

Lunenburg Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Bilotta Meeting Room
Lunenburg Town Hall
May 8, 2025

Present Members: Chair Chris Menard, Vice Chair Jean Russell (Zoom), Clerk Tom Gray, Committee Member Tanya Dall, Committee Member Ana Lockwood, Committee Member Mike Rupp, Committee Member Jay Simeone (Zoom)

1. Call to Order

The meeting opened at 7:00 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Public Comment

Ana Lockwood was contacted by a vendor partaking in the fair on Saturday. They are in need of volunteers for the dunk tank and are inquiring with Boards and Commissions for participants.

5. Town Manager & Finance Director Reports

There were no reports for the Town Manager or the Finance Director.

6. New Business

a. Post Annual Town Meeting discussion and recommendations

Chris Menard thanked everyone on the Committee for their work and completing the budget season.

Tom Gray felt the moderator did a great job and there were no issues with technology. There are upcoming elections, and he is encouraging everyone to vote.

Jean Russell heard from several residents that the three large expensive articles were overwhelming. She suggests staggering or breaking down articles into multiple town meetings. Jay Simeone agrees and states it is difficult to pass any additional money articles with the severe budgetary impact of the schools.

b. FY27 budget process and improvements

Chris Menard confirms the school committee selected the new Superintendent, Dr. Jodi Fortuna. All interviews are available online for review.

Chris Menard believes budgeting should be an all-year process and not completed within a few months. Additionally, department heads should have their presentations in February and March. Chris Menard suggests the Committee should review if self-sustained programs are truly self-sustained.

Tanya Dall suggests holding preliminary budget presentations starting in the fall. She suggests creating a template with a budget tool for all departments to utilize for presentations.

Tom Gray suggests that the Town Manager ask departments to start working on their budget for FY27 now. A general calculation should be made and there are variables that can be determined in advance. Chris Menard confirms there are categories that are predictable including new growth, salary, and Chapter 7.

c. Summer schedule and focus areas

Tanya Dall suggests inviting the Town Manager and the new Superintendent of Schools to the next meeting to inquire about what they would like to see in the future. The Committee agrees to hold one meeting for the months of June and July. Chris Menard will speak to the Town Manager and inquire about having a meeting with the new Superintendent once her contract is complete and she is on board.

Chris Menard also suggests holding meetings over Zoom.

7. Old Business

a. 2025 Budget Task Force Recommendations

Chris Menard pulled together debt projections and suggested members' review the data.

There needs to be discussions about Turkey Hill renovations versus a re-build and the future of the Brooks House. Tom Gray suggests selling the Brooks House as a house as opposed to commercial office space. Ana Lockwood states the historical preservation committee needs to act and make a decision.

8. Minutes (3/27, 4/3, 4/24)

Tanya Dall expressed that she is not accustomed to the way the minutes are written. Chris Menard suggests speaking to the Town Manager to create consistency.

There was a motion to approve the minutes from March 27, 2025, April 3, 2025, and April 24, 2025, by Ana Lockwood, seconded by Tom Gray. Roll call vote. Jean Russell aye, Jay Simeone aye, Ana Lockwood aye, Tanya Dall aye, Tom Gray aye, Chris Menard aye.

9. Committee Reports

Tom Gray states he is unsure if the Municipal Building Design Committee will remain because of the vote against recommendation. He hopes that the Select Board will ask the Committee to continue their work or create a new committee.

10. Actions and Topics for Future Meetings

Tanya Dall is requesting a meeting with the Town manager and the new School Superintendent.

There will be a review of Committee assignments.

11. Important Dates & Upcoming Meetings

- a. Town Election, May 17 7:00-5:00
- b. Fincom Meeting, May 22

12. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

13. Adjourn

There was a motion to adjourn by Ana Lockwood, seconded by Tom Gray. Roll call vote. Jean Russell aye, Jay Simeone aye, Ana Lockwood aye, Tanya Dall aye, Tom Gray aye, Chris Menard aye.

The meeting closed at 8:03 PM.