



**Meeting Minutes
March 25, 2020**

Finance Committee Members Present: Christos Arsoniadis, David Clough, Dan Cole, Emilio Mauro, Tim McKenna, Cindy Thomas and Wai Wong.

Finance Committee Members Absent: Rob Barker and Barbara Saint André.

Guests Present:

Michelle Resendes, Business Manager, Blue Hills Regional Technical School
Jill Rosetti, Superintendent-Director, Blue Hills Regional Technical School
Randy Scollins, Finance Director
Ellen Jones, Finance Committee Secretary

Opening: Chair McKenna called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom virtual meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Chair McKenna reviewed the agenda.

New Business:

Blue Hills Regional Technical High School – Discussion with Jill Rosetti and Michelle Resendes

(see two meeting documents)

Ms. Rosetti opened up the discussion by explaining that both her and the Business Manager are new to their positions, however, Ms. Rosetti has been with the school for 25 years. Ms. Rosetti turned the discussion over to Ms. Resendes.

Instead of going through the Blue Hills budget books page by page, Ms. Resendes suggested opening up the discussion for questions from the Committee members. Blue Hills is requesting a 2% budget increase which represents a \$29,615 increase to Canton's assessment. The following are highlights from the discussion:

- Canton has 67 students as of October 2019 enrolled at Blue Hills which is the same number of students as last year. Canton's students represent approximately 8% of the total Blue Hills student population. Student enrollment has been relatively flat over the past five years.
- The total assessment requested by Blue Hills for FY21 for Canton is \$1,477,309.
- Canton's portion of the Blue Hills budget for the renovation project is 7.4% based upon 4-year enrollment.
- Of the \$1,477,309 total assessment the renovation portion for Canton is \$126,141. As debt for the project is paid down \$126,141 will decrease.
- The School to Careers portion of the assessment is \$27,368.

A third document entitled "Municipal Assessment & Enrollment History Fact Sheet – Canton" was displayed on the screen and reviewed by Ms. Resendes.

- With regard to enrollment the five-year averages for Canton are 42 applicants with 64% being accepted and 40% actually enrolled.
- There was a significant increase in Canton's assessment from \$47,202 for FY19 to \$239,906 for FY20. This was due to the renovation project.
- With regard to the changes in per pupil cost, the district's average cost per pupil is \$17,335 as compared to Canton's per pupil cost of \$19,758.

Ms. Resendes stated that Blue Hills is nearing completion on the renovation project. Because of the COVID virus and the concern for social distancing of workers and staff, Blue Hills' focus at the present time is on landscape work. The project is 96-98% complete. The goal is to have the project completed by June but Ms. Resendes is uncertain if this goal will be reached given the current situation.

In response to Mr. Mauro's question as to whether the renovation project was running over budget and if additional funding sources would be needed, Ms. Resendes stated that they froze the budget and they have been able to cover some overages. Some expenses are being charged to the school's Food Services Fund because there was work that was done in the cafeteria and it was permissible to charge these costs to that Fund. There have been savings in

“breakage” in employment. The school has also seen a significant reduction in utility costs because some of the freezers have been replaced with more cost efficient equipment.

Ms. Resendes further stated that they are “scraping by” and she would not “sugar coat” the budget situation. They are making adjustments on the district budget and would not impose additional expenses on the participating communities. Overages were due to unforeseen circumstances in the way the contract was done for the repair of the building. They are in the process of commissioning the HVAC systems. The renovations project was not done to increase enrollment. Ms. Rosetti stated that the project started out with a limited scope to replace doors, windows, electrical systems with other necessary upgrades.

A Finance Committee member inquired if the school being closed would cause a budget problem because of a decrease in revenue with the pool also being closed. Ms. Resendes stated that the revolving fund for the pool was self-sustaining and at the current time they were not paying their recreation staff due to the pool closure.

Ms. Resendes thanked the members of the Finance Committee for meeting with them to keep the budget process going.

Discuss and Vote various Annual Town Meeting Articles

Four articles on the agenda (Articles 36, 37, 38 and 39) had been previously voted at the Finance Committee meeting on Monday, March 23 and were removed from the agenda. Three articles were added to the agenda (Articles 26, 35 and 53).

Article 4 – Act on Consent Agenda – A draft Consent Agenda was presented to the Committee which included Articles 5, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 40 and 41.

Vote – Article 9 – Adjust FY20 Accounts

A motion made by Ms. Thomas that the subject matter of Article 9 be indefinitely postponed was seconded by Mr. Cough. Mr. Scollins stated there will likely be year-end transfer requests from the Finance Committee’s Reserve Fund or amongst other FY20 appropriations or other sources as departments may be incurring additional expenses due to the COVID health crisis.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Mauro	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Wong	Aye	Ms. Thomas	Aye
Mr. Cole	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Continued Discussion - Article 4 – Act on Consent Agenda

Mr. Scollins asked the Finance Committee to consider adding the following articles to the Consent Agenda:

Article 10 – Transfer Unexpended Prior Year Appropriations (transfer from street betterments account)
Article 11 – Authorize Certain Revolving Funds
Article 20 – Community Recognition Supplemental Funding
Article 21 – Increase Solar Stabilization Fund (\$100,000)
Article 23 – Appropriate Proceeds from TNC Per Ride Assessment Funds (\$9,408.90)
Article 24 – Home Rule Petition relative to Retired Police Officers

The Finance Committee did not support Articles 21, 23 and 24 being added to the Consent Agenda. They supported adding Articles 10, 11 and 20 to the Consent Agenda.

A motion made by Mr. Mauro that Articles 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 40 and 41 be included in the Consent Agenda was seconded by Ms. Thomas.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Mauro	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Mr. Cole	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Vote – Article 7 – Set Salaries of Elected Officials

Motion #1 - A motion made by Ms. Thomas to recommend to Town Meeting a salary for the Town Clerk of \$95,465 as written was seconded by Mr. Mauro.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Clough	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Cole	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Motion # 2 – A motion made by Ms. Thomas to recommend to Town Meeting that the salary and compensation for all part-time elected officials be fixed for FY21 as written in the warrant was seconded by Mr. Wong.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Cole	Aye	Mr. Mauro	Aye
Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye	Ms. Thomas	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye	Mr. McKenna	Aye
Mr. Wong	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Vote - Article 8 – Pay Bills of Prior Fiscal Year – As stated by Mr. Scollins municipalities are not allowed to pay for prior year expenditures from current year appropriations. There is a 7/10 required vote at an Annual Town Meeting and a 9/10 required vote at a Special Town Meeting to approve paying bills from prior fiscal years. Prior year invoices are not paid out of Free Cash but are paid from the Department’s budget line item that the invoice would have been previously paid from. The original warrant article referring to Free Cash as a funding source was incorrect. The motion presented to the Finance Committee as written references the correct funding sources.

A motion made by Ms. Thomas to recommend to Town Meeting that unpaid bills from the prior fiscal year in the amounts of \$4,888.96 (Bi-County Collaborative/School Dept.) and \$2,561.36 (Cabot Risk – Covel/HR Dept.) be paid as written in an amended motion was seconded by Mr. Mauro.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Clough	Aye	Mr. Cole	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye	Mr. McKenna	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Vote – Article 26 – Amend Preservation Restriction on First Parish Church Steeple

Ms. Thomas suggested deferring Article 26 to Town Meeting as she was under the impression that the Board of Selectman preferred that this article be dealt with by the citizens at Town Meeting. Mr. Cole received an email from Kristen Phelps of the Community Preservation Committee regarding the new antennae in the steeple. The original preservation restriction/documentation did not address who the revenue would go to if a piece of equipment were added to the steeple. One of Mr. Cole’s concerns was the revenue sharing part of the amendment. The article does not address revenue but only addresses the Board of Selectmen be authorized to enter into an amendment regarding the antennae and the change in the appearance of the steeple as a result of this added equipment. Mr. McKenna suggested voting similarly to the BOS’ vote to defer to Town Meeting. Town Counsel would need to confirm if deferring to Town Meeting was a legal motion as Finance Committee was charged with the task of making recommendations to Town Meeting.

Mr. Mauro stated that the Community Preservation Committee would need to provide their opinion on this amendment because CPA/public funds were committed to this private-entity project for the original project recommended by CPA in 2015.

A motion made by Ms. Thomas to recommend to Town Meeting the motion as written for Article 26 was seconded by Mr. Mauro. (At the time this vote was taken there was a positive motion drafted for Article 26 in the meeting document that stated support to authorize the BOS to amend the preservation restriction.)

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Clough	Abstained	Mr. Cole	No
Ms. Thomas	No	Mr. Wong	No
Mr. Arsoniadis	No	Mr. McKenna	No
Mr. Mauro	No		

The motion failed 0-6-1.

Vote – Article 35 – Amend General By-Laws by Adding Sidewalk Betterment Assessment By-Law

A motion made by Ms. Thomas to recommend to Town Meeting Article 35 as written in the warrant with a modification changing 13% to 15% in the by-law was seconded by Mr. Wong.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye	Mr. Cole	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Vote – Article 53 – Amend Additional 43D – Mr. Mauro had spoken with the Economic Development Chair who had recommended to the Board of Selectmen to indefinitely postpone Article 53. The traffic issue was one of the primary concerns with Amazon proposing a distribution center on Dan Road. Amazon had not replied to a number of correspondences from the Town.

A motion made by Mr. Mauro that the subject matter of Article 53 be indefinitely postponed was seconded by Mr. Wong.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye	Mr. Cole	Aye
Mr. Mauro	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Article 54 – Budget – Mr. Scollins stated that with the current health crisis and revenues not flowing as they normally would, he will be taking a more in-depth look at all of the recurring revenues for next year as well as any financial impacts for the current fiscal year. He will be reviewing property tax revenue, state aid, local receipts and transfers from other funds to identify revenues that may be at risk given the current economy. Mr. Scollins will be discussing this “first pass look” with Mr. Aspinwall and then with the BOS at their upcoming meeting. He will share this information with school leadership as well as the leadership of the Finance Committee. There will be discussions to move forward with the budget in its present form or to make adjustments along with the possibility of deferring Town Meeting to another date. House Bill 4580 currently in the legislature would give municipalities the option to move/delay their Town Meetings for 30 days, however, this bill has been revised several times.

Mr. Mauro inquired if articles were approved at Town Meeting, how much flexibility with regard to obligation would the Town have if the items were discretionally pulled back or not implemented at a later date. Mr. Scollins stated that technically if articles are approved at Town Meeting these are legal authorizations. It would fall to the BOS and the School Committee for imposing restrictions on spending after a budget has been approved.

Mr. Scollins stated that he is expecting that the Town will receive relief from FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) but that it might be in the distant future. This reimbursement will come in the form of Free Cash.

Public Comments - There were no public comments.

Announcements – There were no announcements at the meeting.

Next Meeting Date - The Finance Committee will meet on Thursday, April 2 at 6:30 to discuss the FY21 budget article. This may be the final meeting prior to the Town Meeting document being sent to the printer.

Approval of Minutes – There were no minutes approved at the meeting.

Adjournment: A motion made by Mr. Clough to adjourn the meeting at 9:14 p.m. was seconded by Mr. Wong.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. McKenna	Aye	Mr. Mauro	Aye
Ms. Thomas	Aye	Mr. Arsoniadis	Aye
Mr. Cole	Aye	Mr. Wong	Aye
Mr. Clough	Aye		

The motion passed 7-0-0.

Minutes reviewed by: Committee Members
Respectfully submitted,

Timothy McKenna
Chair, Canton Finance Committee

**Canton Finance Committee Meeting
March 25, 2020
Meeting Documents**

Please note: Some meeting documents may be found on the Town's website under the Posted Minutes section (Laser Fiche).

For information regarding department budget requests please follow the below link:

<https://www.town.canton.ma.us/DocumentCenter/View/5658/FY21-Municipal-Budget---Dept-Requests---Jan-2020>

Agenda for March 25, 2020 (1 page).

Member Town Proposed Assessment Guide 2020-2021 dated February 1, 2020 – Blue Hills Regional Technical School (17 pages).

Proposed 2020-2021 Operating Budget dated January 21, 2020 – Blue Hills Regional Technical School (26 pages).

Municipal Assessment & Enrollment History Fact Sheet – Canton provided by Blue Hills Technical School (2 pages).