

**Minutes
Lincoln Finance Committee**

**Virtual Meeting Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020
Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law**

**March 20, 2023
7:30 pm ET**

In attendance at the meeting were Finance Committee Member Attendees: Andrew Payne (Chair), Paul Blanchfield (Vice-Chair), Gina Halsted, Fuat Koro, Nancy Marshall, Rich Rosenbaum, Ellen Meyer Shorb.

Others present: Colleen Wilkins (Town Finance Director), Buck Creel, and Chris Fasciano, both on behalf of the School Building Committee

Introduction

The meeting (via Zoom) was called to order at 7:32 pm and it was noted the meeting was being held in accordance with Governor Baker's Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law and that the meeting was being recorded. Members introduced themselves, and the agenda was reviewed.

Andy Payne reviewed the agenda.

Annual Budget Q&A

Mr. Payne confirmed that the budget presentation has been uploaded and is available for online review by residents and that questions were invited as part of tonight's agenda.

Resident Peter Buchthal asked a question with regard to collective bargaining negotiations and the impact of an outcome that may exceed the Lincoln School budget request at Lincoln Town Meeting. Paul Blanchfield responded that the School Committee presented their budget, which was in line with FinCom guidance, and included some additional requests for preferred items. Given the confidentiality of collective bargaining, final negotiations are not yet concluded, but there remains confidence that the guideline and requested preferred items as outlined should be sufficient. The question by Mr. Buchthal was whether the town was running the risk of an override, and Paul Blanchfield responded that there was no risk.

Resident David Cuetos highlighted the benefit expenses and their increase and comparison to other towns. He also questioned the difference in benefits expenses between Lincoln and Hancom. Paul Blanchfield confirmed the practices for cost reimbursement from Hanscom to the Town. With respect to other Town Comparisons, Mr. Blanchfield requested a written request from Mr. Cuetos in order for the Committee to review and respond properly.

Resident Barbara Low asked how to source the FinCom hearing presentation and was advised by Mr. Payne.

Questions concluded.

SBC Representation After Town Meeting

The FinCom has a voting seat on the School Building Committee (SBC). FinCom member and SBC Liaison Gina Halsted will conclude her service and will step down from the Finance Committee following the conclusion of Lincoln Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Payne suggested that Ms. Halsted continue as the liaison on behalf of the FinCom for the duration of the SBC's "existence", in line with LSC member Tara Mitchell and her continuing as liaison after her LSC service concludes.

A motion was made by Nancy Marshall to appoint Gina Halsted as the Finance Committee's voting representative to the School Building Committee (SBC), in emeritus, until the SBC winds down or the Finance Committee designates another representative. Ellen Meyer Shorb seconded the motion. The roll call vote in support was unanimous.

Recruiting

Mr. Payne asked that names be submitted to him with regard to nominations for a new appointment to the FinCom to succeed Gina Halsted upon the conclusion of her seven-year tenure. Mr. Payne spoke to numeracy, gender, area of residence, and school-aged parents being areas of interest for membership, in balance and complementary to the current composition of the FinCom.

Liaison Updates

Mr. Payne asked members for their updates.

Ms. Shorb spoke with regard to the Community Center Building Committee. IKON Architects presented to the CCBC, and was ultimately chosen. Two other firms also presented. A clear understanding of working through wants versus needs, net-zero and the proportionate (50%/75%/100%) design options were articulated strengths that drew the committee to IKON.

Mr. Payne questioned the CCBC's stance about the pricing range that was emphasized by residents at Special Town Meeting. He wondered whether the CCBC has truly internalized the will of the town. Rich Rosenbaum responded that his sense was that the CCBC is a bit more neutral relative to before Special Town Meeting. Ms. Shorb said while needs and wants are well vetted, the means by which they could be achieved remain open to exploration. The architects plan to come up with a base design and then discuss additions at what cost.

Ms. Marshall spoke to other area towns and projects already underway at lower costs serving higher populations that might be worth consideration. She also spoke to the spectrum of costs regarding water infrastructure and other potential costs in the next 10-15 years that is incumbent on the Town Boards to clearly outline to residents, as all choices may or may not be feasible and need to be weighed as personal priorities for voters.

Ms. Halsted responded that the Water Board is assiduously seeking information on outside funding for the priorities it expressed at the prior FinCom meeting, but much remains to understand about infrastructure construction and other (new PFAS remediation regulation) costs.

Mr. Payne reminded the FinCom regarding the discussion about the residual funds from the sale of the modular buildings from the School Building Project being used outside the restoration of the fields and interior lighting. The FinCom is responsible for offering an opinion and presenting the contents of the warrant article. Gina reviewed the history of this question. The modular classrooms were paid for by the School Building Project. They then were sold, and the sale revenue flowed back into the Town General fund. The School then asked for some of the proceeds to be reallocated back into the School Building Budget last year, to cover the cost of the field restoration and new lighting expenses. For this year's Town Meeting, the question is being asked whether any residual funds from the sale that are unused from the field restoration be permitted for other uses relating to the School Building Project. The amount voted last year was \$550k, dedicated to lighting systems and field restoration. Buck Creel also noted FEMA has been approached about reimbursing Consigli for some costs during COVID, but that remains unresolved. The request now is for the remainder of the residual funds unspent for the field restoration to be allocated back to the SBC.

The question of what is remaining unspent for the field restoration was raised. Mr. Creel estimated approximately \$80k.

Mr. Blanchfield expressed support for the request. Mr. Payne proceeded with a motion that the FinCom support the warrant article request. Mr. Blanchfield seconded. On a roll call vote, the motion was supported unanimously.

Other Business

Mr. Blanchfield reviewed the upcoming FinCom meeting dates and format (Zoom, hybrid or in person). Opinions about the nature of the meetings and ensuring optimal attendance were discussed.

Review and approve minutes from prior meeting

Amendments to the minutes were offered and incorporated. Mr. Payne requested any further edits. Mr. Rosenbaum moved to approve the minutes, the second was offered by Fuat Koro. No further discussion was offered. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed 6-0-0. Ms. Halsted was unable to vote on this motion due to technical issues.

Adjourn

Ms. Marshall moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Rosenbaum seconded. The motion passed on a roll call vote 6-0-0 and again, Ms. Halsted was unable to vote due to technical issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Marshall