

**Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2022
7:30 PM
* VIRTUAL MEETING ***

Present: Christine Russell (Chair), Adam Nolde (Vice Chair), Roland Bourdon, Steve Noone, David Wellinghoff, Jason Cole, Christi Andersen and Esha Gangolli

Ms. Russell called the meeting to order.

1. Citizen's Concerns

None

2. Financial Planning/ABRSD Enrollment

Presentation by Mr. Nitschelm and Mr. Kadlec on financial planning and ABRSD enrollment, highlights included:

- Decreased enrollment at ABRSD K-6 since 2005
- ABRSD enrollment and projections are provided to the State and confirmed by school admin
- From 2019 to 2021 K-6 enrollment went from being predicted to increase to now showing a steady decline
- Presenters recommend a committee to review the need to close a school, saving an estimated \$2-3M of operating costs and avoiding the need to rehab/replace an existing school
- Independent, unbiased review of predicted enrollment should be brought to Town Meeting
- Ms. Russell commented that the MA. School Building Authority reviewed enrollment projections when the current School project started
- Mr. Cole suggested that housing turnover should be considered and that local birth rates would be more helpful than national statistics
- Members agree to the need to better understand the forecasting model and reviewing the potential drivers of enrollment as part of long term planning

3. FY23 Budget

Comments and Questions have been collected and will be submitted in advance of budget Thursday. Mr. Noone asked if anyone had more information on the school budget beyond what was included in the packet. The definition of capital was discussed and Mr. Noone summarized the difference between an operation budget and capital budget. Capital items should be tangible items. The goal is to provide a definition to be used by the Town and School as part of their capital plan documents.

4. Point of View (POV), Slide 6

The data has not yet been received to support slide 6. Mr. Majors and Ms. Russell tried to clarify the relevance of the data and what is the best source of such data. Mr. Cole will be reaching out for volunteers for the POV outreach presentation.

5. Finance Committee Business

Mr. Majors recognized new Economic Development Committee member and that an overview of the POV was presented to them.

Ms. Russell reported that the Select Board suggested remote meeting for January and February. Ms. Russell ask for feedback of the members and it was decided to meet remotely thru the end of February.

Ms. Russell reported that the Select Board is seeking volunteer for DPW working group, Mr. Bourdon volunteered. Mr. Nolde also expressed interest.

Ms. Russell confirmed that budget Thursday to be held January 20, 2022 will be remote.

Ms. Gangolli moved to adjourn. Mr. Noone seconded. The motion was approved unanimously by roll call vote.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Presentation by Mr. Nitschelm and Mr. Kadlec
- Point of View (POV)