Appropriation

VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Briggs moved, Ms. Reynolds seconded)

Article 11 – OPEB Trust Fund Expenses

VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Reynolds moved, Mr. Kupka seconded)

Article 12 – Appropriation to the Opioid Prevention Programs Fund

VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Ortner moved, Mr. Kupka seconded)

Article 14 – Use of Free Cash

VOTE: Defer to future meeting.

Article 20 – Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Budget

VOTE: Defer to future meeting.

Article 21 – Amenities Building at Concord-Carlisle High School

VOTE: Defer to future meeting.

Article 23 – Concord Public Schools Operating Budget

VOTE: Affirmative action (Ms. Ortner moved, Ms. Reed seconded)

Article 24 – Concord Public Schools Capital Budget

VOTE: Defer to future meeting.

Article 25 – Appropriation to Middle School Stabilization Fund

VOTE: Defer to future meeting.

3. Correspondence – None

4. Minutes – January 18, 2024 minutes were approved as amended (Ms. Wasoff moved, and Mr. Dahlberg seconded). February 15, 2024 minutes were delayed to a future meeting.

5. Adjourn the Meeting – Mr. Patel closed the meeting at 10:00 p.m.

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link: [March 7, 2024 Concord Finance Public Hearing and Committee Meeting \(youtube.com\)](#)

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk, Karlen Reed, Finance Committee Vice Clerk

Town of Concord
Public Hearing
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting – March 21, 2024
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Suresh Bhatia (remote), Kathy Cuocolo (remote), Eric Dahlberg, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Karlen Reed, Christine Reynolds, and Lois Wasoff

Members Absent: Margaret Briggs, Jon Garofalo, Greg Guarriello, Amrith Kumar, Quazi Sadruzzaman.

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Kerry Lafleur (Town Manager), Elizabeth Rourke (Assistant CFO), Terri Ackerman (Select Board member), Mary Hartman (Select Board member), Carmen Reiss, Wendy Rovelli, Dean Banfield, Alan Cathcart, Gary Clayton, Fred Ryan, Nikki Andrade, Mr. Ledoux, Burtin Flint

1. Call to Order

Mr. Patel called the meeting to order at 7:02pm with a brief presentation of the budget/guidelines process used by the Finance Committee. A road map of the budget process was followed by steps undertaken by the Finance Committee throughout the year. Tonight, the enterprise funds will be discussed including the operating and debt service costs.

2. Finance Committee Annual Town Meeting Public Hearing

A.

Article 16 – Create Stormwater Enterprise Fund: Both the operating and debt service were mentioned. The process for establishing the Stormwater Enterprise fund was described. Bylaw definitions, department responsibility, fees etc. were described. The ERU is a common unit to assess the fee. The fee will be based on the need for Stormwater Management (SWM) currently targeted at \$1.5-2 Million with a preliminary needs assessment used for the year. The Outlook for next 5 years probably will increase after that due to additional needs. Currently, the department is taking funds out of other programs to meet near-term needs. Having an enterprise fund would address equity for distributing costs between rate payers and commercial landowners. Oversight management is thought to be through both the rate-payer and impervious cover (homeowner vs business). Cost will likely be incorporated in the water/sewer bill. The responsibility of the municipality (8% of total impervious area) would bare its cost as a fee.

B. Article 43 – Amend departmental Revolving Funds Bylaw

Revolving funds must be established on an annual basis. A 6th fund for ambulance services is being requested to be established. The Town is currently taking in \$900K for ambulance fees. Currently, the service is part of a consortium. Ms. Lafleur indicated that changing the structure of service would entail a considerable increase in cost. By

planning ahead during the upcoming fiscal year, the Town would be in a better position to manage the costs.

C. Article 44 – Authorize expenditure of Revolving Funds under Mass. Gen. Laws 44 § 53 E ½

The purpose of this article is to appropriate the budgets associated with each fund.

D. Article 45 – Light Plant Expenditures and Payment in Lieu of Taxes

MWH Sales has seen some fluctuation in electricity sales, which have dropped over the past two years. Transition costs are expected to increase over the years. Outreach and educating the public will be conducted to garner the public's interest in type(s) of service. This year, Capital outlay requires borrowing with anticipated borrowing of approximately \$10 million or more. Payment in lieu of taxes is \$464,500.

Telecommunications was presented in terms of broadband service with a revenue of approximately \$385,000. Forecast plan includes new hires (unspecified number) hiring as well as capital projects. With MCI closing, rates will be adjusted (\$870,000) resulting in a relatively small impact.

E. Article 46 – Solid Waste Disposal Fund Expenditures

Details of the program were described together with Fund expenses. Funds will be used for pay-as-you-go service. The average user cost in FY25 is up to \$637 compared with last year's average of \$482. The cost of recycling only is \$325 up from \$178 last year. Costs are no longer funded by the fund balance.

F. Article 47 – Sewer System Expenditures

The Sewer fund deals with general operations. Infrastructure is valued at \$18.8 million that supports 1/3 of the town's population. Total operational expenses are \$3.8M. Infiltration/Inflow (I/I) is an increasing annual need at \$248,000). The FY25 rate is anticipated to be 5% higher. Capacity has been reached in the sewer system, which is a big, future concern. The Town is looking for opportunities to increase capacity irrespective of cost!

G. Article 48 – Sewer Improvement Fund Expenditures

These expenditures are used to improve system. Currently the wastewater treatment plant needs \$675,000.

H. Article 49 – Water System Expenditures

The system valued at \$25.8M and supplies 95% of population. The town owns 134 miles of pipes and maintenance expenditures are targeted at compliance with the national Safe Drinking Water Act. Income from special services fees and other sources contribute towards system maintenance. Costs for current Cyber Security are \$5.8 million and security is a growing concern. The FY25 Capital Improvement Plan includes Meter-reading as being critically important. FY25 rates are increasing \$86/year (about +2%). Rates are set in anticipation of debt.

I. Article 50 - Authorize Expenditure from PEG Access & Cable Related Fund

Payments comes from both Carlisle and Comcast. The Town is renegotiating its contract with Comcast together with a fee paid by Carlisle. PEG Access is planning to support

the 250 Celebration and is expanding equipment in Town House. In addition, more equipment and software as well as a van to broadcast outside of theater are planned. Harvey Wheeler improvements were mentioned, which are not a big capital improvement. And, the Maker Space in Library is looking to increase equipment for borrowing.

- J. Article 51 – Beede Swim and Fitness Center Enterprise Fund Expenditures
Net income is \$127,150. Budget goals include pool space, swim lessons, flex membership options, personal training, and annual events. Personnel costs are 41% of the budget with capital outlay being 18%. Membership has increased! Capital projects require roof replacement and building improvements. The pool facility needs new pump. Highlights of Beede Shutdown were described.
- K. Article 52 – Unpaid Bills
Less than \$12K of unpaid bills are anticipated. FY24 funds will be used before Free Cash, which is neither planned nor expected to be used.
- L. Article 53 – Debt Recission
Not being moved.

3. Close the Finance Committee Annual Public Hearing

The Hearing was adjourned at 8:58pm.

4. Finance Committee Meeting

Mr. Patel opened the meeting at 9:05pm.

- A. Discuss and Potentially Vote on the Following Articles:
 - Article 16 – Create Stormwater Enterprise Fund
VOTE: Affirmative Action

 - Article 43 – Amend departmental Revolving Funds Bylaw
VOTE: Affirmative Action

 - Article 44 – Authorize expenditure of Revolving Funds under Mass. Gen. Laws 44 § 53 E ½
VOTE: Affirmative Action

 -
 - Article 45 – Light Plant Expenditures and Payment in Lieu of Taxes
VOTE: Affirmative action

 -
 - Article 46 – Solid Waste Disposal Fund Expenditures
VOTE: Affirmative action

 -
 - Article 47 – Sewer System Expenditures
VOTE: Affirmative action

 -
 - Article 48 – Sewer Improvement Fund Expenditures
VOTE: Affirmative action

-
- Article 49 – Water System Expenditures
- VOTE: Affirmative action
-
- Article 50 - Authorize Expenditure from PEG Access & Cable Related Fund
- VOTE: Affirmative action
-
- Article 51 – Beede Swim and Fitness Center Enterprise Fund Expenditures
- VOTE: Affirmative action
-
- Article 52 – Unpaid Bills
- VOTE: Affirmative action
-
- Article 53 – Debt Recission
- VOTE: Not moved
- Any Article Presented on March 7, and/or March 19, 2024

5. Correspondence – None

6. Minutes

Minutes of the March 19, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Patel adjourned the meeting at 9:41pm.

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link: [Concord Finance Committee March 21, 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)

Respectfully submitted,

Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk

	Article 4
<p>M. Article 16 – Create Stormwater Enterprise Fund Both the operating and debt service were mentioned. The process for establishing the SW enterprise fund was described. Bylaw definitions, department responsibility, fees etc. were described. The ERU is a common unit to assess the fee. The fee will be based on the need for STM ocurrently targeted at \$1.5-2 Million, preliminary needs assessment for the year. (Outlook for next 5 years; probably will increase after that due to additional needs.) Currently taking funds out of other programs to meet near-term needs. Having an enterprise fund, would address equity for distributing costs between rate payers and commercial landowners. Oversight through the rate-payer and impervious cover (homeowner vs business). Cost will likely be incorporated in the water/sewer bill. Municipal (8% of total impervious area) would bare that cost as a fee.</p> <p>N. Article 43 – Amend departmental Revolving Funds Bylaw Revolving funds must be established on an annual basis. A 6th fund for ambulance services is being requested to being established. Currently taking in \$900K for ambulance fees. Current service is part of a consortium. Changing the structure of service would entail a considerable increase in cost. Trying to plan ahead.</p> <p>O. Article 44 – Authorize expenditure of Revolving Funds under Mass. Gen. Laws 44 § 53 E ½ The purpose of this article is to Appropriate the budgets associated with each fund.</p> <p>P. Article 45 – Light Plant Expenditures and Payment in Lieu of Taxes MWH Sales has seen some fluctuation; electricity sales have dropped over the past two years; transition costs are expected to increase over the years. Educate the public and garner the public’s interest in type of service. Capital outlay requires borrowing this year. (\$10+M) Payment in lieu of taxes is \$464, 500. Telecommunications was presented in terms of broadband service. Revenue ~ \$385K. Forecast plan: hiring, capital projects. With MCI closing, rates will be adjusted (\$870,000) and a relatively small impact.</p> <p>Q. Article 46 – Solid Waste Disposal Fund Expenditures Funds to be used for pay-as-you-go. Details of the program were described as well as Fund expenses. Average cost in FY25 = \$637 (from \$482). Recycling only = \$325 (from \$178) (No longer funded by the fund balance.)</p> <p>R. Article 47 – Sewer System Expenditures</p>	Y.

Sewer fund deals with general ops. Infrastructure valued at \$18.8 million that supports 1/3 of population. Total ops expenses = \$3.8M; I/I is increasing need (\$248,000); installing xxx ; FY25 rate is 5% higher. With impact of \$39. Capacity was reached in the sewer system – big, future concern. The Town is looking for opportunities to increase capacity – irrespective of cost!

- S. Article 48 – Sewer Improvement Fund Expenditures
Expenditures used to improve system. Wastewater treatment plant needs \$675,000.
- T. Article 49 – Water System Expenditures
Income from special services fees. System valued at \$25.8M. Supplies 95% of population. 134 miles of pipes. Expenditures are targeted at compliance of Safe Drinking Water Act. Cyber Security are \$5,8M security is a growing concern.
FY25 – Capital Improvement Plan; Meter-reading is critically important. Rates in FY25 are increasing \$86/year; increase is +12%. Rates are set in anticipation of debt.
- U. Article 50 - Authorize Expenditure from PEG Access & Cable Related Fund
Payments from Carlisle and Comcast. Renegotiating contract with Comcast; fee paid by Carlisle; Planning to support the 250 Celebration; expanding equipment in Town House; More items and software as well as a van to broadcast outside of theater. Harvey Wheeler improvements were mentioned, not a big capital improvement; Maker Space in Library is looking to increase equipment for borrowing.
- V. Article 51 – Beede Swim and Fitness Center Enterprise Fund Expenditures
Net income = \$127,150; net income estimate = \$42,981. Budget goals pool space, swim lessons, flex membership options, personal training, annual events. Personnel is 41%, capital outlay = 18%. Membership has increased...; Capital projects = roof replacement, building improvements; pool facility = pumps...
Highlights of Beede Shutdown were described.
- W. Article 52 – Unpaid Bills
<\$12K of unpaid bills; FY24 funds used before Free Cash (which is not be planned to use)
- X. Article 53 – Debt Recission
Not moved

- A. Article 13 – Funding Public Safety during the Concord 250 Celebrations in 2025
Funding public safety during the 250 celebrations. The timelines extend implementation now and continue into 2026. Regional, state and national attention is anticipated. Responsibilities and obligations are ours! A total of \$700,000 funds is needed for public safety for which an additional \$350,000 is needed to bolster public safety. Assumptions regarding the number of spectators and venues that are hard to monitor or control warrant additional funding for security. All events have been submitted for federal review together with a detailed breakdown of the complexity of the planning process. Remaining funds (\$475,000) of the proposed \$1,175,000 budget goes to programs.
- B. Commemorating the Beginning of the American Revolution, April 19, 1775
No additional information provided.
- C. Article 15 – Establish a Permanent Senior Means Tested Property Tax Exemption

Approval of the Act establishes a permanent Senior Means Tested Property Tax Exemption for those who qualify. Last year, the impact on property tax was \$0.01 increase last year. The eligibility criteria (\$250,000) last year and \$275K this year showed 37 and 34 applications respectively. The focus on eligibility targets elders with limited means. Tax payers must reapply and qualify every year. Having boundary limits for eligibility guard against a throng of folks applying.

D. Article 17 – Nagog Pond Improvements and PFAS Mitigation

Alan Cathcart, Director of Public Works, is proposing an appropriation of \$50M for design and infrastructure improvements for two facilities and several groundwater wells. Carbon, fluoride and other compounds have infiltrated the environment and go back to the 1930's/1940's. Now, PFAS has become an emergent contaminant. Nagog is the primary facility for mitigation (no detection in 2014); state regulators in 2020 and required a PFAS limit of 20 parts per trillion (PPT). In 2022, the Federal EPA announced an interim level of 4 PPT. Currently, the impact in Concord shows two groundwater sources out of compliance in addition to the Nagog facility's lack of compliance. The final Federal Standard is anticipated at 4PPT, but yet approved.

The present cash reserve is \$10M. The \$50M covers the 3 sources over next 3 years. Currently it is premature to determine a breakout of permitting and costs. At this time the estimates are \$35M for Nagog and \$5-\$10M for other sources. The application for borrowing from state is dependent on having TM approval, which is why the articles are on the agenda. The bottom line shows a doubling of rates in the next 10 years. There is a 12.5% increase on water rates this year.

Upon questioning, Mr. Cathcart indicated that he is still working with MWRA as a different option, yet the possibly of merging would be considered in 10-20 years. To date \$7-8 M has been spent on design, legal and other concerns regarding the Nagog facility.

Mark Howell asked about the phase of the overall process and wrap the story in that context of Nagog. \$7-8M spent on design/legal/etc. to date.

E. Article 19 – Minuteman Regional Technical High School District Budget

Ms. Andrade provided a status report on the budget and Concord's share for the regional technical high school. Concord's assessment is \$1,732,805. Ms. Andrade mentioned that all 12 applicants from Concord were accepted at Minuteman. She also mentioned that with a decreasing number of students from non-member schools, Concord's share of the budget would increase as there would be no offset. Concord's share of costs will increase. Currently Concord has 15 slots for students per year; current numbers show a total of 41 students from Concord currently enrolled in the four-year program.

F. Article 33 – In-Town Solar Expansion

Costs have dropped substantially and ground-mounted solar is a better value than rooftops due to installation costs. At this time only specific components of the system are being proposed. These include a Control system (approximately \$100,000) and Battery storage facility (\$2+M). Questions regarding maintenance, degradation of battery performance and longevity indicates a life-span of 20 years. Ongoing maintenance would be performed by the Light Plant or an outsourced service. The source of power to fuel the battery is at night by fossil fuel. Comments and questions from audience included the quickly changing improvements of this technology and marginal return on investment at this time.

G. Article 40 – Community Preservation Appropriation Recommendations

A total of \$1,878,320 is proposed for 17 projects. Chairperson Burton Flint briefly described each of the projects. Questions focused around higher dollar amount projects such as the amount of \$500,00 for the Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust, final design request of \$200,000 for the Assabet River Bridge, CPS athletic fields (\$250,000), and historic preservation at 51 Waldon Inc. (\$195,000).

- 8. Close of the Finance Committee Annual Public Hearing** – Mr. Patel motioned to close the meeting, Mr. Kupka second @ 9:33pm

The Meeting adjourned at 9:33pm

YouTube: [Ctrl+Click to follow link:](#)

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortnier, Finance Committee Clerk

Town of Concord
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting – March 28, 2024
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Suresh Bhatia (7:02), Margaret Briggs, Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, Greg Guarriello (Remote, 7:08), Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Christine Reynolds, and Lois Wasoff (Remote)

Members Absent: Jon Garofalo, Amrith Kumar, Karlen Reed, Quazi Sadruzzaman

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Kerry Lafleur (Town Manager), Elizabeth Rourke (Assistant CFO), Terri Ackerman (Select Board member), Mary Hartman (Select Board member), Carmen Reiss, Wendy Rovelli, Dean Banfield, Alan Cathcart, Gary Clayton, Fred Ryan, Nikki Andrade, Mr. Ledoux, Burtin Flint, Paul Macone, Sandy Smith

1. Call to Order

Mr. Patel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. 2024 Annual Town Meeting

A. Discussion and Potential Vote on the Following Articles

- Article 7 – FY24 Budget Line-Item Adjustments
No discussion

- Article 14 – Use of Free Cash
The Town currently has \$8.5 million in Free Cash. With upcoming Warrant articles this number will drop to approximately \$7 million. The Tax for a median valued property would increase by 3.7 percent. Under discussion, members of the committee raised concerns about the impacts from upcoming new projects, potentially higher borrowing costs, and the bond rating. Suggestions included gradually eliminating the \$1 million tax relief versus completely eliminating it. Mr. Ansaldi encouraged better planning and examination of what we should have as a policy for creating a stabilization fund for future projects.
Motion: Withdraw the article, which was approved.

- Article 20 – CCRSD Budget
With an exchange of emails late this afternoon, the committee learned that the School Committee is not going to meet our guideline number. According to the Governor's Budget the Regional High School will be getting \$89,000 less in State Aid than what was assumed in their budget. To make up the revenue shortfall they are going to cut that money from their operating expenses. Unfortunately, this does not mean a reduction to Concord's assessment. Numerous questions arose regarding: the impact of reduced state aid; cost per student with reduced enrollment of 100 students (+10%). The committee intends to ask for a written response from the school regarding the impacts of a 100+ student reduction.

Motion: Affirmative action at the Finance Committee's guideline of \$23,029,906 w/o debt.

Vote: 10 yes; 1 - abstain

- Article 21 – Amenities Building at Concord-Carlisle High School
Article withdrawn.
 - Article 24 – Concord Public Schools Capital Project
Renovations at the Thoreau School form the basis for the \$200,000 request. An additional +\$200,000 from an individual will be added. Any remaining fund needs will be coming from creative sources.
Motion: Affirmative Action
 - Article 33 – In-Town Solar Expansion
Special Town Meeting to be held on April 16th.
Recommendation: to be determined at a future meeting.
 - Article 40 – CPC Appropriation Recommendations
Being asked about applicant requests spanning more than one year, Burtin Flint, CPC Chair, indicated that currently three projects are known to have follow-up requests in future years in areas including housing, staff and tech support and from the Housing Trust. Upon further questioning of frequency or length of time, the Trust responded that it will return every year until state funding starts. Future returning requests include: Hillcrest steps (post design phase), Assabet bridge trail (\$850,000 for design study and construction of bridge with costs ranging between \$8-10 million).
Motion: Affirmative action
 - Any and all Articles from the three Finance Committee Public Hearings – None
- B. Review and discuss the FY25 Finance Committee Report
Document preparation is on schedule and will go to the printer on April 1. Ms. Wasoff commented that there should be a section dealing with the five-year tax projection. At a past Town Meeting, tax projections were voted to be required and included in this report. Ms. Ortnier will discuss with the CFO and will include them. Ms. Wasoff expressed concerned that there is no longer a deep dive section on specific articles.

Mr. Patel reviewed his cover letter. Mr. Kupka questioned if we want to mention the off-budget increases to the Enterprise fund for storm water and the \$50 million for freshwater. Mr. Kupka will send a sentence or two.

3. Finance Committee Reorganization

Slate for FY25:

Eric Dahlberg – Chair

Lois Wasoff – Vice Chair

Don Kupka – Clerk

Karlen Reed – Vice Clerk

Lyndsey Lis – Chair, Guidelines Quazi Sadruzzaman – Vice Chair, Guidelines

The slate for next year is approved.

Christine Reynolds and Parashar Patel are off the Committee following Annual Town Meeting.

Amrith Kumar is declining to serve out his term.

4. **Correspondence**

Paul Macone speaking online indicated that not having a budget book available at this time is unfortunate. His remarks were not directed at specific individuals but more of a concern for having a record. In response, Mr. Patel suggested he share his questions, comments, and thoughts with the Town Manager.

Sandy Smith stated that the Finance Committee can always review decisions and votes on articles. Bylaws can be read and/or reviewed and can be reviewed by the Finance Committee annually noting that changes can occur every year.

5. Minutes

Minutes from the March 19, 2024, meeting are approved.

Minutes from the March 21, 2024, meeting are not reviewed.

The Meeting adjourned at 9:33pm

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link: [Concord Finance Committee Meeting - March 28, 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk

Town of Concord
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting – April 25, 2024
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present: Margaret Briggs (remote), Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, Don Kupka (remote), Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Karlen Reed, Christine Reynolds, Quazi Sadruzzaman (7:06pm), and Lois Wasoff

Members Absent: Suresh Bhatia, Jon Garofalo, Greg Guarriello, Amrith Kumar,

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Kerry Lafleur (Town Manager), Terri Ackerman (Select Board member), Mary Hartman (Select Board member), Tracey Marano (Chair, School Committee), Jason Bulger (CMLP), Brian Foulds (Chair, Electrification Committee), Paul Boehm (Chair, 2229 Main Street Task Force)

1. Call to Order

Mr. Patel called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

2. Public Comment

Ms. Marano, Chair of the CCRSD, requested that the Finance Committee reconsider its position regarding the budget.

Mr. Dinos Gonatas indicated that he favored action at this time regarding the purchase of batteries by CMLP.

3. 2024 Special Town Meeting

Topic: Discussion and potential vote on recommendation for Article 1 In-town Utility Scale Battery

Mr. Bulger reviewed the current plan and urgency of its approval, especially with the unanticipated closure of MCI. Options, including the possibility of a 3rd party agreement by one of two vendors will be examined. A plan will be in place by “this fall” with mitigations to account for the upcoming shoulder season. The timeframe for delivery of batteries will be known after vendor selection. Under discussion, Ms. Ortner voiced concern about authorizing the purchase of a \$10.4 million project with neither a plan nor a firm bidding process in place. Others offered support for this process.

Motion: Purchase of a \$10.4 million battery made by Chris Reynolds, seconded by Karlen Reed

Affirmative action – 10 members, 1 abstention.

4. Article 7 of the 2024 Annual Town Meeting

Discussion regarding the adjustments to the FY24 Town Budget line-item adjustments included a chart that showed the changes to the line-item adjustments which will cover the transfer costs of \$515,000. Adjustments could be made due to the 1.3% savings in the budget.

Motion: To approve the transfer of funds

Affirmative action – unanimous

5. 2229 Main Street

Mr. Boehm began with providing background information on the charge of the group, its organization, residual risks to any portion of the site, financial aspects of ownership, the

needs of the town, status of the cleanup, and the task force's report due date to the Town by October 31, 2024. Due to the financial and legal aspects associated with the acquisition of the site, the Task Force is awaiting support from the Select Board before planning commences. Reuse of the site is only one component of planning. The estimated cost of acquisition, costs of site preparation, costs to Town of ownership, and costs to the Town if not purchased were noted as major elements to be evaluated. The Finance Committee is primarily interested in knowing revenue opportunities, such as housing, recreation potential, and commercial interest. Currently, the Federal Government (EPA) would be the negotiator of the \$100 million lien on the parcel. The site will not be available for acquisition from EPA until 2028. The range of value or price to purchase is \$4-10 million.

6. Finance Committee Year End Review

Chair Patel began the discussion with a chart of topics and status of progress.

(Chart attached)



2024-04-24 Work
Plan - final.pdf

Suggestion included:

- a. Reassess the roles and needs for Finance Committee liaisons as they pertain to Town and School needs (example, Economic Vitality)
- b. Treat Tier 1 capital similarly for Town and Schools
- c. Improve discussion on the capital planning process – i.e., collaboration
- d. Enhance communications between FC members and liaison roles
- e. Become more informed of the Town's strategic plan – understand priorities, integration of departments, and impending municipal land use plan
- f. Enhance communication with Minuteman – better understand financial needs and goals
- g. Knowledge of the numbers – two people need to examine the models when creating the guidelines

7. Correspondence

- a. This year's Finance Committee Report is shorter and easier to read.
- b. Meeting packets are well-organized.
- c. Need to develop an approach for collecting institutional knowledge and passing it along.

8. Minutes - Approve minutes of March 21, 2024 and April 16, 2024

Minutes were held awaiting comments from committee members by 04/29/24. Amended minutes will be included at the May 23rd meeting.

9. Anticipated Adjournment

Prior to adjournment, several members in the audience were asked to make comments and/or suggestions. Ms. Marano suggested the use of Google docs or other online repository to assist the FC in capturing institutional knowledge. Ms. Hartman suggested that the FC beef-up liaison responsibilities and to address and include upcoming expenses, such as MCI in the guidelines.

The Meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link: [Concord Finance Committee Meeting - April 25, 2024 \(youtube.com\)](#)

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk

**Town of Concord
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of Meeting – April 30, 2024
Room 242, CCRSD**

Members Present: Margaret Briggs, Eric Dahlberg, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Parashar Patel, Karlen Reed, Christine Reynolds, Lois Wasoff (At least one additional member arrived during the intense discussion.)

Members Absent: Uncertain due to schedules of individual members.

Others Attending: Anthony M. Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Liz Rourke (Assistant CFO)

Meeting summary:

The meeting started at 6:30pm with a brief introduction by Mr. Patel regarding the nature of the business meeting that would focus on Article 40 – Community Preservation Appropriation Recommendations. Mr. Patel reminded the group that time was of the essence and that the item of interest would be Item F – 250 Trees for the 250th Memorial. Ms. Reed began the discussion with asking for an amendment to the Article that would remove Item F from the list. Ms. Reed then conveyed her reasons for wanting the Item to be removed. A robust discussion ensued with numerous questions, points of view, and additional suggestions.

After discussion, no conclusion was reached. The Article would not be considered at this evening's meeting.

The meeting ended at 6:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dee Ortner, Finance Committee Clerk

DRAFT

**Town of Concord
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting – May 1, 2024
In-Person Meeting at CCHS, room 242**

Members Present: Peggy Briggs, Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Greg Guarriello, Don Kupka, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Karlen Reed, Quasi Sadruzzaman, Lois Wasoff.

Members Absent: Suresh Bhatia, Parashar Patel.

Others Attending: Anthony Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Liz Rourke (Assistant to CFO), Gary Clayton and Christa Collins (Concord250 Subcommittee for Permanent Memorial), and Burton Flint (Community Preservation Committee).

Item 1: Call to Order of the Finance Committee Meeting at 6:30 p.m. by Eric Dahlberg, Vice Chair.

Item 2: Article 40, Item F (using \$125K of CPC funds to plant 250 trees as a memorial to celebrate Concord250). The FinCom discussed its concerns about Item F of the CPC's Article 40 and its reasons for recommending No Action to Town Meeting. Ms. Reed outlined those concerns:

- a. Concord already has a tree planting program, spending more than \$50K per year and planting 80-100 trees.
- b. Item F funds planting 150, not 250 trees at \$1600/tree. The other 100 trees come from the annual tree planting program.
- c. Whether trees are valuable as a permanent memorial is questionable. Item F does not provide for on-going care of the trees, so many will wither and die.
- d. The Town is using \$125K of ARPA funds to support this program, and those funds could be used for other public purposes, like fixing roads.

Mr. Clayton and Ms. Collins offered their perspectives on the need and merits of their proposal to the CPC. Mr. Flint noted that this proposal had the greatest number of support letters of all the 2024 CPC applications.

Item 3: Mr. Dahlberg adjourned the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Karlen Reed, Finance Committee Assistant Clerk

**Town of Concord
Meeting of the Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting – May 23, 2024
Hybrid Meeting - Webinar**

Members Present: Peggy Briggs, Kathy Cuocolo, Eric Dahlberg, John Garofalo, Pat Geyer, Greg Guarriello, Lyndsey Lis, Dee Ortner, Karlen Reed, Paul Rodriguez, Quazi Sadruzzaman, Sri Tupil.

Members Absent: Suresh Bhatia, Don Kupka, Lois Wasoff

Others Attending: Anthony Ansaldi, Jr. (CFO), Carmin Reiss (Town Moderator)

Item 1: Call to Order of the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:00 p.m. by Eric Dahlberg, Chair. Eric welcomed new FinCom members Pat Geyer, Paul Rodriguez, and Sri Tupil.

Item 2: Public Comment: None

Item 3: 2024 Annual Town Meeting Debrief with Town Moderator Ms Carmin Reiss: Ms Reiss provided several observations about Town Meeting preparations and execution. Of note, Ms Reiss recommended that next year we include a table of the FinCom and Select Board recommendations and the Warrant in the FinCom Report. Ms Reiss observed that including FinCom’s reasoning for its recommendations was good. Also, she saw real benefit in combining the Town and School budgets into one public hearing, though it made for a long evening. She also recommended FinCom work with the Select Board in creating the Town Calendar for Town Meeting and resist changing its scheduled meetings once they have been posted on the Town Calendar. Ms Reiss also mentioned returning to having people’s slide presentations aired for the first time at the pre-town meeting hearings which will include the motion. FinCom members offered their thoughts and compliments on running a smooth Town Meeting. Ms Reiss said she estimates 2025 Town Meeting to occur in the first week of June.

Item 4: Finance Committee Mission and Responsibilities: Chair Dahlberg focused on FinCom’s five responsibilities: guidelines, warrant article hearings, annual report, five-year projection, and the Town Reserve Fund. Ms Cuocolo suggested adding the slide to our opening remarks at Town Meeting, and Ms Lis suggested adding it to our FinCom Report.

Item 5: Finance Committee Member Roles and Responsibilities (as members, officers, and liaisons): Chair Dahlberg emphasized his expectations for members: preparation, participation, meeting etiquette, training, and liaison role. He explained the duties of the six FinCom officers and then solicited feedback on these tentative Liaison assignments and explained the liaison role and responsibility:

2229 Main Street Advisory Task Force: Kathy Cuocolo

Board of Assessors: Pat Geyer

Community Preservation Committee: Peggy Briggs

Concord 250th Committee:

Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust: Lois Wasoff

Economic Vitality Committee: Quazi Sadruzzaman
Light Plant:
MCI Concord Advisory Board: Don Kupka
Middle School Building Committee: Suresh Bhatia
Minuteman Vocational Tech: Paul Rodriguez
Planning Board: Sri Tupil
Public Works Commission: Karlen Reed
Recreation Commission: John Garafolo
Schools (CPS and CCRSD): Dee Ortner and Pat Geyer
Select Board: Eric Dahlberg
Warner's Pond Task Force: Karlen Reed

We will finalize the liaison list at the June 20 meeting. Chair Dahlberg will send the list to the committee chairs and the liaisons will follow up. Ms Cuocolo provided her liaison report on the 2229 Main Street Task Force and asked for a show of hands of those who wanted to go on a tour of the site on May 29.

Item 6: Discussion of key goals to accomplish, priorities to track, and big picture schedule: Chair Dahlberg spoke about our FY2025 goals and timeline of priorities. The dates provided in the packet are tentative, but the June 20, July 18, and August 22 meetings will be posted in the Town Calendar as they are not likely to be changed. FinCom members discussed the need to keep abreast of the Town Meeting Study Task Force discussions as FinCom's role as the Town Meeting financial advisor may be impacted. Chair Dahlberg will follow up with Moderator Reiss on this. Ms Reed sought a status update on the disposition of the Peabody School, so Chair Dahlberg suggested Ms Ortner and Ms Geyer will watch for it during school committee meetings. Mr Ansaldi suggested FinCom could refine its policies on free cash and the Town's stabilization fund. Several FinCom members noted their appreciation for more joint meetings with the Carlisle Finance Committee regarding our regional high school budget process. At our next meeting, Ms Lis and Mr Sadruzzaman will guide us through the guidelines process.

Item 7: Correspondence: Included in the packet is Chair Dahlberg's memo to the FinCom on the recent Chair's Breakfast. Chair Dahlberg urged FinCom to watch future Chair's Breakfast as the meetings provide an excellent summary of the committees' actions and will be Zoomed, recorded and posted.

Item 8: Minutes: The following minutes were approved as submitted in the May 23 packet: April 16, 2024 (Ms Ortner moved to approve, Ms Cuocolo seconded the motion, 8 yes, 4 abstain;) and April 29, 2024 (Ms Cuocolo moved to approve, Ms Geyer seconded the motion, 10 yes, 2 abstain). The minutes for March 21 and 28, April 25, 30, and May 1 are held over til next meeting for more revisions.

Item 9: Recap of Action Items: FinCom members are to consider their liaison assignments, tentative schedule, and goals. Chair Dahlberg will speak with Moderator Reiss about our role in the Town Meeting Study Task Force. Our next meeting is June 20 at 6:30 p.m. This is a half-hour earlier than usual, something we are trying out.

Item 10: Adjournment. Chair Dahlberg adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

YouTube: Ctrl+Click to follow link:

<https://youtu.be/6npJZxGq7jA?si=3NMItnQKeITeAiw>

May 23, 2024 Packet link: <https://concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/48749>

Respectfully submitted, Karlen Reed, Finance Committee Vice Clerk