



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: Thursday, September 9, 2021

Meeting Time: 7:00 pm

Meeting Agenda items to be discussed:

1. Discussion of FY 2022 Finance Committee calendar and related goals
2. Update on progress of Sewer Rate study
3. Update on Covid and ARPA projects
4. Review 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: Sept 9, 2021

Members Present: Lynn Nenni, Devin Peterson, Ken Willette, Terry Smith

Special Guest: Stuart Beckley, Town Manager

The meeting was called to order at 7:05.

Item 1) Discussion of Finance Committee calendar and related goals.

The committee reviewed a proposed calendar of activities leading up to the May 2022 Annual Town Meeting and town vote on the FY 2023 budget. The committee agreed with the plan, and noted that April meetings will be dependent on the ATM date set by the Selectman. The Town charter states the last date to pass the budget is the second Monday in May. The committee also discussed the timing of their public hearing on the proposed budget in April and their final recommendation and vote, but did not set a date.

Everyone agreed long term capital planning was a critical element of the budget and to reserve time in February to discuss the recommendations of the Capital Planning Committee and the Water and Sewer reports.

Stuart agreed to confer with the selectman regarding dates for the ATM, as well as dates to discuss the FY 2023 budget with the Selectman, Board of Education and Finance Committee. He also agree to provide the Finance Committee with his proposed budget by February 24th.

Item 2) Update on Sewer Rate Study

Terry Smith provided an update on the status on the Water Resources Committee's review of the sewer rate study and a copy of the preliminary report prepared by Tighe and Bond. The report is an assessment of projected costs to operate the treatment plant for the next several years including recommended upgrades, as well as three funding alternatives to pay for the upgrades and ongoing operations. Terry noted the report will be used to help the Selectman set a new sewer rate paid by sewer users. It was also noted that the current sewer rates did not cover the cost of operating the plant and that the 2021 budget included an approximate \$125,000 contribution from the general fund to cover the cost of operations.

The Finance Committee discussed their role in the evaluation of the study and concluded that unless asked, they had no role in setting the sewer rate, which is the responsibility of the Board of Selectman. The Committee did however believe they should discuss and make a recommendation on the impact of future bonding for sewer and water related projects on the town budget. The committee also expressed interest in further evaluation of the Water and Sewer Studies prepared by Tighe and Bond at future finance committee meetings.

Item 3) Update on Covid and ARPA funds

The Town Manager gave an update on the progress of spending the Covid grant and stated that he had contacted an outside organization for assistance in distributing small business and taxpayer grants and loans to individuals and businesses impacted by the pandemic and that security camera's had also been ordered. Stuart also mentioned that he did not believe it was likely that all of the grant could be spent and anticipated returning approximately \$400,000. There was no update on the spending of the ARPA funds however he expected the selectman to vote on the spending in late October.

Item 4) Approval of prior meeting minutes.

Ken Willette moved the approval of the August 17th meeting minutes.

Second: Devin Peterson

Unanimously approved.

Item 5) Review of any emails or correspondence since last meeting

None noted.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Nenni