

Minutes Holden Finance Committee, September 14, 2022, Town Hall

Members Present: Paul Challenger, Dave White, Chris Lucchesi, Don Graves, Al Berg, Jane Titcomb, Stephanie Adams, Donna Wallace, Marilyn Foley

Also Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager (left at 8:00), Joe Sullivan, Town Moderator (left at 7:30)

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 P.M.

Joe introduced Donna Wallace the new appointee to the Committee. The Committee welcomed her. Donna gave us a brief run-down of her background.

Peter announced that Department Budgets will begin preparation beginning in early October.

Peter updated the Committee on Holden lawsuit versus the DCR and the City of Worcester. The jury awarded Holden \$14.6 million dollars in the sewer rates case. The court also found that there was a breach of contract by the DCR, but did not award any damages related to that breach. The City of Worcester has filed to ask for a Judge to overturn this decision. During the appeals process 12% interest will be added to the total until payment is made. The Town is asking the court to reconsider whether DCR should face damages also. This lawsuit has been ongoing for 9 years.

The DPW building is 95% completed, except for network equipment switches, which are back ordered and difficult to get as a result of problems during COVID 19 pandemic. A ribbon cutting will be held on October 1, 2022 at 11:00 A.M.

Peter has talked with the new WRSD Superintendent, who has run into some unforeseen to him school issues within the WRSD concerning certain accounts. The District has not yet hired a new Finance Director, which could be a problem with the budget season approaching.

The Town will revisit the HVAC issues at the Senior Center. Also, there is no further information on the library windows. Dawson School is addressing the bathroom situation, which was caused by adding full-day kindergarten two years ago, increasing the number of students in the building. For this year, a few kindergarten bathrooms will be created in the building. A type of temporary/semi-permanent modular bathrooms will be completed for next year.

The Recreation Director that was appointed in the spring has resigned and Angela Green has been promoted to Director after impressing Peter over the past year as Assistant Director.

Peter presented the Committee with the new field proposal for the 13 acres behind the new DPW facility that connects to the Dawson recreation property. Also included is funding for improvements of other fields in town. Peter is looking to use ARPA federal funds for the project. The staff is still working on the proposal with hope for an October 17 Special Town Meeting.

Peter also updated the Committee on the planned Shrewsbury Street project to eliminate the traffic light at Doyle Road and create a roundabout. The Committee will get a detailed presentation before the special town meeting. An informational meeting is planned for the public.

The Committee discussed receiving information from Town prior to Finance Committee meetings. A motion by Jane 2nd by Don to require information on the Friday prior to the Wednesday Finance Committee meeting or the information could not be discussed at that meeting was voted unanimously.

The Committee discussed wanting to know more about the process of presenting information within the Budget document.

A motion by Stephanie 2nd by Dave to approve the minutes of May 16, 2022 was voted in favor 5- 0, with 4 abstaining Don, Al, Jane, Donna.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilynn Foley, Clerk

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