

Town of Northbridge
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023 at 6:30PM

RECEIVED

23 NOV 20 PM 2:03

Committee Members in Attendance: Plato Adams, Jim Barron, Sean Ferry (Note: Arrived at the Finance Committee Meeting at 6:40PM), David Graham, Steve Gogolinski, and Chris Thompson

Finance Committee Member not in Attendance: None

NORTHBRIDGE TOWN CLERK
LINDA B. DYKLEN

Town of Northbridge Administration and Department Managers in Attendance:

Adam Gaudette, Town Manager, Town of Northbridge, MA
Sharon Emerick, Town Accountant, Town of Northbridge, MA

Other: Taxpayer(s) in Attendance: Barry Gallant

Finance Committee Meeting:

At 6:31PM the Finance Committee Meeting was called to order by Plato Adams.

Reorganization of the Finance Committee

A motion to appoint the following to the Finance Committee Positions for the next Fiscal Year was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by David Graham and unanimously approved as follows:

Plato Adams as Chair of the Finance Committee

Steve Gogolinski as Vice Chair of the Finance Committee

Jim Barron as Clerk of the Finance Committee

**Town of Northbridge – Public Notice / Hearing
Continuation of The Public Notice / Hearing:**

At 6:35PM, the Finance Committee Chair – Plato Adams - opened the Town of Northbridge Public Notice with the following statement:

“Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Sections 2-3(b) and 6-6(a) of the Northbridge Home Rule Charter, that the Finance Committee will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 at 6:30PM, in the Level 1 Media Room, Northbridge Town Hall, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA to discuss all articles contained in the Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant and the proposed operating budget as submitted. All interested persons are invited to attend.”

It was recommended by the Town Manager Adam Gaudette to keep the Public Notice / Public Meeting open until the next Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, October 4, 2023.

Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles

An overview of each Warrant Articles was made by Adam Gaudette, Town Manager:

ARTICLE 1: (Board of Selectmen) To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate and/or transfer from available funds in the Treasury and/or transfer from the unexpended appropriated funds of one or more of the departments of the Town various sums of money and authorize the payment of prior year bills; or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 2: (Board of Selectmen) To see if the Town will vote to amend the votes taken under Article 3 of the 2023 Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting (May 2, 2023), appropriations and transfers under the Omnibus Budget Article, to raise and appropriate, and/or to transfer from available funds in the

Town of Northbridge
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023 at 6:30PM

Treasury and/or the Health Insurance Stabilization Fund to supplement appropriations under the Omnibus Budget Article; or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 3: (Bylaw Review Committee) To see if the Town will vote to approve the grammatical and stylistic amendments to the Code of Northbridge (Bylaws) in accordance with the final report of the Bylaw Review Committee appointed in 2021 pursuant to Section 8-9(b) of the Home Rule Charter, said report being on file with the Town Clerk; or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 4: (Bylaw Review Committee) To see if the Town will vote to approve the substantive amendments to the Code of the Town of Northbridge (Bylaws) in accordance with the final report of the Bylaw Review Committee appointed in 2021 pursuant to Section 8-9(b) of the Home Rule Charter, said report being on file with the Town Clerk; or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 5: (Bylaw Review Committee) To see if the Town will vote to amend the General Bylaws by adding new Section 9-1100 entitled Graffiti Violations and Removal and inserting said section in the Code of the Town of Northbridge.

ARTICLE 6: (Conservation Commission) To see if the Town will vote to adopt regulations pertaining to the use of conservation lands for inclusion in Division 5, Chapter 205 of the Town of Northbridge Code, a copy of which is on file with the Town Clerk. The regulations will apply to the use of all lands under the management of the Conservation Commission unless their use is otherwise regulated under a Conservation Restriction; or take any other action relative thereto.

ARTICLE 7: (Petition) Town of Northbridge An Ordinance Relative to Excessive and Unreasonable Noise.

Article(s) Summary / Comments:

Per the Town Manager Article 1 and Article 6 would most likely be Passed Over.

Per the Town Manager Article 2 has been proposed which would amend (i.e. reduce) by \$100,000 the votes taken under Article 3 of the 2023 Spring Session of the Annual Town Meeting (May 2, 2023).

Per the Town Manager Article 3, Article 4, Article 5 and Article 7 (i.e., Petitioner Article on Excessive and Unreasonable Noise / Noise Ordinance) will be voted on at Town Meeting.

Per the Town Manager a proposal to purchase the old Fire Station for \$50,000 was made by a local resident. There is a proposal to turn the old Fire Station into a Restaurant / Brewery.

Per the Town Manager, the Fall Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles will be voted on at the next Finance Committee Meeting which is scheduled for Wednesday, October 4, 2023 at 6:30PM in the Conference Room, 7 Main Street, Whitinsville, MA - Conference Room.

A few questions were raised by Northbridge resident Barry Gallant as follows:

A question on Article 7 and the verbiage: "Health Stabilization Fund" was made as the balance in the Health Stabilization Fund was moved to the general Stabilization Fund per authorization at the Spring 2023 Annual Town Meeting. Per the Town Manager, Article 7 when presented at Town Meeting will exclude the "Health Stabilization Fund" terminology.

A question was also raised as to if and when the Health Stabilization Fund terminology would be removed from future Warrant Articles. This will be researched as the account, with a zero balance, still exists in the Chart of Accounts for the Town.

Town of Northbridge
Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023 at 6:30PM

A question was raised as to the balance in the Stabilization Fund. Per the Town Manager the balance in the Stabilization Account is roughly \$3.7 Million.

A question was raised on the State Budget and whether the Budget is finalized and will any monies due from the State be reduced. Per Adam Gaudette, Town Manager, the State Budget has been finalized and monies due to the Town will not be reduced.

It was also noted by Adam Gaudette; Town Manager that roughly \$450,000 of various architectural and engineering costs, etc. will be applied against the \$1,000,000 MA American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, which is associated with the Aldrich Street School.

Continuation of The Public Notice / Hearing:

It was recommended by the Town Manager Adam Gaudette to keep the Public Notice / Public Meeting open until the next Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for next Wednesday, October 4, 2023.

Approval of Previous Finance Committee Meeting Minutes:

A motion to approve the Finance Committee Meeting of 3/22/2023 was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by David Graham and unanimously approved.

A motion to approve the Finance Committee Meeting of 7/13/2023 was made by Chris Thompson, seconded by Jim Barron and unanimously approved.

Adjournment

Since no further business was to be transacted, a motion to adjourn the Finance Committee Meeting at 7:29PM was made by Steve Gogolinski, seconded by Chris Thompson and unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ James P. Barron, Clerk, Town of Northbridge Finance Committee

