

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

Meeting Minutes for January 6, 2022

PRESENT:

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

DP called meeting to order at 5:37 PM

AGENDA:

1. Meeting minutes

- a. Approve minutes December 2, 2021 FC meeting
 - i. Motion by CG to accept minutes as written, seconded by DP; Approved unanimously; AS and MK abstained as not present at meeting

2. Administrator's input/Budget

- a. Special Town Meeting Warrant is set for January 18, 2022 at 6:30 PM
 - i. Article 1 - Transfer from Stabilization Fund for Leonhardt Road repairs
 - 1. Motion by CG to accept Article 1 as written. Seconded by DP. Approved unanimously
 - ii. Article 2 – Bylaw Change for Warrant Mailing (non-FC issue)
 - iii. Article 3 – Zoning Bylaw Change – Mobile Homes (non-FC issue)
 - iv. Article 4 - Zoning Bylaw Change – Mobile Homes (non-FC issue)
- b. Becket Arts Center has submitted a Capital Request for \$18,500. This represents about 17% of the total project cost (about 23% of phase 2)
 - i. We should explore if this is a Town Capital expense or CPA Funds
 - ii. WC to investigate the BAC and Cupola request for CPA
- c. We will see increases in the operating budget due to increased cost of multiple supplies, materials, etc.
- d. We need to decide on a COLA
- e. We are still investigating sharing our police chief with Otis (50/50)
- f. We have the following Capital Budget Requests to date – FC support of potentially grant funded items (*) other than Ambulance Radio will be highly contingent on receipt of grants
- g. All Capital items will be decided once the school budget is known

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	\$750,000.00	*	AFG 95/5
Town Hall	Cupola	\$10,000.00		
	Wind Study	\$15,000.00	*	DOER
	Town Hall Renovation/Office Furniture	\$12,500.00		
	Grant Match – Benton Hill	\$12,814.00		

	Rd			
Arts Center	Heating System	\$18,500.00		
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

3. Broadband Update

- a. FSA-08 and FSA-09 are partially released
- b. Underground connections are on hold due to frozen ground. Temporary on ground connections are possible for these customers at an added cost
- c. The budget overall looks good and connection costs are mostly consistently coming in under budget. The BOS approved ARPA funds will be dedicated to Broadband
- d. WC is looking at bonding options

4. Other business

- a. DP proposed we consider tax abatements for low income residents in low value domiciles
 - i. We will take a long term study of same to see if it is at all viable
- b. DP was asked to represent FC on a Planning Board subcommittee to evaluate developing a short-term rental bylaw
- c. We would like a presentation from the Energy Committee on the reasons and benefits for a wind turbine – costs, payback, etc.
- d. MK asked if Becket would be receiving free covid test kits. WC indicated we are not currently on the state's priority list
- e. CG asked about moving meeting time to earlier in the day. AS indicated that would be a hardship due to work reasons

5. Adjourn meeting

- a. CG moved to adjourn meeting at 7:01 PM; Seconded by DP; Approved unanimously

Next meeting: Thursday February 3, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted by Ron DeFoe

Approved by Dan Parnell, Chair

