

Location: In-person at Lunenburg Town Hall and broadcast on Zoom

Present: Chairperson Evan Watters, Vice-Chairperson Chris Menard, Jay Simeone, Tom Gray, Tom Balish (arrived later), Caesar Nuzzolo

Guests: Town Manager Heather Lemieux (Remote)

1. Call to Order

Mr. Menard called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and read a statement concerning the Open Meeting Law, and how all public meetings are legally being held remotely.

This meeting was recorded and is viewable on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/ckCnO-5t0t8>

2. Pledge of Allegiance

- 3. Announcements:** Mr. Watters announced that the annual fundraiser for the Boys and Girls, “Club Are You Smarter Than Our Sixth Graders?” is on Friday April 28, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Menard turned the meeting over to Mr. Watters.

- 4. Public Comment:** Lunenburg resident Dave Rogers commented that he had trouble calling into the meeting from home, and came to Town Hall to inform the committee. Mr. Rogers also inquired as to when the public could comment on the Town Warrant.

5. New Business:

- a. Update on Budget Numbers:** Drafted warrant articles have been changed from letters to numbers, and committee members voted on updated articles as they’ve learned dollar amounts that go along with some articles.

Article 6 (regarding the FY24 Capital Plan) Mr. Menard motioned to recommend approval, Mr. Nuzzolo seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously. There was a discussion regarding an email from a School Committee member regarding the latest items to be funded on the FY24 Capital Plan. Ms. Lemieux explained that she added the next prioritized items on the plan when funds became available, and that the prioritized list did not change since the Capital Planning Process was completed at the beginning of the calendar year.

Article 8 Collective Bargaining Agreement for Firefighters has not been finalized. The vote stands to defer to Annual Town Meeting.

Article 14 (Sewer Enterprises) The Sewer Commission realized that the numbers in their budget for usage fees has increased, and as a result, the dollar amount of the article has changed. The committee learned the Sewer Commission would not be meeting until April 11, 2023. Mr. Menard motioned to defer recommendation to Annual Town Meeting, Mr. Nuzzolo seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.

Article 20 (Historical Commission edits) The article was edited to include all homes in town, not just those within the Historical District. Mr. Menard motioned to recommend approval. Mr. Nuzzolo seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.

Article 21 (Senior Tax Relief) The article was edited to add revocation of Senior Tax Relief at a future Town Meeting if needed. Committee members discussed whether the article would have financial impact. Mr. Watters commented that the budget would not be impacted, but it would have an effect on the property owners' taxes. Mr. Menard motioned to recommend approval, Mr. Nuzzolo seconded. On vote, motion carried (4-1 Simeone -nay)

6. Town Manager/Finance Director Report: none

7. Old Business

- a. Town Meeting Finance Committee Report: Mr. Watters is still drafting the report, and pointed out that the town is facing a dilemma concerning the latest property tax bills, and using free cash to fund the overlay account for abatements, which took money away from funding the FY24 Capital Plan, and spending ARPA funds on capital items, on top of an unforeseeable future. Mr. Menard opined that the town is in good shape financially, and is weathering the storm, but municipal building projects have been sidelined. Mr. Nuzzolo added that he is optimistic, and the report can include all the ways the town is handling current obstacles. The committee agreed that focusing on factual information about the town's finances in the report would suffice.
- b. Tax Abatement/Assessment: Third and Fourth Quarter taxes are due on May 1 and are being accepted with no interest charged. Abatement Applications are still being accepted. Extension forms are being mailed out by the Assessor's Office.

8. Minutes: none

9. Committee Reports: Committee members updated each other on their respective assignments.

10. Items for Future Meetings: Invite Select Board Chairperson Michael Ray Jeffries to discuss potential issues going into next fiscal year.

11. Public Comment Lunenburg resident Rhonda Lissio thanked the committee for not deferring the FY24 Capital Plan article to Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Lissio attended several Capital Planning Committee meetings, and has followed the process extensively. According to Ms. Lissio, for three consecutive years, the School Committee has asked to change the prioritization of items after the process has ended. Ms. Lissio read all the FY24 Capital Plan requests from the School Committee.

12. Next Meetings: April 20, 2023 (Public Hearing), May 6, 2023 (ATM)

13. Adjourn: At 8:24 p.m. Mr. Menard motioned to adjourn, Mr. Nuzzolo seconded. On vote, motion carried unanimously.