

**Westport Finance Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
Virtual Meeting-Remote Participation  
January 09, 2024**

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

Also Present: Paul Joncas, Dana Steward, Kristen Stinton, Ralph Souza, Nicole Pearsall

Karen Raus called the meeting to order at 6:31pm, and a Pledge of Allegiance .

Karen Raus read the following: This meeting is being held remotely in accordance with the Governor of Massachusetts '*March 12, 2020, order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A Section 20 and on March 29, 2023, Governor Healey signed a Supplemental 2023 Budget Bill allowing remote and hybrid meetings options for public bodies through March 31, 2025. This meeting is being recorded.*

Karen Raus (Chair) opened the meeting mentioning continuing with the Fy25 budget meetings.

**1.Department Budget Meetings:**

- A. Conservation Department:** Paul Joncas was in attendance to present the Fy25 budget. Paul Joncas mentioned he is the chair of the conservation commission for 12 years, The Budget we have a full-time conservation agent and full-time office clerk. Our total budget with office supplies is \$138,688. We give back \$20,000 a year out of our wetland fees to the town to put towards our salaries and we also get back the money from soil permits and rda's which is around \$7000. The budget is very small, and simply basically everything that's contractual other than that we have about \$64 to \$70 in office expenses with postage and office supplies and mileage for our agent.
- B. Recreation Department:** Dana Steward was in attendance to present the Fy25 Dana Steward mentioned consists of the salary and \$2000 for general expenses that were given to us last fiscal year For my position which is at 30 hours a week, I'm the only staff and the revenue is under the recreation revolving account through the fees that we charge for our recreation programs, through the gym rentals which have increased over the years and also through grants that I tried to get and receive. And as well as Community Preservation Commission has been very generous and helping us with our playgrounds as well as other donations and grants. For our revolving fund we brought in a total revenue of \$15,203.33
- C. Building Department :**Ralph Souza was in attendance to present the Fy25 budget.

Ralph Souza mentioned my budget is pretty straightforward. As of last year, we issued 1060 permits and returned in on the building permits \$435,224.00 to the town. With wire inspector \$123,616 returned into the town and gas inspector had \$27,935, plumber inspector \$37,940 returned into the town which totals \$624,755 of building and revolving accounts.

**D. Town Clerk/Register of Voters:** Kristen Stinton was in attendance to present the Fy25 budget. Kristen Stinton mentioned for the town clerks' budget, we have a little bit of an increase, almost 4% this year. Most of that is based on some training most town clerks across the state participate in different programs on a regular basis to stay up to date with all of the laws and regulations. The other major increase is in postage, and that is because I will be doing more things online vital records, dog license. I have removed some things that were in there that were really being used like buyback and longevity pay that sort of thing because it's not relevant for the assistant out there for a while. We have a few more years before that's relevant, so we'll have to reintroduce that later. Kristen Stinton continued with the Register of Voters budget and mentioned the increase is about 7.56% we have a staff member who is hitting her 15-year mark and her she has a significant salary increase. All the non-clerical part time positions, that sort of thing will be a slight increase and that means poll worker. I'm working on trying to kind of adjust where things are being spent because I don't feel like the breakdown has been very clear in our budget. There are four Register of Voters in town including the town clerk.

## **2.Discussion :Fiscal24/Fiscal 25 budget ; 5-year operating /capitol plan:**

There was discusses and comments among the finance committee on the past joint meeting last week with members of the school committee and select board on the Fy25 budget as well a finance committee member mentioning the news coming out on the state already discussing fiscal 24 of how they're going to be making some adjustments to their budget, and using some interest in some other reserves that it might not be a great budget cycle for Fy25.

**4. Committee/Liaison updates:** Cindy Brown mentioned for the CIPC, the capital improvement planning committee. We are meeting on Thursday to take a final vote. There is a 5-year plan in place. Hugh Morton mentioned there was a sworn-in of the new chief of police and there will be a meeting shortly to take a look at their budget. Cindy Brown continued and mentioned the personnel board there is a meeting tomorrow night for a new job description as Deputy Chief ,because the Deputy Chief also retired on the same date that the Chief of Police did . The Select Board approved the job description last evening. It's coming to the personnel board tomorrow, and hopefully he'd like to get the job posted by Thursday if it meets with the approval of the personnel board tomorrow.

**5.Minutes:** The minutes for January 02, 2024 , was presented for approval Cindy Brown motioned and Al Lees seconded to approve. The roll call vote was 8-0 in favor Morton :aye Raus ;aye Brown ;aye Orlando ;aye Thrasher; aye Lees ;aye Carreiro; aye Lebreux; aye

The minutes for January 03, 2024 , was presented for approval Michelle Orlando motioned and Cindy Brown seconded to approve. The roll call vote was 8-0 in favor Morton :aye Raus ;aye Brown :aye Orlando ;aye Thrasher; aye Lees ;aye Carreiro; aye Lebreux; aye

**6.Topic for next Meeting Agenda:** Department Budget Meeting

**7.Meeting Schedule:** January 16, 2024 , January 23, 2024, February 06, 2024

**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 7:56pm was made by Hugh Morton and Al Lees seconded the roll call vote was 8-0 all in favor. Raus ;aye Morton ;aye Thrasher ;aye Lees ;aye Brown; aye Orlando ; aye. Lebreux; aye Carreiro ;aye

Respectfully submitted,  
Jessica McKane  
Finance Committee Recording Clerk

**REFERENCE DOCUMENTS:**

Fy25 Budget schedule as of Jan9.xlsx  
2024 Jan 09, 2024, AGENDA.docx  
1-3-24 Meeting Minutes Finance Committee with Select Board and School Committee.docx  
1-2-24 Meeting Minutes Finance Committee.docx  
Budget Presentation Recreation Dept 1-9-23.pdf  
Building Department Budget Materials 2025.pdf  
171 Conservation (3).xlsx  
Finance Committee Files Budget (2).pdf  
Clerk\_Elections Budget (2).xlsx  
Copy of TA Budget Details V 12-12-23.xlsx

