

MINUTES OF MEETING OF WAREHAM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: March 15, 2023

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bernie Pigeon, Chair
Norma Scogin
Joseph Smith
Julie Moran
Tom Worthen
Gerald Stefanski
Matt Rose

Members Absent: Tom Hannon
Dominic Cammarano (Arrived at 6:32 P.M.)

III. FINANCE COMMITTEE MATTERS

A. Acceptance of meeting minutes, if any. (NONE)

B. Discussion of 2023 Spring Annual Town Meeting Articles – Petition Articles

1. Article 22 – Petition: Parker Mills Dam – Barry Cosgrove

Present before the FinCom: Barry Cosgrove

NOTE: Mr. Cammarano arrived at this time.

Mr. Cosgrove stated the purpose of this article is to supply a measure of support to the BOS in getting the Parker Mills Pond dam situation resolved. He feels unless the Town takes affirmative steps, nothing will transpire relative to the dam issue.

Mr. Cosgrove described in detail why it is classified as a high-risk dam & potential dangers if the dam fails. He is in agreement w/ the BOS that the dam be removed.

Mr. Cosgrove noted the State has indicated they are tired of the ownership situation/problem of the dam. He cited multiple documents from various years that indicate A.D. Makepeace holds most ownership.

A question & answer session ensued re: information Mr. Cosgrove presented, for example, water levels.

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2. Article 20 – Petition: Terminate Contract 2022-001/Sewer (Swifts Beach) – Jean Welch

Present before the FinCom: Jean Welch

Ms. Welch stated the purpose of the article is to terminate sewer project contract 2022-001 for Swifts Beach & for the Town to consider all other options to repair the sewer gravity system in this area.

Ms. Welch gave a timeline of reports/meetings made by the Sewer Commission relative to the project. At a specific meeting, answers to questions were not answered & the issue of residents being responsible for & paying for grinder pumps came up. It was after this time, that residents of the area became more concerned, gathered more information & more interest in the project. A petition was circulated & the issue gained momentum.

Ms. Welch stated at this time, most residents of the area have less confidence in the original decision to replace the current gravity system w/ a low pressure sewer line. She stated the residents of the area feel the Town should step back & review/study the matter further & the current gravity system be repaired.

Present before the FinCom: Mr. Scanlon

Mr. Scanlon stated the homes in Phase I of the proposed project are an average of 86 years old. To put grinder pumps in these homes would also require electrical upgrades which would add to the costs. He expressed concern at how little information has been provided to residents. He spoke re: lack of information on the grinder pumps, their placement & financial burdens to many of the homeowners.

Present before the FinCom: Judith Whiteside, Selectboard Chair

Selectboard Chair Whiteside stated the contract has been put on hold at this time. The Town is trying to protect its loss potential under the contract.

Present before the FinCom: Sylvester Sceloni

Mr. Sceloni discussed pumping that is done into manholes. He made a suggestion on what could be done & what was done incorrectly when a sinkhole developed previously.

Selectboard Chair Whiteside stated the Selectboard voted 5-0-0 on the article.

Mr. Smith cited the lack of information & issue of sump pumps. Mr. Scanlon noted his findings of homes in Phase I relative to sump pumps. Mr. Smith understands the grinder pumps would relieve some of the problems. Mr. Scanlon discussed grinder pumps.

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Present before the FinCom: Leslie Mason

Ms. Mason expressed concern re: lack of notification that the project had been approved & was proceeding. Residents did not become aware of the project approval until an August 2022 meeting. She feels the Sewer Commissioners were remiss in not notifying residents in a timely manner. Mr. Pigeon stated he was at that meeting & he concurred w/ Ms. Mason.

Present before the FinCom: A resident

The resident expressed concern re: how the area loses power often. She stated there will be costs associated w/ electrical, plumbing & w/ the power outages, generators may need to be purchased.

Present before the FinCom: Steve Pellier

Mr. Pellier asked who is in control of approving the costs for homeowners. Mr. Pigeon stated it is the Sewer Commissioners responsibility to vote. Mr. Pellier feels it was a mis-represented project. Mr. Pigeon noted Town Meeting approved the project. Again, Mr. Pellier feels the project was mis-represented. Brief discussion ensued.

Present before the FinCom: Chris Fernandes

Mr. Fernandes feels the objective of the article is to stop the project at this time & then review/study the matter further. Mr. Pigeon briefly explained processes at Town Meeting relative to this article & if this article passes Town Meeting, it may not stop the project. Brief discussion ensued.

3. Article 21 – Petition: Town of Wareham Playground Revolving Fund – Claire Smith

Present before the FinCom: Claire Smith

Ms. Smith spoke re: Swifts Beach Playground renovation. She spoke re: various Town playgrounds over the years that have been renovated using private donations & Community Preservation monies.

Ms. Smith expressed concern re: lack of maintenance at these playgrounds going forward. The article proposes to set up a revolving fund for maintenance issues/ minor repairs & the burden wouldn't fall on Municipal Maintenance to pay. Volunteers are willing to do the work. This proposal is strictly to pay for maintenance, not equipment. Brief discussion ensued.

Brief discussion ensued re: having a process in determining what needs fixing & where the funding would come from, for example fundraising.

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C. Discussion of 2023 Spring Annual Town Meeting Article 15 – Tremont Nail Factory Office Building – Judith Whiteside.

Present before the FinCom: Judith Whiteside, Selectboard Chair

Selectboard Chair Whiteside stated the master developer is still negotiating w/ the Redevelopment Authority. One of the issues is the dam. The master developer is being encouraged to move forward. The Selectboard has yet to take a position on the building at this time.

Selectboard Chair Whiteside stated there is not a current historic restriction at present on the building, but there will be a restriction on that specific building, not the whole property.

Brief discussion ensued re: possibly including the Old Company Store building & an additional building w/in the redevelopment plan as a whole.

Brief discussion ensued re: mold inside the building & the dam issue.

D. Discussion & possible vote on articles already reviewed.

Mr. Pigeon updated the FinCom on upcoming article discussions to be held.

Selectboard Chair Whiteside spoke re: Special Town Meeting article dealing w/ an earth removal engineering study. The purpose of the article is to deal w/ the issue of earth removal & how to move forward. Brief discussion ensued.

Selectboard Chair Whiteside spoke re: Special Town Meeting article dealing w/ the Wareham Village: Reinvestment Sub-District, WV-1R. The purpose of the article is to create a sub-section in downtown Wareham which is already WV-1. It entails creating zoning that would allow investors to invest in downtown & allowing buildings to go up over 50 ft. The Town is trying to encourage investment & making downtown more attractive to investors.

MOTION: Ms. Scogin moved Favorable Action on Article 15 of the 2023 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Cammarano seconded.

Roll Call Vote:	Mr. Smith – Yes
	Ms. Moran – Yes
	Mr. Worthen – No
	Mr. Cammarano – Yes
	Mr. Stefanski – No
	Mr. Rose – No
	Ms. Scogin – Yes
	Mr. Pigeon – Yes

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VOTE: (5-3-0)

Mr. Worthen, Mr. Stefanski & Mr. Rose opposed

MOTION: Mr. Cammarano moved Favorable Action on Article 21 of the 2023 Spring Annual Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Moran seconded.

Roll Call Vote:
Mr. Worthen – Yes
Ms. Moran – Yes
Mr. Smith – Yes
Ms. Scogin – Yes
Mr. Cammarano – Yes
Mr. Stefanski – Yes
Mr. Rose – Yes
Mr. Pigeon – Yes

VOTE: Unanimous (8-0-0)

MOTION: Mr. Cammarano moved Favorable Action on Article S5 of the 2023 Special Town Meeting Warrant. Mr. Smith seconded.

Roll Call Vote:
Mr. Worthen – Yes
Ms. Moran – Yes
Mr. Smith – Yes
Mr. Cammarano – Yes
Mr. Stefanski – Yes
Mr. Rose – Yes
Mr. Pigeon – Yes
Ms. Scogin – Yes

VOTE: Unanimous (8-0-0)

MOTION: Mr. Smith moved Favorable Action on Article S9 of the 2023 Special Town Meeting Warrant. Ms. Scogin seconded.

Roll Call Vote:
Mr. Worthen – No
Ms. Moran – No
Mr. Smith – No
Mr. Cammarano – No
Mr. Stefanski – No
Mr. Rose – No
Mr. Pigeon – No
Ms. Scogin – No

VOTE: Unanimous (0-8-0)

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E. Discussion/assignment of articles for FinCom recommendations.

Assignment of articles for FinCom recommendations were made.

Discussion ensued re: Article 18 – Wareham Middle School Roof Replacement Project.
Selectman Whiteside noted she saw a document that is stating this matter should to go on the ballot.

IV. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Unanticipated Items)

V. NEXT MEETING DATE & TIME

The next FinCom meeting is March 22, 2023 at 6:30 P.M. in Room 27 of Wareham Town Hall.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ms. Scogin moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M. Mr. Smith seconded.

VOTE: Unanimous (8-0-0)

Date signed: 4/24/23

Attest: Bernie Pigeon
Bernie Pigeon, Chair
WAREHAM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Date copy sent to Wareham Town Clerk: _____