

**Town of Deerfield
Finance Committee
Minutes of the Meeting, March 23, 2023
REVISED**

The meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

Attending: Mark Brennan, Beth Brown, James Cambias (secretary), Julie Chalfant (chair), John Paresky, David Sharp.

Joint meeting with Select Board.

Also Present: Brenda Hill, Trevor McDaniel, Carolyn Shores Ness, Christopher Nolan, Kevin Scarborough, Kayce Warren.

Ms. Chalfant called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. on March 23, 2023, remotely via Zoom.

Mr. Cambias moved to adopt the Minutes of the March 15 meeting (as revised). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-2, Mr. Brennan not having joined the meeting.

Mr. Cambias moved to adopt the Minutes of the March 20 meeting (as revised). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0-2, Mr. Brennan not having joined the meeting.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$5,265,247 for Deerfield Elementary School (account 300-5400). Mr. Cambias seconded the motion. After some discussion, the motion was withdrawn pending action by the School Committee.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$588,676 for the Highway Department Payroll (revised) (account number 422-5110). This represents an increase of \$424 over the previously recommended version. Mr. Scarborough explained that this budget reduced overtime to 220 hours for employees, and raises Chris Miller to Step 9 7 in the salary chart because of his increased responsibilities. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$861,300 for revised Wastewater Treatment Plant expense. Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. This reflects an increase in the cost of sludge removal. The expense is covered by sewer fees. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Scarborough discussed Highway Department capital requests, but the Committee took no action.

Mr. Paresky moved to recommend the sum of \$471,415 for Deerfield's Franklin Tech school assessment (account 320-5410). Mr. Cambias seconded the motion. This represents a decline of 12.9 percent from last year based on fewer Deerfield students enrolled. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$4,306,795 for Deerfield's Frontier Regional School assessment (account 310-5400). Mr. Paresky seconded the motion. After considerable discussion, the motion passed 6-0-0.

Ms. Brown moved to recommend the sum of \$11,290 for Frontier Regional School capital spending (account 310-5800). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. This is debt-excluded payment on interest for capital projects approved in 2018. The motion passed 5-0-1.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$96,311 for Deerfield's share of Frontier Regional School transport (account 315-5800). This represents an increase of 21.13 percent. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts often reimburses towns for some proportion of transport expense, but this cannot be predicted. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$17,827 for Franklin Tech school capital spending (account 320-5800). Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. This represents a decline of 4 percent from last year, mostly due to the decline in enrollment from Deerfield. The motion passed 6-0-0.

Mr. Paresky left the meeting.

Mr. Sharp moved to recommend the sum of \$115,000 for Smith Vocational school tuition for 5 Deerfield students. Ms. Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Ms. Brown moved to recommend the sum of \$45,000 for Smith Vocational school transportation. Mr. Sharp seconded the motion. Concerns were raised about the cost being levied per student rather than by route. The motion passed 4-1-0.

Mr. Brennan moved to recommend the sum of \$15,950 for Select Board and Administrator Expense (account 122-5400). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This represents an increase of \$3700, or 30.2 percent, but reflects actual expenditures due to rising cost of meetings, dues, and postage. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Sharp moved to recommend the sum of \$16,500 for Town Office Expense (account 192-5430). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This is an increase of \$2500 or 17.86 percent, reflecting an increase in the cost of supplies and printing costs for town reports. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of ~~\$62,732~~ \$63,108 for Recreation Department Director salary (account 634-5110). Ms. Brown seconded the motion. This represents an increase of \$9,940 or 18.7 percent over last year. The rise reflects an increase in the number of hours the Director works due to expanded duties. The motion passed 4-0-1.

Mr. Sharp moved to recommend the sum of \$100,000 for the Reserve Fund (account 132-5400). No second. Mr. Cambias moved to recommend the sum of \$120,000 for the Reserve Fund. Ms. Chalfant seconded the motion. Mr. Cambias withdrew the motion to reconsider next meeting.

Mr. Cambias moved to expend the sum of \$1,503 of the Dickinson Library Trust income on libraries. Ms. Chalfant seconded the motion. This fund is a bequest which can only be spent on libraries, and is divided between the Tilton Library and the Frontier Regional School library. The motion passed 5-0-0.

Mr. Cambias moved to recommend adding the sum of \$39,308 to the OPEB benefits fund this year. Mr. Brennan seconded the motion. This follows the Select Board's plan of spending approximately 4 percent of health insurance costs on funding OPEB. The motion passed 5-0-0.

The committee discussed capital debt, and the possibility of creating a debt-excluded borrowing fund for capital projects. No action was taken.

Mr. Brennan moved to adjourn. Mr. Cambias seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.