

**Buckland Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2021 — Virtual meeting 6 p.m.**

This meeting was conducted in accordance with the state of Mass. recommendations for virtual meetings during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Finance Committee Members: Paula Consolo, Larry Langford, Raymond Lanza-Weil, Ciara Hayden

Others present: Town Administrator Heather Burke, selectboard member Barry Del Castilho, Pam Guyette, Cindy Schwartz, Marilyn Kelsey, Bruce Lessels, Karen Blom (for a couple of minutes), Mark Amstein (arrived 6:24 pm), Karen Scheaffer (arrived 7:15 p.m.)

Heather departed 6:15pm.

Raymond motions to approve minutes from Feb. 22 as edited; Ciara seconds. Larry, yes; Raymond, yes; Paula, yes; Ciara, yes. Unanimously approved.

6:13 p.m. – Assessors Budget Review, Pam Guyette

Pam has lowered her budget a bit from the first draft. Largest additions are due to the fact that we are in a revaluation year and need to hire an appraiser. Considering Covid, it is recommended that we do some appraisals this year and some next year. Patriot Properties is the company that runs our appraisal software; cost is shared with the Fire District. Pam lowered her recommendation for professional development because much of it has been virtual and less expensive than usual. Paula recommends that we put in the full \$2,800 for Pam's professional development in case the situation changes and in-person training is possible. All agree. Pam leaves 6:24 p.m.

6:30 p.m. – Recreation Committee Budget Review, Cindy Schwartz, Carol Foote, and Mark Amstein

Cindy reports that the Rec area needs more funding for mowings, plumbing, and electrical. Mulch will be needed for summer of 2022; Cindy will find out how much it will cost. Operating budget request reflects a modest increase.

Capital request: \$300,000

This would be the town's portion of a \$1.2 budget for the new pool.

Cindy explained other funding sources, including the original \$500K donation. Hoping \$100K will be secured from a parks grant, which we applied for a while back; need to update our open space plan for this; fundraising will also be needed.

Paula says interest rates are low making this a good time to borrow. Pool is a huge asset to the town and she would like to see us try to move it forward.

Barry says it was suggested that we do all the school capital projects now, but selectboard also considers the pool a priority. Marilyn Kelsey says she is in favor of the pool.

Committee thinks the townsfolk are overwhelmingly supportive. Heather will crunch the numbers to see what it would cost to borrow this sum. A debt exclusion would need to pass.

Rec Committee leaves 7 p.m.

7:00 p.m. – ARMS Library Budget Review, Laurie Wheeler and Sheryl Gilmore

Library has been able to help folks during the pandemic. Participated in the Covid response. Added air ionizers, filters, UV lights to improve the library environment. They are sharing programming and knowledge with other libraries. ARMS has increased programming in the past few months (Cati Coleman talk had more than 100 participants). Committee reports that 13,100 items circulated despite having only curbside pickup. This reflects a 28% drop in circulation, but that is better than many other libraries.

Karen Scheaffer arrived 7:15 p.m.

When asked how much funding is coming from Shelburne, the committee said \$35,146.

Other sources of revenue include:

State aid \$1,900

No annual fund letter this year (\$4,000)

Friends usually give (\$3,000, but no book sale this year)

\$12,000 from endowment (3-5% draw allowed)

The finance committee would like to know how the request for Buckland is calculated. This year (FY22), it is simply the same number that was requested last year (FY21), but the finance committee did not approve that number last year. The FY22 request is a \$3,400 increase over the amount awarded in FY21, or a nearly 18% increase, but it is only \$878 more than the amount awarded in FY20.

ARMS Committee says that usage at Arms is high and they intend to add a day when it will be open for 3 hours; they do not have a breakdown of the number of Buckland residents who use the library.

Laurie and Sheryl and Karen leave 7:27 p.m.

Business not previously known so not on the agenda

Larry notes that the finance committee is authorized to fill vacancies by a vote. He is recommending Bruce Lessels to fill Karen Blom's seat, which she left to become the Town Clerk.

Ciara moves and Raymond seconds that Bruce Lessels be appointed to the finance committee. Larry, yes; Raymond, yes; Paula, yes; Ciara, yes. Unanimously approved.

Next meeting is Monday, March 8, at 6 p.m. on Zoom.

Raymond moves to adjourn. Ciara seconds. Larry, yes; Raymond, yes; Paula, yes; Ciara, yes. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Paula Consolo.