

FINANCE COMMITTEE  
Town of Becket  
557 Main Street  
Becket, MA 01223

**Meeting Minutes for December 2, 2021**

**PRESENT:**

Finance Committee (FC): Dan Parnell (DP); Ron DeFoe (RD); Chuck Garman (CG)  
Town Administrator: William Caldwell (WC)  
Absent: Ann Spadafora (AS); Mark Karlberg (MK)  
In Person Guests: Cathy DeFoe and Jody Shafiroff (Becket Athenaeum)  
By phone: None

DP called meeting to order at 5:32 PM

**AGENDA:**

**1. Meeting minutes**

- a. Approve minutes November 4, 2021 FC meeting
  - i. Motion by CG to accept minutes as written, seconded by DP; Approved unanimously

**2. Discuss Athenaeum Request for More Funding**

- a. Athenaeum is struggling with operating budget and is running in the red; primarily due to mandated minimum wage increases
- b. While it does not fully meet their needs, the Athenaeum is requesting a 3.5% increase for FY23
- c. FC would like to hold annual operating increases to state mandated 2.5%. FC asked Athenaeum explore savings in operating budget by combining water supply with Mullen House/Arts Center. This would eliminate monthly water testing which is quite expensive. WC to investigate Mullen House water situation to see if this is a viable alternative

**3. Administrator's input/Budget**

- a. FY22 budget is in good shape
- b. Will need approximately \$200k at special town meeting in early 2022 to replace monies spent on dirt road repairs taken from Winter Roads Fund. Unfortunately, this work is not covered by MEMA as the total storm damage in the state did not meet their threshold
- c. We are considering sharing our police chief with Otis
- d. Operating Budget requests are due end of December
- e. We have the following Capital Budget Request to date – FC support of potentially grant funded items (other than Ambulance Radio) will be highly contingent on receipt of grants

Department	Item	Estimated Cost	Fund Rec.	Potential Grant
Historical	Ballou Park Wall	\$110,000.00		
Police Department	Cruiser	\$60,000.00	*	USDA 75/25
Fire Department	Engine	\$700,000.00	*	AFG 95/5
Town Hall	Cupola	\$10,000.00		
	Wind Turbine	\$125,000.00	*	DOER
	Office Furniture	\$10,000.00		
Arts Center	Main Entrance	\$10,000.00		
Athenaeum	Maintenance	\$10,000.00		
Ambulance	Squad Vehicle	\$50,000.00	*	USDA 75/25
	Monitor	\$40,000.00	*	USDA 75/25

	Radio	\$2,000.00	*	USDA 75/25
--	-------	------------	---	------------

**4. Broadband Update**

- a. Underground installations are coming to a halt due to frozen ground
- b. Sertex is doing well hanging cable, but we are still facing Make Ready issues with Eversource

**5. Other business**

- a. CG questioned if we can move meeting time to during the day (proposed 3:00 on first Thursday). DP will canvass FC members to see if this is palatable

**6. Adjourn meeting**

- a. CG moved to adjourn meeting at 6:28 PM; Seconded by DP; Approved unanimously

**Next meeting:** Thursday January 6, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Ron DeFoe

Approved by Dan Parnell, Chair

