



**Finance Committee**  
**May 4, 2021 1:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Minutes**

Meeting video is available online: <https://youtu.be/EZYPA9bFgWU>

*Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this meeting of the Finance Committee is being conducted via remote participation.*

Members participating remotely: De Angelis, Griesemer, Pam, Schoen, Steinberg, non-voting members Hegner, Kubiak, and Sheffler

Members absent: None

Others participating remotely: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Finance Director Sean Mangano, Clerk of the Council Athena O'Keeffe, Comptroller Sonia Aldrich, Assistant Comptroller Holly Bowser, DPW Superintendent Guilford Mooring, and Assistant Superintendent of Public Works Amy Rusiecki.

**1. Call to order**

Steinberg declared the presence of a quorum, called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm, confirmed all participants could hear and be heard, and announced audio and video recording.

**2. FY 22 Town Manager Budget overview**

Steinberg thanked staff for their work on the budget document and presentation.

Mangano gave an overview of the Engage Amherst website.

Members discussed the Engage Amherst site, and asked questions about how time intensive it has been for staff to set up, how and what information is gathered, and the site's features.

Mangano gave a short overview of the budget document.

Members discussed the approach to the budget review and procedures.

**3. FY 22 Capital Improvement Plan**

Mangano gave an overview of the five-year Capital Improvement Plan.

Schoen suggested that the resident proposal for solar canopies at the high school be mentioned in the document.

Griesemer spoke about the property inventory, and asked if more detail can be included in the inventory such as history of the property and photos of vehicles.

Pam asked about assignments and for the library budget.

Griesemer asked about review of the overall capital.

#### **4. Water/sewer rates**

Mangano and Rusiecki presented information on the water & sewer rates, including responses to questions by Councilors:

- Cost of centennial water treatment plant
- Impact of cost increase for centennial on debt
- Water rate comparison FY21 to FY22
- Average and median water bills: these were computed as per request

Members asked about energy savings at the centennial plant and how energy use may be offset by solar panels or other methods. Steinberg spoke about protecting the water source into the future.

Hegner asked about assumptions of water and sewer use were made going forward. Mangano responded that the projected level of consumption is lower than usual use, but that as higher education students return the levels should come back to more typical levels.

Griesemer stated the Council will discuss the water and sewer rates on May 17.

Pam asked about cost versus usage and fixed costs.

Mangano spoke about the challenge of decreased usage and the need for rates to cover fixed costs.

Kubiak spoke about his experience with Deerfield water and sewer rates.

**MOTION:** Griesemer moved, second by Schoen, to recommend approval of Council order FY22-10 to the Town Council, to be effective July 1, 2021. Non-voting members expressed their support for the motion.

**VOTED** unanimously, 5-0 to recommend approval of Council order FY22-10 to the Town Council, to be effective July 1, 2021.

#### **5. Public comment - None**

#### **6. Proposed Auditor Procurement and Selection Process, additional discussion if time permits**

Steinberg stated an amended version of the request for proposals with changes shown is in the meeting packet. Members reviewed the revised draft Audit Request for Proposals (RFP) committee charge.

Griesemer stated the Governance, Organization, and Legislation Committee will need to review the charge before Council action.

Mangano requested addition of two non-Councilors to the committee: someone who has experience with the audit and another staff member outside the finance department.

Members discussed the addition of staff members as voting or non-voting members. Bowser spoke about the selection process and stated she would be able to serve impartially. Aldrich stated the audit selection is exempt from 30B, so this process is over and above what is required by state law.

Mangano stated the process was developed by staff and the Finance Committee can recommend a different process; the committee charge is a new part due to Charter requirements.

**MOTION:** Schoen, Pam to recommend the draft Audit Request for Proposals Committee Charge and forward it to the GOL Committee. Non-voting members expressed their support of the motion.

**VOTED** 4-0-1(De Angelis, Pam, Schoen, and Steinberg voted Yes; Griesemer Abstained) to recommend the draft Audit Request for Proposals Committee Charge and forward it to the GOL Committee.

7. **Future meetings and FY22 budget calendar**
8. **Topics not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before the meeting - None**
9. **Adjourn**

Steinberg declared the meeting adjourned at 3:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Athena O’Keeffe

Clerk of the Town Council

**Record of agenda packet materials and documents presented**

CO FY22 - 05A - Capital Improvement Program

CO FY22 - 06 - Capital Improvement Program - Borrowing Authorizations

CO FY22 - 10 Water and Sewer Rates

CO FY22 - 10 Water and Sewer Rate Memo 4.8.21

Finance Committee Agenda 05.04.2021

FY22 Capital Improvement Program

FY22 Complete Budget

RFP ACCT 22-001 Auditing Services - Draft 2020-04-29