

## **Weston Finance Committee**

Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2023

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 on Thursday, March 9, 2023, via a Zoom video conference. It was broadcast live and recorded by Weston Media Center. There being a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:03PM.

Present for the meeting were:

*Finance Committee:* Lisa Reitano (Chair), George Berbeco, Jonathan Harris, Karen Meslin, John Sallay, Zachary Sadek, Matthew Seltzer, and Bharath Venkataraman.

*Also Present:* Leon Gaumond (Town Manager) and Susan Kelley (Finance Director), Chris Fitzgerald (Recreation Director), Melissa Crocker (Recreation Commission Member), Laurie Bent (Select Board Member), Shirley Small-Rougeau, Deborah Toppan, and Kelly Larocque

Jonathan Harris was appointed to serve as Secretary Pro-Tempore and charged with keeping the minutes of the meeting. The Zoom video conference meeting was recorded by Weston Media Center and is available on-line.

1. The minutes for the March 2, 2023 Finance Committee meeting were unanimously approved.
2. There were no resident comments.
3. Melissa Crocker (Recreation Commission Member) presented the Town Meeting articles for the construction of 6 pickleball courts and the resurfacing with post tension concrete of the tennis/basketball courts at Burchard Park. The estimated cost for the pickle ball court alone would be \$1,240,000, the tennis/basketball court alone would be \$920,000 for a total of \$2,160,000. However, if the two projects were combined, the cost would be \$1,900,000 for a savings of \$260,000 with less disruption in terms of construction time to Burchard Park. The CPC has not yet approved the project. At Town Meeting, there is a plan to present three articles: (1) Pickleball & Tennis/Basketball Courts together, (2) Pickleball Courts alone, and (3) Tennis Courts alone.
4. Laurie Bent (Select Board Member) presented the Town Meeting article for replacing the water tanks at Paine's Hill and Cat Rock. The reason for replacing the water tanks is that they are past their useful life and not high enough to generate satisfactory water pressure for all areas of the town. The estimated cost for the project would be \$26,220,000.

Discussion ensued. One member advised doing all three water tanks at once. Leon Gaumond said that ARPA funds may be allocated to fund the project and a decision had not yet been made about how the main source of funds will come from water bills or tax bills or some combination. Concern was expressed about the variable nature of water usage and therefore water bills if we try to fund fixed debt service solely in this manner.

5. The Finance Committee voted 8-0 in favor of the Opioid Settlement Article.
6. The Finance Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the Capital Article with the Wellesley Street TIP project removed and voted 5-2 in favor of the Wellesley TIP project alone.
7. The Finance Committee postponed a vote of the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Rhododendron Garden Article. There was general agreement about the need for the CPC to develop a long-range plan to determine which projects are proposed for funding.
8. The Finance Committee postponed a vote of the Property Tax Deferral Article because it needed additional information.
9. The Finance Committee postponed a vote of the Additional Liquor License Article because it needed additional information.
10. The Finance Committee voted 5-2 to take no position on the Service Dog Article.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Harris