

BILLERICA FINANCE COMMITTEE MINUTES
March 31, 2022

A Public Hearing/Meeting of the Billerica Finance Committee was held on Thursday March 31, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in room 210 of the Town Hall

Present: David Gagliardi, Chairman; Doug Meagher, Vice Chairman; Mary McBride, Secretary; Donald Damon, Member; Cheri Gargalianos, Member; Rino Moriconi, Member; John Mulloy, Member; Philip Newfell, Member; John Kleschinsky, Member; Patrick Logue, Member; Kelley Sardina, 1st Associate, Sharon Healey, 2nd Associate; Paul Watson, Ex-Officio Town Accountant; and Joyce MacMillan, Recording Clerk.

Excused Absence: Doug Fogerty, Member

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman David Gagliardi called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

OPEN ADVERTISED PUBLIC HEARING:

Doug Meagher, seconded by Don Damon Made a motion to open the public Hearing.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

WARRANT ARTICLES:

Article 14 - CPC Budget & Project Recommendations – Travis Brown & Mary Leach

Several projects that were submitted for this round, one being the Howe School. There is also a study for the skateboard park, one for tennis court restorations at the Peggy Hannon Rizza (PHR) Complex, one for the Clara Sexton House Barn restorations and the Invasive Species restoration.

Chairman Gagliardi opened the floor to the committee for questions or concerns. Where is the skate park? It is at PHR near the tennis courts. It is an area that has been neglected for quite a while. Where is the barn? It is part of the Clara Sexton House and by renovating/restoring the barn the Historical Society will have more space for exhibits. They have an open house every first Sunday of the month from 1 to 3 pm. Is there currently a cash balance in the CPC account? Yes, not sure how much but it is over a million. For any projects approved in the past, if the monies are not spent it stays in the account, in its designated bucket, also known as Special Fund. The money is not issued to the grantee until it is needed/spent. How much is the match? This year it was about 24%, it varies each year, and it has been trending upward. Also, there is a scrivener's error on page 11 of the Preliminary Warrant. Under reserves, the first special fund says Open Space Special Fund, it should say Housing Special Fund.

There is \$100,000 in available funds for housing projects? Yes, there was no application in a timely fashion from them this year, so that money sits in the Housing Special Fund. It can only be used for housing project applications that are approved and recommended by the CPC to Town Meeting. Housing is still sitting on funds from last year. Have we spent any money from CPC on housing? Yes, they purchased a duplex on Mason Ave. Some of the down payment was CPA funds. The tennis/pickleball courts, are they at PHR? Yes, next to the skate park. Invasive Species project, is that for any area in town or a specific area? They will be starting with Nutting Lake and then anywhere it is needed. What is the balance of the PHR bonding? It has not started yet for PHR or the Howe project. So, has not impacted the budget yet. It was approved at the last Spring Town Meeting. A member commented that he would like to see that paid down fast as it comes due. The tennis courts were mentioned in a study done for PHR and back then it was mentioned they were in good condition. Did the study change? Were you told this needed to be done? How did they come up with the \$75,000 figure? Not sure if they did a separate study or if they spoke with other towns that had the same issues. They do look to be in rough shape. The skatepark was in the same study so why are they starting with a study? They are starting slow, seeing what the evaluation is and come pack with the proposal. Howe School work session with the Select Board asked for \$500,000. Supply prices have risen drastically, they are asking for what they think they will need and whatever funds they do not use will stay in the CPA Account. The Fund balance according to what is online as of June 30, 2021, is \$1,214,799. The Clara Sexton House is owned by the Billerica Historical Society, a non-profit. Since they are a private entity asking for public funds, it had previously been said that we would like to see that they make a concerted effort to raise funds for their projects and not just keep coming to the CPC. They are a private non-profit and the Town has a permanent Historic Preservation Restriction. The town has the right of first refusal. What is the Massachusetts Community Preservation Coalition? It is a non-profit resource, like a quasi-state organization, made up of folks from everything from Mass Audubon to Historic New England. They are lobbyists for the CPA in the state and serve as an educational support for the various CPCs around the state. They are very familiar with every project that has and has not been done in the state, but they do not offer legal guidance, they refer you to your own Town Counsel. Can the article be split? Some committee members would like to vote in favor of a couple projects and no on a couple. No, this is the way they are submitting it. Can we ask Paul Watson for the rolling budget? Can we get it any time a CPC article come before us? Yes, Paul should have that, and we can get it forwarded to the committee. (Done)

The CPC finally got a new coordinator, and she is just getting up to speed.

Doug Meagher seconded by Mary McBride made a motion to recommend Article 14 to Town Meeting as printed in the preliminary warrant noting the scrivener's error as discussed.

It was voted:

10 – In favor
1 – Opposed – Kelley
Sardina

Article 1 - Set Compensation of Town Clerk – Dave Gagliardi

Doug Meagher seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to recommend Article 1 as printed in the Preliminary Warrant.

It was voted: 11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Article 3 - To Hear Reports of Town Depts., Committees & Officers – Dave Gagliardi

Doug Meagher seconded by Patrick Logue made a motion to recommend Article 3 as printed in the Preliminary Warrant.

It was voted: 11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Article 10 - FY 2023 Water Enterprise Budget (Voted as Budget 3/22 7-2) – Dave Gagliardi

Article 10 has already been discussed at the previous meeting, only needs to be voted.

Doug Meagher seconded by Mary McBride made a motion to recommend Article 10 as printed in the Warrant in the amount of \$7,315,982.

It was voted: 8 – In favor
2 – Opposed-Don Damon,
Patrick Logue
1 – Abstained – Dave
Gagliardi

Article 11 - FY 2023 Wastewater Enterprise Budget (Voted as Budget 3/22 7-2) – Dave Gagliardi

Article 11 has already been discussed at the previous meeting, only needs to be voted.

Doug Meagher seconded by Mary McBride made a motion to recommend Article 11 as printed in the Preliminary Warrant in the amount of \$9,016,825.

It was voted: 8 – In favor
2 – Opposed-Don Damon,
Patrick Logue
1 – Abstained – Dave
Gagliardi

Article 12 - To Allow Town Manager & FinCom to Transfer Funds up to \$5,000 – Dave Gagliardi

One question – Should that read “within the department”? It does say that within the verbiage of the Article.

Doug Meagher seconded by Rino Moriconi made a motion to recommend Article 12 as printed in the preliminary warrant.

It was voted: 11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Article 13 - To Allow Departmental Revolving Funds – Dave Gagliardi

Question – some of the expenditures show zero spent, has it not been updated? Not sure, might be a timing thing. We will have to ask Paul Watson.

Doug Meagher seconded by Don Damon made a motion to recommend Article 13 as printed in the preliminary warrant.

It was voted: 11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Article 26 Renaming Substance Abuse Committee – Dina Favreau

No one for this article was present, will be heard at a future meeting

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING:

Doug Meagher, seconded by Cheri Gargalianos, made a motion to close the public Hearing.

It was voted: 11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

MINUTES

Review minutes of March 15, 2022

Doug Meagher seconded by Rino Moriconi made a motion to accept the minutes of March 15, 2022.

It was voted: 10 – In favor
0 – Opposed
1 – Abstained – Kelley
Sardina

Question – Article 26, we can still vote on it. It is only a sense of Town Meeting. It is just changing a name and nothing financial. Some of the committee would like to give them a chance to speak.

MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE – not subject to discussion

Nothing from the High School Building Committee – They have not had a meeting in a while, they might be waiting for the final numbers to come in from the Mass School Building Authority (MSBA).

Nothing from the CPC.

The next meeting will be Thursday April 7, 2022.

ADJOURNMENT:

Doug Meagher, seconded by John Mulloy made motion to adjourn.

It was voted:

11 – In favor
0 – Opposed

Chairman David Gagliardi adjourned the meeting at 8:50 pm.

Joyce MacMillan, Recording Clerk