

**Town of Deerfield
Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting of January 26, 2026**

Members Present: Beth Brown, Mark Brennan, James Cambias (secretary), Julie Chalfant (chair), Margaret Nartowicz, John Paresky.

Also Present: Michael Archbald, Holly Drake, Chris Dunne, Blake Gilmore, Chris Goudreau, Tim Hilchey, Trevor McDaniel, Denise Schwartz, Rachel Stoler. Joint meeting with Select Board.

Documents Presented:

- "FY27 est Revenues"
- Town of Deerfield All Departments Expenditure Report 07/01/2025-12/31/2025.

Ms. Chalfant called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. on January 26, 2026, via Zoom.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to accept the Minutes of the January 12 meeting. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. Discussion of revisions. Motion to accept the Minutes as revised passed, 4-0-2.

Mr. Cambias moved to accept the Minutes of the October 24 2025 meeting. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. The motion passed, 4-0-2.

The Committee considered expenditure reports from December. Ms. Drake answered questions about projected costs for Recreation Director and expenses, increased insurance cost, Open Space Committee spending, and Frontier school transportation. Also questions about the mechanics of state-funded highway funding.

Chris Goudreau of Mass in Motion discussed the citizen's petition proposing a "tax workoff" program for older adults and veterans in Deerfield. The plan would allow participants to volunteer in Town departments to offset property tax on their homes. The maximum abatement would be \$1500 per household, calculated at \$15 per hour, and there would be about 10 positions total. Senior Center Director Jennifer Remillard has volunteered to administer the project.

Ms. Schwartz added some remarks on the benefits of the project to participants, improving engagement and increasing activity for seniors. Mr. Archbald said that there is a great need for a program like this.

The Committee and Select Board asked a number of questions about the mechanics of the program, eligibility, and potential costs.

Discussion of revenue forecasts for fiscal year 2027. Ms. Drake explained she assumed a small increase in property taxes (2 percent), used the same

numbers as last year for state funds because that information was not available when she prepared the estimate, and assumed either small increases or none at all to local revenues for a net increase of about 1.5 percent. The total revenue estimate is about \$476,000 greater than 2026, an increase of just over 2 percent.

Mr. Dunne pointed out that state "cherry sheet" appropriations arrived late on Friday and he will circulate them.

Mr. Paresky moved to endorse the Mass in Motion tax workoff petition. Ms. Nartowicz seconded the motion.

Mr. Cambias moved to amend Mr. Paresky's motion to add "in principle" as there is yet no final written text of the petition. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion to amend. The motion to amend passed, 5-1-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to amend the motion to ask the Select Board to consider the program. Ms. Nartowicz seconded the motion to amend.

Mr. Brennan modified his amendment by informal consent to combine it with the endorsement wording already under consideration. Mr. Paresky seconded the modification. The modified amendment passed, 6-0-0.

The amended motion to endorse the tax workoff program in principle and ask the Select Board to consider it passed, 6-0-0.

Discussion of the dates of upcoming meetings.

Mr. Cambias moved to adjourn. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. The motion passed, 6-0-0, and the meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.