

Weston Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2021

A meeting of the Finance Committee of the Town of Weston, which was duly called and posted in compliance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, was held virtually on Thursday, January 7th, 2020 at the Weston Town Hall. There being a quorum present the meeting was called to order at 7:03pm.

Present for the meeting were:

Finance Committee: Lisa Reitano – Chair, John McDonald, James Jarrett, Jim Philipkosky, Karen Meslin, John Sallay, Bharath Venkataraman, Lisa Schwallie and Paul Clark.

Also Present: Leon Gaumont, Town Manager (“TM”), and Susan Kelley, Finance Director.

John McDonald was appointed to serve as Secretary pro tempore and charged with keeping the minutes of the meeting. The meeting was recorded by Weston Media and is available online.

- 1) There were no resident comments.
- 2) The minutes of the meeting of December 3rd were approved by all members present.
- 3) The Chair and the TM briefly discussed the PEC agreement covering employee health insurance for Town and School employees. This agreement was recently finalized and will result in some reduction in costs. However, Weston’s costs will still be higher than our peers. We expect to have more details of the new agreement soon. The Town Manager estimates that the savings in the 3rd year of the agreement should approximate \$400,000.
- 4) With respect to the FY 22 budget, there had been concerns about significant cuts in the State Aid due to the pandemic. However, the TM has heard that the State revenues are higher by 9% than what the State had previously estimated. Now he thinks there may be no cuts in School Aid and only minimal cuts to General Aid. We will have a better picture of all State Aid when the Governor’s budget is released later in January.
- 5) Fincom discussed the upcoming preliminary reviews of individual department budgets for FY 22. Typically, one Fincom member attends the meeting when the dept. manager presents their proposed budget to the TM. If desired, Fincom may submit questions in advance to the TM. In addition, the TM indicated that any follow up questions subsequent to the meeting may be resolved via email as well.

- 6) Fincom briefly discussed various upcoming departmental budgets. Fincom members who had reviewed these budgets in prior years offered suggestions. Some raised questions about whether furloughs were appropriate for departments like the Library and the WAIC which were partially closed. Other issues of note include a proposed Pool renovation as well as any plans to raise fees by the Rec. Dept. Also, at the Brook School there is a plan under discussion to build 14 additional units.
- 7) For all depts., Fincom suggested that future issues and challenges be explored with the dept. mgrs. In addition, dept. mgrs. should discuss the impact of covid and whether that may present any opportunities for efficiencies post covid.
- 8) A subgroup of Fincom members is meeting with the School Committee budget subgroup and the School Finance Director for the FY22 School budget. The School's preliminary budget is expected to be presented on January 11th. The subgroup is focusing on the projected enrollment and the impact on FTE's.
- 9) Susan Kelley will schedule the preliminary department reviews starting next week.
- 10) Work on subcommittee projects continues.
- 11) The meeting adjourned at 9:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

John McDonald