

**Town of Deerfield  
Finance Committee  
Minutes of the Meeting of February 2, 2026**

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

**Also Present:** Holly Drake, Christopher Dunne, Blake Gilmore, Tim Hilchey, Trevor McDaniel. (Joint meeting with Select Board.)

**Documents presented:**

- Budget Analysis spreadsheets by Julie Chalfant
- Revenue Detail as of 1/29/2026
- Budget Proposals: Moderator (account 114-5100), Select Board Salaries (account 122-5100), Select Board Staff Salaries (account 122-5110), Select Board Administration Expense (account 122-5400), Finance Committee (account 131-5400), Accountant Salary (account 135-5110), Accountant Expense (account 135-5400), Personnel Board (account 152-5400), PEG Access Capital (account 155-5800), Open Space Committee (account 172-5400), Planning Board (account 175-5400), Zoning Board of Appeals (account 176-5400), Agriculture Commission (account 179-5400), Energy Committee (account 182-5400), Council on Aging (account 541-5400), Veterans District Assessment (account 543-5400), ADA Coordinator (account 549-5400), Historical Commission (account 691-5400), Veterans Day/Memorial Day Expense (account 692-5800), Legal Expense (account 151-5300), General Insurance (account 196-5400), OPEB (account OPEB)

Ms. Chalfant called the meeting to order at 5:02 pm on Feb 2, in the Town Offices on Conway Street in South Deerfield.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to accept the Minutes of Jan 26. Mr. Cambias seconded the motion. Ms. Chalfant noted that the increase in property tax should be 2.5 percent. The motion to accept the Minutes as corrected passed, 6-0-0.

Ms. Chalfant presented her analysis of projected revenues and expenses. We have a \$627,128 increase in projected revenues, a 3.2 percent margin, available for non-debt expenditures. Mr. Dunne discussed efforts to keep department budgets under that threshold. Ms. Drake cautioned that there are unlikely to be any large cuts possible.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$500 for Moderator (account 114-5100). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is the same as for the past two years. The motion passed, 6-0-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$16,000 for Select Board Salaries (account 122-5100). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$372,279 for Select Board Staff Salaries (account 122-5110). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This represents a decrease of 1.64 percent from last year. Mr. Dunne explained that the temp position has been dropped because the backlog is done. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to recommend the sum of \$13,000 for Select Board Administration Expense (account 122-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is a drop of \$6000, or 31.58 percent, from last year. Mr. Dunne explained the cuts have come from reducing professional meetings and training expenses, with fewer people attending. Mr. McDaniel pointed out the meetings really do help, especially for new members. The motion passed, 6-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$300 for Finance Committee (account 131-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This sum is the same as last year.

Mr. Brennan moved to reduce the sum to \$200. Mr. Cambias seconded the motion to amend. Ms. Nartowicz did ask if there's another budget line to cover registration fees for state meetings. The motion to amend failed 3-3-0.  
The motion passed, 4-2-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$103,978 for Accountant Salary (account 135-5110). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This represents a 6.74 percent increase over last year. The sum includes 100 paid hours for Brenda Hill assisting in transition to a new Accountant. Ms. Drake's salary is by class comp schedule as agreed when she took the job. The motion passed, 6-0-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$28,450 for Accountant Expense (account 135-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is an increase of \$5500, or 23.97 percent. This all comes from increase in fees from the outside audit firm. The motion passed, 5-0-1.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to recommend the sum of \$500 for Personnel Board (account 152-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. This is level funding from last year. The motion passed, 6-0-0.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to recommend the sum of \$4000 for PEG Access Capital (account 155-5800). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is funded through the franchise fee collected by Comcast. This amount is the same as last year. Some discussion over the proper figure for the balance.

Mr. Brennan moved to table the motion. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion to table. The motion to table passed, 6-0-0.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to recommend the sum of \$250 for Open Space Committee (account 172-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is the same amount as the past two years. The motion passed, 6-0-0.

Ms. Nartowicz moved to recommend the sum of \$2000 for Planning Board (account 175-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is the same as every year since 2023.

Mr. Brennan moved to table the motion, pending discussion from planning board about training expense. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion to table. The motion to table passed, 5-0-1.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$1000 for Zoning Board of Appeals (account 176-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is a level funding request, but the actual expenditures vary widely. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$100 for Agriculture Commission (account 179-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The amount has been the same since 2021. The motion passed, 5-1-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$1000 for Energy Committee (account 182-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is the same amount as every year since 2021. The motion passed, 5-1-0.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$100 for Council on Aging (account 541-5400). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$18,202 for Veterans District Assessment (account 543-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is the amount determined by the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Service District. The amount is \$2250 or 14.1 percent more than last year. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Nartowicz had to leave at 6:10 p.m.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$250 for ADA Coordinator (account 549-5400). The motion was seconded jointly by Ms. Brown and Mr. Paresky. The motion passed, 5-0-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$1175 for Historical Commission (account 691-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion.

After some discussion Mr. Brennan moved to table the motion pending discussion with the Commission. Mr. Cambias seconded the motion to table. The motion to table passed, 5-0-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$2500 for Veterans Day/Memorial Day Expense (account 692-5800). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed, 5-0-0.

Discussion of times for the next few meetings.

Ms. Brown moved to recommend the sum of \$62,000 for Legal Expense (account 151-5300). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. This is \$23,000 less than last year. The motion passed, 5-0-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$99,000 for General Insurance (account 196-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is a \$7000 increase over last year, or 7.61 percent. Mr. Dunne is still shopping for insurance hoping to find a lower premium.

Mr. Paresky moved to table the motion until Mr. Dunne can get more quotes. Mr. Cambias seconded the motion to table. The motion to table failed, 2-3-0.

The motion passed, 4-0-1.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$51,176 for OPEB (account OPEB) brown seconded. This is an increase of \$4529 or 9.71 percent over last year. The figure is based on 2025 total insurance cost. Questions asked about whether SCEMS and other enterprise fund agencies should pay into that. General sense that it would make sense to charge them.

Mr. Brennan withdrew the motion in order to ask those departments to revise budgets to include OPEB cost.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$100,000 for Reserve Fund (account 132-5400). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. This is the same as last year. The motion passed, 5-0-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to adjourn. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.