



Town of Orleans

Finance Committee

19 School Road Orleans Massachusetts 02653

Tel. (508) 240-3700

Fax (508) 240-3388

ORLEANS TOWN CLERK

Jessie Hegri
23 MAR 13 1:26PM

MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 2, 2023 – 7:00 pm

This was a hybrid meeting of the Orleans Finance Committee, convened in the Nauset Room at Town Hall, with remote participation also provided by Zoom technology. Real-time public access was provided by Orleans Channel 18 on the Town website and cable television.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Finance Committee Chairman Nick Athanassiou. Also attending, and thus constituting a quorum were Committee Vice Chairman Chris Kanaga Committee Clerk Elaine Baird (participating remotely) and Committee members Lynn Bruneau, Tim Counihan, Constance Kremer, Ed Mahoney and Peter O'Meara (participating remotely). Alissa Magnotta joined the meeting (remotely) from approximately 7:10pm until 7:25pm.

Guests: Meff Runyon, Select Board member and Liaison to the Finance Committee. Peggy O'Sullivan from Media Operations provided technical support for this meeting.

(0:01) Public Comment: There were no public comments.

(0:30) Announcements:

Mr. Athanassiou announced that there will be a joint meeting with the Select Board on March 15th for the Public Hearing to review the Town Budget and the NRSD School Budget.

(2:00) Review / Approval of Finance Committee Meeting Minutes – 2/09/23, 2/23/23

- 2/09/23 – Mr. Counihan moved to approve the minutes as drafted; Ms. Kremer seconded. The vote was 8-0-0 with Mmes. Baird, Bruneau and Kremer, and Messrs. Athanassiou, Counihan, Kanaga, Mahoney and O'Meara all voting "aye" by roll call.
- 2/23/23 – Mr. Counihan moved to approve the minutes as drafted; Ms. Kremer seconded. The vote was 8-0-0 with Mmes. Baird, Bruneau and Kremer and Messrs. Athanassiou, Counihan, Kanaga, Mahoney and O'Meara all voting "aye" by roll call.

(04:30) Discuss FinComm Town Meeting "FY23 Annual Letter to the Town" structure/content and agree on next steps

Mr. Athanassiou said that he and Ms. Baird and Ms. Bruneau met to review Fin Comm's 2022 "Letter to the Warrant" as well as the Fin Comm "priorities" from the 11/9/22 joint meeting with the Select Board. One suggestion would be to use the Fin Comm "priorities" as a "framework" for the 2023 "Letter to the Warrant" with updates re any "new news" since that meeting. Ms. Bruneau briefly reviewed the Fin Comm "priorities" from the 11/9/22 meeting: strategic planning, financial /investment planning; quality of life; communication /transparency; and accountability /leadership. She also suggested that Fin Comm could consider other data from the Division of Local Services (DLS) website, especially when discussing financial planning.

Mr. Athanassiou, when discussing strategic planning, noted that strategy needs to be tied to the budget. The Town is not currently doing this as it is being done in neighboring towns. An example he provided is the Planning Board's Comprehensive Plan, and noted that it is a long-term comprehensive plan, but that is not tied to any budget. He noted that a strategic plan is a managerial

tool that looks ahead 3-to-5 years and the first part is always the operating budget. He suggested that the Town begin working in this way, toward a strategic plan tied to the operating budget.

Mr. Counihan and Ms. Kremer agreed. Ms. Baird said that it was time to turn this ship around, and begin linking the numerous studies recently done, or being started soon, to the budget and a capital planning process. There was further discussion along the same lines.

For the letter, the FinComm discussed the best way to tackle drafting it. Further suggestions regarding the suggested strategy and/or content s/be provided to Mr. Athanassiou and Ms. Bruneau ahead of next week's Fin Comm meeting. Once the draft is begun, "huddles" might focus on specific sections. The "Letter" will be "due" when the Warrant goes to press on April 7.

(27:00) Review / Continued Discussion of FinComm FY24 Budget Reviews / Preliminary discussion on viewpoints on Joint Select Board / FinComm Budget Hearing of 3/15/23

Ms. Bruneau discussed the Fin Comm meeting with the Water Department on 2/7/23. The FY24 Water Department budget anticipates further restrained water usage.

She also reviewed the Recreation Department budget, discussed briefly with DPW Director Tom Daley on 2/15/23, with the understanding that the Rec Department reorganization is "pending", waiting for further recommendations from Interim Town Manager Charlie Sumner. Mr. Runyon provided additional information as to the Recreation Department's operations, as presented to the Select Board.

Ms. Bruneau also highlighted a number of DPW and other department staff positions that need to be filled or funded.

Ms. Bruneau reviewed the Rock Harbor Enterprise Fund budget and the Fin Comm recommendation that the Town consider "sun-setting" this Enterprise Fund at the end of FY24, primarily because of the mismatch between revenue sources and those using the assets. Runyon noted the proposed Blue Economy Study, which is intended to look at Rock Harbor and Town Cove. Fin Comm also recommends "sun-setting" the Moorings Operations Enterprise Fund at the end of FY24 - also because of the mismatch between revenue sources (those paying for moorings) and those enjoying access to the Town's waters. There was further discussion about the Enterprise Funds for harbor and shoreline-related projects and their funding sources.

Ms. Bruneau reviewed the Sewer Enterprise Fund budget and the current status of sewer project components and planning. There was further discussion regarding the structure and purpose of the fund.

Ms. Baird said that a good part of the Library meeting was spent discussing the new building project.

(1:18:00) May 2023 TM "Warrant Watch": Discussion of Warrant Articles proposed and / or expected (re current version of Warrant Index / possible invitations to others for updates)

Ms. Bruneau said that the draft Warrant Index includes a lot of "business as usual" in terms of the Warrant Articles and their order - much of this is the same year-to-year. After the Budget and the CIP, Capital Budget items are listed, followed by additional potential articles: i.e. zoning, Governor Prence, and other housing-related articles. The last page of the Index includes several

“usual suspects” for the “Special Town Meeting” which are Articles related to the current fiscal year - amending the FY23 budget. The Index will be updated each week, prior to/after each Select Board meeting.

(1:28:00) Updates

Update of Select Board Meeting discussions / decisions

Ms. Bruneau said that the Select Board voted to approve the Debt Policy that was initially presented last December. She also noted that three charter changes have been approved by the Select Board for May Town Meeting consideration; however, all of the Charter changes approved at last October’s Town Meeting and last May’s Town meeting have been approved by the Attorney General and will appear on the May Local Election Ballot for final approval. Mr. Runyon said that there was a desire to separate the school budgets from the Town budget on the Warrant - to be voted separately at Town Meeting.

Mr. Athanassiou discussed the conversation around expanding the use of Universal Pre-K funding, and a potential study around the expansion. He suggested the Fin Comm could follow up on any “study” needed. He also noted that the Fire Department override for 8 additional firefighters/paramedics is still being discussed by Administration. Mr. Athanassiou said that Interim Town Administrator Charlie Sumner noted several grants received by the Town.

Mr. Athanassiou said that the Town Administrator Search Committee will review candidates in the next couple of weeks.

(1:37:00) Liaison Reports as appropriate

Ms. Bruneau said that the Planning Board will meet on March 28th with the Chairs of Town Boards/Committees to explain the Planning Board initiative for updating the Town’s Comprehensive Plan (dating from 2006) and to ask for help/support for the Town Boards/Committees. Mr. Runyon said that he hoped that the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan would end up being one plan.

Ms. Bruneau said another meeting on the Universal Pre-K topic will take place next week.

(1:41:00) Other general updates

Mr. Athanassiou said that on March 9th the Fin Comm will meet with the Community Preservation Committee to review the projects approved by/to be funded by CPC for FY24.

Mr. Athanassiou said that March 15th will be a joint meeting with the Select Board to review the NRSD School Budget and for the public hearing on the FY24 Town Budget.

Mr. Athanassiou said that on March 30th at 6:15pm, the FinComm will meet with Mr. Sumner and Finance Director Cathy Doane for a Q&A session re Warrant Articles and any other financial questions.

Ms. Bruneau noted that Orleans Elementary School will be coming to the meeting on March 23rd to discuss their budget.

Ms. Baird discussed the lack of communication on town meetings and information, and recommended a potential communications person for the Town. She also recommended taking the

COA's newsletter and adding a page on town-wide events. Mr. Athanassiou suggested running an online version, as well as the print version.

Ms. Kremer discussed communications regarding the sewer tie-ins and how the future of the Town's communication can look. There was further discussion about communications coming from the Town.

(1:55:00) Review Schedule and Items for Future Agendas Including others to Invite for Updates

Mr. Athanassiou reminded the Committee and the audience that the meeting next week will begin at 6:15 pm.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn by at 8:56 pm by Mr. Mahoney and seconded by Mr. Counihan. The vote was 8-0-0 with Mmes. Baird, Bruneau and Kremer and Messrs. Athanassiou, Counihan, Mahoney, Kanaga and O'Meara all voting "aye" by roll call. The meeting adjourned at 8:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney Butler, Secretary

The documents listed below are all in the Finance Committee Drop Box except as noted:

1. March 2, 2023 Finance Committee meeting agenda
2. Draft February 9, 2023 Fin Comm Meeting Minutes
3. Draft February 23, 2023 Fin Comm Meeting Minutes
4. Fin Comm "FY22 Annual Letter to the Town"
5. Fin Comm "Priorities" as Discussed at the 11//9/22 Select Board Meeting
6. Draft FY24 Fin Comm Budget Reviews for the Rec Department, Moorings Operations, Sewer Operations, Rock Harbor Boat Basin, Transfer Station, Water Department
7. Draft Warrant Index for the May 2023 Town Meeting
8. Select Board meeting packet for the 3/1/23 Select Board meeting (Select Board website)