

**MINUTES**  
**Warrant Committee Meeting**  
**March 28, 2023**

<b>Warrant Committee Members</b>	Steve Callahan (SC, Chair), Robert Sliney (RS, Co-Chair), Edward Vozzella (EV), Jillian Rafter (JR), Brent Nelson (BN), Peter Michelson (PM), Mather Eldred (ME)  Attending Later (Remotely): Sharon Tatro (ST)  Absent: Jeremy Marsette (JM)
<b>Guests</b>	Eileen Murphy, Gus Murby - Medfield Select Board Kristine Trierweiler (KT), Town Administrator Frank Gervasio (FG), Assistant Town Administrator Andrew Foster, Town Accountant Mark Cerel, Town Counsel M. LaFrancesca (MLF), MPS Director of Finance and Operations Various heads of Town departments Town residents, including C. Potts (7 Curve Street)
<b>Meeting Location</b>	Town Building Chenery Hall
<b>Meeting Times</b>	7:05 p.m. to 8:42 p.m.
<b>Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes</b>	None
<b>Operational Budgets (including votes taken)</b>	Addressed in narrative that follows
<b>Warrant Articles (including votes taken)</b>	Addressed in narrative that follows
<b>List of all documents and exhibits used</b>	Agenda for Meeting Chair (SC) slides regarding summary of Town fiscal status and financial Warrant Articles
<b>Other Business</b>	n/a
<b>Follow-ups</b>	
<b>Dates for Meetings including WC</b>	Future meetings of the WC are scheduled for April 3, April 11, and April 25. The Town Meeting will be held on May 1.
<b>Discussion with Financial Team</b>	Call to order 7:05. Motion to open hearing: RS (second, ME)  Chair: Town warrant posted to Town website, made available to residents. Public notice of the hearing on the proposed Town warrant has been made

to residents. A recording will be available on the Town website. Chair then describes the constitution and purpose of the WC, emphasizing the role the WC plays in studying the financial affairs of the Town (including capital expenditures), and to evaluate other warrant articles submitted by various parts of Town administration, or put forward via citizen petition. This effort culminates in a recommendation for passage or dismissal on each article of the Town warrant.

Co-Chair RS thanked the representatives from Town administration and the various departments with whom the WC has worked over the past several months for their dedication and patience with the WC as it has performed its duties.

Chair then provided a brief summary of the Town's fiscal condition and operating budget (slides available on recording). Revenue sources and FY 24 projected amounts (total projected revenue of \$74.0 million). Explanation of the property tax levy calculation and the impact of Proposition 2 1/2 on these calculations. Recent history of the average single family (residential) tax bill, and how that bill relates to other communities in the Commonwealth. Gross and net State Aid to Medfield, projected FY 24 and past years. Breakdown of revenue streams from local receipts for FY 24 (projected).

Breakdown of operating expenditure (total operational budget of \$70.6 million for FY 24) between school expenditures, municipal operations, fixed costs, and debt services. Main drivers for operational cost increases were identified as salary increases as demanded via contractual agreements, energy costs, school transportation costs, and health insurance premiums. NOTE: approximately 80% of operating expenditures are composed of salary and benefits for employees. The FY 24 operating budget represents a 1.5% increase from FY 23. The discussion of the operating budget constitutes a reading of Article 22 in the Town Warrant.

Comment from C. Potts: suggested future FY deliberations consider inter-district choice as a means to bring in revenue for the schools in an era in which enrollments may be declining.

Presentation continues (the discussion represents a reading of the associated Articles in the Town warrant).

Current certified free cash balance, and proposed uses of free cash as proposed in the Town warrant, were summarized. These proposals constitute some, or all, of Articles 7, 9, 14, 17, 20, and 22. It was noted that the Town's sound fiscal management has allowed the Town to maintain a bond rating of Aa1 for some years, with the most recent credit review by Moody's occurring in September of 2021. The increase in Town reserve accounts, as a percentage of operating revenue, since FY 2018 was reviewed, the bulk of this increase has been in the General Stabilization Fund, with a current (FY 23) estimated balance of \$3.1 million. The status

of the Municipal Building Stabilization Fund (subject of Articles 15 and 16) and the Capital Stabilization Fund (subject of Articles 17 and 18) were reviewed.

Additional Warrant articles were then read, and questions were invited from hearing participants.

- Article 1 requests acceptance of annual Town Reports.
- Articles 2, 3, 4, and 5 address aspects of human resource management for the Town. Article 2: elected official compensation. Article 3: personnel administration plan. Article 4: police collective bargaining agreement. Article 5: revocation of civil service.
- Articles 6, 7, and 8 address the (proposed) Opioid Stabilization Fund (OSF). Article 6: creation of OSF. Article 7: transfer into OSF. Article 8: transfer out of OSF.
- Articles 9 through 14 address various revolving funds, trust funds, and other funds. Article 9: authorized new vaccine revolving fund. Article 10: annual revolving fund expenditure limits. Article 11: cemetery perpetual care trust fund. Article 12: Vine lake cemetery expansion study. Article 13: Local PEG access appropriation. Article 14: Affordable Housing Trust request for funding.
- Articles 23 through 25 address water and sewer. Article 23: water and sewer enterprise fund budget. Article 24: rescind bond authorization.
- Article 19 concerns the construction of a garage at the Center at Medfield.
- Article 20 concerns the Elementary School Feasibility Study funding.
- Article 21 authorizes payment of bills from the prior fiscal year (total of \$3441).
- Article 31 address the disposition of free cash.

Non-financial articles [NOTE: article numbers below reflect printed Warrant Report — numbers have changed since the recorded meeting of March 28]:

Article 25: authorization for school committee to enter lease agreements and PPAs for solar photovoltaic installations.

Article 26: change in noise bylaws.

Article 27: restrictions on use of private wells during demand curtailment periods.

Citizen Petition articles:

Article 28: school committee public hearings.

Article 29: employee compensation transparency.

Article 30: creation of groundwater protection committee.

BS (second, EV) moves to close hearing of the WC at 7:45pm. Regular agenda for the WC then resumed.

JR reviewed budget proposal from the Health Department (total \$201,110, 2% increase from FY 23).

ME reviewed budget request for Facilities Department. Primary departure from FY 23 was an increase in the salary line-item to cover the request for additional FTE to serve as a project manager. There currently exists a number of previously-approved capital improvements (approximately \$230k of previously-appropriated funds, for school and Town projects) that have not yet been undertaken due to lack of resources to scope, plan, and budget the work, solicit bids, and oversee completion. A question arose as to whether the allocated additional salary (approximately \$80k) would be sufficient to attract an appropriate candidate. Town Administrator indicated confidence about the number given similar recent postings from other municipalities.

Another aspect of the Facilities budget that shows a projected increase is the energy (electricity) budget for various Town buildings/divisions. Assistant TA FG appraised the WC on the nature of future electricity contracts, to take effect midway through the coming FY. Averaged over the entire FY, the expected increase will be 7%, though the actual rate increases are expected only in the second half of FY24.

WC member Sharon Tatro (participating remotely) joined at approximately 8pm to discuss the capital expenditures proposed for FY 24. ST and TA KT worked through each item in the requested disbursements from the Capital Stabilization Fund. The list of items and recommended amounts are listed in the text of Article 18 in the printed Warrant Report. A total of \$796k will be requested from the Capital Stabilization Fund. The total FY 24 capital budget request, from all Town funding sources, amounts to \$1,296,095.

M. LaFrancesca, MPS Director of Finance and Operations, reviewed the recommended funding from the Municipal Building Stabilization Fund to be applied to buildings in the schools. Line items can be found in the text of Article 16 in the printed Warrant Report. The total request from the schools is \$922,500, the major components being the replacement of the fire alarm system at Medfield High, renovation go the tennis courts at Medfield High, and replacement of the auditorium seating at Blake Middle School. MF, together with KT, continued to describe the items associated with Town buildings. These items bring the total request from the Municipal Building Stabilization Fund to \$1,490,500.

In conclusion, KT thanks BoS and school committee for their efforts that have produced a balanced budget as of the current meeting. School committee found mechanisms to reduce their request by \$173k. The Town

	<p>made changes to workers compensation (made possible by absence of claims), snow &amp; ice removal allotments, and the deductible level on property insurance. The requested conservation agent went from full to 0.5 time, and the Town will wait until January to fill a highway opening.</p> <p>A final informational item: KT, FG, RS, SC met with auditors who should be completing their audit soon. Initial feedback is very positive from auditors on Town administration and finance.</p> <p>ST motion to adjourn (RS seconds). Adjournment at 8:42pm</p>
<b>Attachments</b>	See list of documents and exhibits

Respectfully Submitted: Brent D. Nelson