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BELMONT, MA

DATE: July 5, 2023
TIME: 8:52 AM

Minutes of the
Town of Belmont
Warrant Committee Meeting
Wednesday, May 24, 2023
7:30pm



To view the recording of the meeting, please click [HERE](#).

Call to Order: Mr. Lubien called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. 15 voting members present.

| Member | Present | Member | Present |
|---|---------|--|---------|
| Geoffrey Lubien, Chair | Yes | Conor McEachern | Yes |
| Paul Rickter, Vice-Chair | Yes | Robert McLaughlin | Yes |
| William Anderson | Remote | Lynn Peterson Read | Remote |
| Tom Caputo | Yes | Laurie Slap | Remote |
| Christine Doyle | Remote | Matthew Taylor | Yes |
| Anne Helgen | Remote | Marie Warner | Yes |
| Staff | | Jack Weis | Yes |
| Patrice Garvin, Town Administrator | Yes | Mark Paolillo, Ex-officio Designee, Select Board | Yes |
| Jennifer Hewitt, Assistant Town Administrator & Finance Manager | Yes | Meghan Moriarty, Ex-officio, School Committee | Yes |
| Anthony DiCologero, Schools Director of Finance | Remote | | |

Review School Department Q3 Financials

Mr. DiCologero explained that there is currently a projected deficit of \$696,000, and outlined what the District will do to mitigate this deficit. These efforts will produce a remaining deficit of approximately \$253,000. He then provided a General Fund summary which shows the details of the efforts to mitigate the deficit.

Mr. DiCologero then outlined some additional funding that they are working to secure to help with the deficit and announced that DESE has awarded the District about \$181,000 in relief which will be received in FY23.

He then provided details of the SPED Expenses including Out-of-District Placements, Direct Services, and Transportation expenses.

Mr. DiCologero then provided details of the operational responses that are in place to address the deficit.

There were a series of questions and discussions about Mr. DiCologero's presentation, the financial situation of the District, and the details of the budget documents.

There was a discussion of what details and information would be helpful in the future.

Discuss and Vote on Annual Town Meeting Segment B Articles

Article 12:

There was a discussion of the Town Clerk choosing to not receive a COLA increase for FY24.

Motion: Mr. Rickter moved favorable action on Article 12. Mr. Weis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those attending virtually.

Article 13:

Motion: Ms. Helgen moved favorable action on Article 13. Ms. Doyle seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those attending virtually.

34 Article 14:

35 Mr. Lubien provided the current year-to-date numbers, which were discussed.

36 ***Motion:*** Mr. Weis moved favorable action on Article 14. Ms. Warner seconded, and the motion passed
37 unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those attending
38 virtually.

39 Article 15:

40 Ms. Hewitt reviewed the analysis of the Free Cash Policy that was prepared for this item which showed
41 \$15,553,790 at the beginning of FY23, and \$5,308,081 remaining after use for the Operating Budget and
42 OPEB. There was a detailed discussion of what to do with these funds and how Free Cash works year to year.

43 ***Motion:*** Ms. Doyle moved favorable action on Article 15. Mr. Caputo seconded, and the motion
44 passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those
45 attending virtually.

46 Article 16:

47 Ms. Garvin explained that a name change is needed to repurpose an existing fund, rather than repeal and
48 replace it. There was a discussion of this suggestion including some of the challenges. The Committee
49 discussed how the fund would work as well as some wording suggestions for the motion.

50 ***Motion:*** Ms. Doyle moved favorable action on Article 16. Mr. Weis seconded, and the motion passed
51 14-1 by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those attending virtually with
52 Ms. Read opposing.

53 Article 17:

54 Mr. Lubien explained that this money comes from fees on Lyft and Uber, and how these funds might be used
55 was discussed.

56 ***Motion:*** Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on Article 17. Mr. Weiss seconded, and the motion
57 passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those
58 attending virtually.

59 Article 18:

60 Ms. Hewitt explained the purpose of this article, how the settlement works, and the specific rules that must be
61 followed when spending these funds. She explained that best practice is to create an Opioid Settlement
62 Stabilization Fund and she provided information on how this would work.

63 ***Motion:*** Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on Article 18. Mr. Rickter seconded, and the motion
64 passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those
65 attending virtually.

66 Article 19:

67 This article appropriates the money for the fund in the previous article.

68 ***Motion:*** Mr. Caputo moved favorable action on Article 19. Mr. McLaughlin seconded, and the motion
69 passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those
70 attending virtually.

71 Article 20:

72 Mr. Taylor asked if the Tree Planting plan includes guidelines around using native species. Ms. Doyle said this
73 had not been discussed, but she thinks Mr. Marcotte would work with the Tree Committee. Mr. Lubien
74 explained his experience working with the tree department and what their recommendations were around
75 health and dealing with power lines. There was a discussion of tree species.

76 **Motion:** Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on Motion A contained in Article 20. Mr. Rickter
77 seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and
78 roll call vote for those attending virtually.

79 **Motion:** Mr. Rickter moved favorable action on Motions B & C contained in Article 20. Mr. Taylor
80 seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and
81 roll call vote for those attending virtually.

82 Article 21:

83 Mr. Lubien explained this article.

84 **Motion:** Mr. Anderson moved favorable action on Article 21. Mr. Taylor seconded, and the motion
85 passed 14-1 by a show of hands vote for those attending live and roll call vote for those attending
86 virtually with Ms. Moriarty opposing.

87 Article 22:

88 Ms. Hewitt explained that this article is restructured from last year and explained the differences.

89 **Motion:** Mr. McLaughlin moved favorable action on all motions contained in Article 22. Mr. Taylor
90 seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by a show of hands vote for those attending live and
91 roll call vote for those attending virtually.

92 Mr. Lubien advised the Committee that there may be an amendment proposed on Town Meeting floor to use
93 another \$300,000 from Free Cash for the School Budget. He will be working on this and will advise the
94 Committee when/if they will vote on it. He then shared his concerns about this possible amendment and the
95 challenges facing Free Cash. There was a discussion of the possible amendment and its impact.

96 **Discuss LWV Warrant Briefing Presentation**

97 Mr. Lubien explained the goals of the LWV presentation, and what information he will present. He pointed out
98 that there cannot be a quorum because he has not posted the event as a meeting but encouraged members to
99 send him any information they would like him to share.

100 He also provided an update on the status of the Warrant Committee Report.

101 **Liaison Reports:**

- 102 A. Town Administrator: Ms. Garvin reported that candidates for Treasurer and Director of Human
103 Resources have accepted offers of employment.
- 104 B. Select Board: Mr. Paolillo reported on the recent activities and votes of the Select Board.
- 105 C. School Committee: Ms. Moriarty reported on their work to increase the athletic fees and a possible
106 donor who may help address the impact of this.

107 **Public Comment** – there was no public comment.

108 **Adjournment**

109 **Motion:** Mr. McLaughlin moved to adjourn the meeting of the Warrant Committee. Mr. Taylor
110 seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:47pm.

111 Respectfully submitted by,

112
113 Susan Peghiny
114 Recording Secretary
115