



Ware

MASSACHUSETTS

Finance Committee
126 Main Street
Ware, MA 01082

Finance Committee Meeting

Meeting Location: Selectmen's Conference Room
Ware Town Hall – 126 Main Street

Meeting Dates: Tuesday, December 9, 2021

Meeting Time: 7:00 pm

Meeting Agenda items to be discussed:

1. Discussion of ARPA Recommendations to BOS
2. Discussion of 2023 Budget Calendar
3. Discussion of Free Cash and Debt Service Policies
4. Approval of prior meeting's minutes
5. Review of any emails or correspondence since last meeting

At the time of posting of this meeting notice and agenda the above items were the only items known. Should an additional item be brought forward, unless of an emergency nature, it will be placed on a future docket. The general public is invited to this and all meetings of the Ware Finance Committee. **THERE'S AN OPENING FOR ONE (1) NEW MEMBER; APPLY ON TOWN WEBSITE (WWW.TOWNOFWARE.COM) OR WITH TOWN MANAGER.**

Submitted by

Lynn Nenni
Chairman Finance Committee

Meeting Minutes: December 9, 2021

Members Present: Lynn Nenni, Ken Willette, Terry Smith
Special Guests: Stuart Beckley, Town Manager

The Meeting was called to order at 7:15pm.

Item 1) Discussion of ARPA recommendations to BOS

The committee reviewed the discussion of the use of ARPA funds that occurred between the Finance Committee and the Board of Selectman at the November 16th and 23rd Board of Selectman meetings, noting that the Board agreed to approve moving forward with the engineering design required to prepare the sewer plant screen for bid at an estimated cost of \$256,000 and hiring a grant writer for two years at an estimated cost of \$130,000. The Town Manager noted that the costs for both items were estimated and had not been put to a vote and that he was investigating whether or not grant funding is available (outside of ARPA funds) to pay for the \$1,250,000 balance of the sewer plant screen. Lynn noted that the rates recently set by the Board included using the ARPA funds to pay for the entire sewer plant screen project, not just the engineering design costs and was skeptical that additional grant money would be available. The committee also inquired whether or not the grant writer was intended to be a permanent position. Stuart said that he was uncertain and it would likely be evaluated at the end of two years.

The committee reviewed a list of recommended uses of ARPA funds suggested by the subcommittee led by Stuart and Nancy Talbot. The committee agreed they thought the funds should be used to fund eligible infrastructure or capital projects that would otherwise require a loan to pay for to avoid paying interest costs, and to support the needs of residents and business's negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Ken Willette made a motion that the Finance Committee recommend utilizing the ARPA funds for the following projects outlined on the subcommittee's list:

- Sewer plant screen \$1,500,000
- Water storage tank engineering design and bid prep \$ 300,000
- Grant Writer (2yrs only) \$ 130,000
- Ambulance purchase \$ 350,000
- HVAC/plumbing repairs for town buildings \$ 100,000
- Category 1 and 2 costs to support the needs of residents and businesses and improvements to the downtown business district \$ 400,000

Total \$ 2,780,000

Second: Terry Smith
Unanimously approved

Terry agreed to continue attending the meetings of the subcommittee studying the use of ARPA funds in order to provide finance committee input and to bring the above recommendations forward at the next subcommittee meeting.

Item 2) Discussion of 2023 Budget Calendar

The committee reviewed the budget calendar noting that in January the committee had tentatively planned to receive the long term capital plan from the capital planning committee and an updated multi-year revenue and expense projection from the Town Accountant. Stuart stated that he believed both reports would be ready in mid-January.

Item 3) Discussion of Free Cash and Debt Service Policies

The committee planned to begin discussions of the use of free cash, reserves and debt in the 2022-2023 budget and requested Stuart supply them with the Financial Reserve Policy recommend account balances of the undesignated fund balance, free cash, stabilization and capital stabilization accounts as well as the policy recommended accounts and amounts that can be used in the 2022-2023 budget. The committee also requested the debt service maturity schedule. Both items were requested for the next Finance Committee meeting.

Item 4) Approval of prior meeting minutes

Ken Willette: Motion to approve the minutes of the Nov 4th and 16th meetings.

Terry Smith: Second

Unanimously approved

Item 5) Review of emails or correspondence since last meeting

None noted

The next meeting date was set for January 6, 2022.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lynn Nenni

Finance Committee Chair