

**Westport Finance Committee
Meeting Minutes
Virtual Meeting-Remote Participation
October 04, 2023**

Present: Karen Raus (Chair), Cindy Brown (Vice-Chair), Hugh Morton, Al Lees, Zachary Lebreux, Lawrence Holsworth, Michelle Orlando, Christopher Thrasher, Al Lee

Also Present: Susan Brayton, Richard Brewer Shana Shufelt, Jim Hartnett, Thomas Aubin, Nancy Staton-Cross, Michelle Rapoza, Evan Gendreau

Absent: Gary Carreiro

Karen Raus called the meeting to order at 6:04pm, and a Pledge of Allegiance.

Discussion with the representatives of the Board of Selectmen and School Committee.

A Fiscal 24/Fiscal 25 Budget: Karen Raus addressed the committee members and welcomed representatives from the school committee and the board of selectmen. Karen Raus continued opening up for discussions on revenue and managing and balancing of the Fiscal 24/25 Budget.

The Town Administrator (Jim Hartnett) discussed for the budget Fiscal 24 year that we have additional expenses with increasing pensions, property taxes, insurances. New growth with changes in the assessing process, with state aid and local receipts which would be the majority of revenue.

The school committee mentioned an estimate of enrollment of special education needs of students cost \$387,000 out of district tuition costs and of out of district transportation costs is \$310,860 and that could change throughout the year.

Fiscal 24 level of school cuts were made in amount of \$275,000 and results were an increase of class sizes in grades one two and three. Four teachers assistants were cut but then hired five back.

Shana Shufelt from the Board of Selectmen mentioned we would have to look at what departments to cut what is required and what is optional with the finance committee mentioning as well of having an assessment done of each department of what is required for staffing.

B.5 year Operating & Capital Plan : Town administrator (Jim Hartnett) mentioned he would be asking each department of a 5-year plan and will be sending the finance committee a report that was generated from the past town administrator of the 5-year plan.

C. Fiscal Policies (overall policies, budget, free cash) Next step : Timeline & Deliverables:
The Finance committee mentioned we should get some information on statute of regulations from the state of what the minimal requirements for each department on staffing for a good starting point from and addition the department heads could give more information on the minimum recommendations legal mandate of each department.

Comments and Statements: The finance committee mentioned keeping an open dialogue for the upcoming fiscal budget season .

Topic for next Meeting Agenda: N/A

7.Meeting Schedule: November 14, 2023

8. Correspondence: N/A

9.Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advanced of the meeting:
N/A

Adjourn :There being no further business to come before this meeting a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm was made by Cindy Brown and Lawrence Holsworth seconded the roll call vote in favor 8-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica McKane
Finance Committee Recording Clerk

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

2023 Agenda October 04, 2023.docx

