

**Town of Brunswick, Maine**

**Town Finance Committee  
Thursday, August 18, 2016 ~ 3:30 PM  
85 Union Street – Town Council Chambers**

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**Meeting Minutes** (Approved 9/15/16)

**Committee Members** Alison Harris (chaired the meeting), Dan Harris

**Staff:** Julie Henze, Branden Perreault

**Others:** Richard Fisco, Jean Powers

**1. Acknowledgement that Meeting was Properly Noticed**

JH confirmed that the meeting was on the Town Calendar

**2. Adjustments to agenda / Public Comment**

Adjustments to agenda: because Steve Walker is absent, table item 4a.  
No public comment.

**3. Approval of meeting minutes from 7/21/16**

Alison Harris moved, Dan Harris seconded, to approve the 7/21/16 Finance Committee Meeting minutes. Motion carried.

**4. Organizational**

**a. Select chair/vice chair – TABLED**

**b. Review Finance Committee Policy**

Suggestions for amendments/clarification: 1) term limits of 2 years, plus partial year if join committee mid-year. 2) Recommend that meetings should be recorded and/or televised. 3) Add review fee schedule to list of responsibilities. *JH to draft amended policy for presentation to Town Council.*

**c. 2016-17 proposed calendar/schedule of work**

JH presented budget/CIP calendar draft which was proposed to the school dept, with the understanding that this is an evolving schedule. At this time this does not include municipal dept budget workshops as in 2016. Committee would like to add three Finance Committee-hosted workshops in March 2017, which the full Council is encouraged to attend.

Also concerned about adding certain fee reviews to the Finance Committee schedule: mall vendor fees before next spring, and to look at the Mere Point Wastewater fees again in advance of 2017 summer season in order to evaluate status of sinking fund for capital improvements. *JH to bring Master Schedule of Revenues, Charges, Fees and Fines to Sept meeting, and suggest schedule of review.*

Public comment: Jean Powers spoke about Mere Point Wastewater fees, and the responsibility of users to bear the cost of system failures. Committee responded that Council confirmed the possibility of a special assessment if necessary.

Jean Powers also raised the question of ambulance billing for motor vehicle accidents. Distinction made between Fire Dept response and ambulance service. *JH to verify that the Town bills for ambulance transport in accident situations.*

## **5. Finance Report**

JH briefly discussed the monthly budget reports as of July 31, 2016, which were previously presented to the full Council on August 15th. JH confirmed that nothing is surprising. Noted certain expenditure categories which show higher percentage expended, such as Technology Services reflecting payment of full year licensing at the start of the year, Risk Management reflecting insurance premiums paid early in the year.

DH raised issue of controlling expenditures, and administering the budget very closely.

Public comment: Richard Fisco spoke about how revenues and fees are reviewed and updated. Feels that the analysis of ambulance fees was inadequate. Also advocated for bicycle licenses, with fees to support roads, and for increasing parking fines.

## **6. Municipal debt**

JH presented several documents, including an excerpt from the CAFR Notes, listing the current bond issues, annual debt service and authorized-but-not-issued debt. Discussion of how smaller projects may be 'bundled' for cost effective issuance of bonds. Bond ordinances authorize the Town to advance funds (pay with cash) to provide flexibility on timing and to better predict the amount needed in bond proceeds.

Discussion of the legal debt limit as governed by State statute, with a review of Table 14 from the CAFR. Town is well within limit.

Review of assumptions used in predicting debt service for the Capital Improvement Program, and how the modeling works to illustrate the debt service 'capacity' from year to year.

Finance Committee's annual review of debt to be conducted in August, before the CIP process begins.

## **7. Investment policy update**

JH provided the current investment policy, which was adopted in 1985, and a draft of a new investment policy. Draft was adapted from the Government Finance Officers Association best practices and model policy. Committee discussed the general objectives of the policy, the allowable investments and historical practices. *No action was proposed until the next meeting, to allow for further review by the full committee and John Eldridge.*

DH question about how the finance committee agenda is developed. JH prepares draft agenda for committee chair review and adjustment – so send items to JH or talk to the chair.

AH emphasized need for 'calendar template' to be sure items are included annually.

## **8. Adjourn**