

Town of Andover
Board of Finance - Board of Selectmen - Board of Education Joint Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 12th, 2023 – 7:00pm
Location: Community Room, Town Hall, 17 School Road

Board of Selectmen: Jeff Maguire, Paula King, Jeff Murray, Scott Person (Absent: Adrian Mandeville)
Board of Education: Superintendent Valerie Bruneau, Taylor Parker, Gerry Cremè, Celeste Willard, Caitlin Greenhouse, Mike Beckwith, Shannon Loudon, Steve Fuss, Tom Mooney (BOE Attorney), Nick Caruso (CABE)
Board of Finance: Joanne Hebert, Robert England, Bill Desrosiers, Brian Briggs, Linda Fish, (Absent: Marc Brinker, Louise Goodwin)
Moderator: Jed Larson
Town Administrator: Eric Anderson
Town Attorney: Dennis O'Brien
Public Present: Bob Hamburger, Julia Haverl, Catherine Magaldi-Lewis, Anne Cremè

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance – Caitlin Greenhouse called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. The Pledge was recited.

2. Nomination of Moderator and Voting –

Gerry Cremè nominated Jed Larson as moderator, Jeff Maguire SECONDED.

Paula King nominated Bob Hamburger as moderator, Scott Person SECONDED.

By a show of hands, Jed Larson was chosen as moderator. He reviewed ground rules for meeting.

3. Comments from the Public – none

4. Changes/Additions to Agenda – Mike Beckwith (BOE) MOTIONED to remove agenda item 6. Shannon Loudon SECONDED. Discussion – that should include both the School and Town Finance Directors, 2022 audit review, bank reconciliations, OPM letter, corrective action plan – reviewed handouts regarding reconciling BOE activity independently. Jeff Maguire weighed in on Treasurer responsibilities for the Town as a whole. Dennis O'Brien commented as well. Vote on motion failed by show of hands – agenda item remains.

5. Role of Board of Selectmen – Jeff Maguire spoke on behalf of the Board of Selectmen; their Board is legislative and an overseeing body of the Town. Their roles include presenting the budget to the Board of Finance.

6. Role of Town Treasurer – role is to accumulate financial data for the Town and create transparency.

7. Role of Board of Education – Gerry Cremè spoke on behalf of the Board of Education; the roles and responsibilities are derived from the State of Connecticut – the Superintendent provides leadership for the district, develop a budget, oversee implementation with union/non-union employees and contracts, review and adopt all Board of Education policies and procedures, create and clarify goals of the district; mission is to engage with the Andover community. Tom Mooney spoke regarding the meeting packet – there are more areas of agreement than disagreement – the Board of Education has a dual status to serve the Town and the responsibility to implement educational interest of the State to fulfill constitution. The Board of Education has the care and control of the property dedicated for the use of school purposes. Additional information regarding a Capital budget & projects – Town Treasurer pays appropriation into accounts for the district.

8. Role of Board of Finance – Joanne Hebert spoke on behalf of the Board of Finance; the Board of Finance is the financial oversight agency for the Town – they follow rules and regulations set forth in the Town Charter and State statutes. The Board will establish and oversee fiscal and financial policies for the Town – they receive financial reports monthly from the Treasurer – they are responsible for approving transfers of funds or changing line items at the end of the Fiscal year. Throughout the budget process they will compile documents and information while discussing and assessing the needs of the Town – a budget is recommended and a mill rate will be set once voted upon. Dennis O'Brien commented regarding the State Statute that Town agencies must report and make records available. Discussion continued regarding how often and the timeframe that these reports must be given – Tom Mooney stated that sometimes the reporting requirements are in the Charter.

Board of Finance members weighed in on policy recommendation for monthly reports, clarification on Town Treasurer for reporting purposes and public information – discussion on any interference of Boards to each other to perform their roles.

9. Discussion: Defining a Capital Improvement – Joanne Hebert provided information regarding excess funds at the end of the year that could be moved into a Capital Improvement Fund for the Board of Education. Robert England stated that purchases for equipment or projects over \$15,000, annual maintenance or leasing costs over \$45,000, must be reviewed. Town department needs for the next 5-10 years and plan for each large-scale purchase. This in part is defined by the annual audit. The Board of Finance put together a Capital Asset (building, parking lot, anything structural) policy – Steve Fuss weighed in on utilization of current employees with maintenance background.

10. Discussion: AES Capital Improvement Account

a. Possible Action – At the end of each fiscal year if there are funds left in the operating budget for the Board of Education it can either be given back to the Town or put into the 2% non-lapsing account – new idea to create Capital Improvement account for the BOE for capital projects and potentially fund through the budget. Discussion on grant funding, capital budget versus operating budget, collaborating on projects, parking lot paving project oversight, project specifications. Superintendent Valerie Bruneau weighed in on oversight versus accountability. Eric Anderson provided information regarding account opening and funding from previous AES Expansion Fund that was no longer being utilized - check cut for paving project has not been deposited due to contractor not able to complete project this year. All Boards will need to collaborate on a policy that will be established and put in place to define how Capital Account dollars are handled.

Nick Caruso works with Boards to have a common understanding of issues and figure out a solution. Potentially have joint meetings quarterly.

11. Comments from the Public –

Bob Hamburger – thanked Jed Larson for moderating the meeting, spoke regarding Capital versus expenses – Capital is uniquely budgeted for and is tangible – long term Capital plan.

Julia Haverl – happy to see Boards collaborating together

Anne Cremè – echoed Julia, and lack of collaboration on Community/Senior Center project

Superintendent Valerie Bruneau – touched on Community/Senior Center project and collaboration on Capital projects going forward

Catherine Magaldi-Lewis – commented on efforts and steps to collaboration

12. Adjournment – MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 9:20pm. Shannon Loudon SECONDED. MOTION CARRIED unanimously by show of hands.