

Lunenburg Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Bilotta Meeting Room
Lunenburg Town Hall
October 23, 2025

Present Members: Chair Chris Menard, Clerk Tom Gray, Committee Member Ana Lockwood, Committee Member Jay Simeone (Zoom)

Absent Members: Vice Chair Jean Russell, Committee Member Tanya Dall, Committee Member Mike Rupp

1. Call to Order

The meeting opened at 7:14 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Announcements

Public hearing and initial votes on recommendations for articles will be discussed at the meeting on November 13th.

4. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

5. Town Manager & Finance Director Reports

Jennifer Warren-Dyment reports that Ezekiel Ayala's last day was Monday, and Katie McKenna started as Finance Director the same day.

The payroll and benefits coordinator, Nancy O'Rourke, is retiring October 21st. The town has appointed a temporary staff member who began several weeks ago to fill the position while it remains vacant.

An offer has been made for the Assistant Accountant Position. In the meantime, retired Finance Director Steve Barrett will assist the town until the role is filled.

The town has a contract with CPA, Eric Kinsherf, who will be providing transitional services to the town for the finance direction transition. He will be tasked with assisting year end close out and prep for free cash certification by DLS.

The tax classification hearing is scheduled for November 25th. The Select Board will vote to determine if there is a shift between the different classes of property. This hearing does not increase or reduce the tax levy but will determine how the levy will be apportioned.

6. Current Business

a. Special Town Meeting Warrant

ARTICLE 1

This article allows Town Meeting to hear and act upon reports delivered to the Town Meeting body by Boards, Committees, Commissions, and Town Officers. There will be oral reports from the Stormwater Task Force, Lunenburg Municipal Building Design Committee, Master Plan Steering Committee.

ARTICLE 2

This article is established for the special meeting to make necessary adjustments to the annual operating budget.

Ana Lockwood asks what specific amount is proposed for raising and appropriation. Jennifer Warren-Dyment will get an exact number to the Committee.

ARTICLE 3

This article requests authorization to pay expenses from a prior fiscal year. At the time of printing there is a bill from FY25 from Heywood Hospital in the amount of \$266.00.

ARTICLE 4

This article requests authorization to fund special projects. There is a request for \$42,900 for stormwater consulting. There is a motion under this article to transfer funds from prior fiscal years unexpended capital articles.

ARTICLE 5

This articles request that the town vote to transfer the sum of \$35,271 from retained grants of the PEB Access and Cable related Enterprise Fund to fund the FY26 PEG Access and Cable related Enterprise operation and capital budget.

Ana Lockwood asks about their total budget. Jennifer Warren-Dyment will check but notes their operation relies on retained earnings.

ARTICLE 6

This articles requests that the town vote to transfer the sum of \$10,000 from the Cemetery Sale of Lots Funds to the Cemetery Capital Article Fund.

Chris Menard questions if this is for north, south or both cemeteries.

ARTICLE 7

This article requests that the town vote to raise and appropriate, or transfer from available funds, the sum of \$50,000 for the engagement of one or more consultant(s) to assist with capital estimations and relative action thereto.

Chris Menard inquires if this includes Monty Tech. Jennifer Warren Dymment is unsure but will inquire.

ARTICLE 8

This articles request that the town establish a Special Education Reserve Fund to be utilized in the upcoming fiscal years, to pay, without further appropriation, for unanticipated or unbudgeted costs of special education and recovery high school programs, out-of-district tuition or transportation; or take any other action relative thereto.

Tom Gray asks if there is a new state law that establishes this fund.

ARTICLE 9:

This article states that eligible seniors may apply for a deferral of property tax payments. The article requests raising the gross receipts limit for the circuit breaker.

Ana Lockwood inquires if any deferrals would be reduced from the levy amount. Jennifer Warren- Dymment states the overlay would need to increase to cover funding.

ARTICLE 10

This article authorizes the Select Board to obtain a permanent easement at 21 Main Street to provide access to Town Hall.

Jennifer Warren-Dymment states there is no financial impact.

ARTICLE 11

This article requests the town transfer the care, custody, and control of Kids Kingdom and the land from the School Committee to the Select Board.

Jennifer Warren-Dyment states there is no financial impact.

Chris Menard questions if there will be a map that shows lines of what the School Committee owns versus what the Select Board owns.

Jennifer Warren-Dyment states there will be a map and confirms most of the land has already been transferred.

ARTICLE 12

This amendment would allow notice of a Town Meeting, be provided via letter or postcard as opposed to mailing warrant booklets to every household.

Chris Menard questions how much it costs to print and mail the booklets. Jennifer Warren-Dyment estimates it to be around \$7,000 to \$8,000 but will get the exact number.

ARTICLE 13

This article addresses the new requirements of the Massachusetts Zoning Act for MBTA Communities. New law mandates a zoning ordinance or bylaw that provides for at least one district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing is permitted as of right, is suitable for families and children, and has a minimum gross density of 15 units per acre.

Jennifer Warren-Dyment states that if communities fail to comply with the new law, they will lose state funding from a variety of grant programs and other initiatives. The article will be submitted in advance to the Attorney General to get pre-review to check to make sure it's acceptable as written.

ARTICLE 14

This article removes the requirement that common driveways be paved with concrete, providing the Planning Board flexibility to approve common drives constructed from appropriate alternate materials.

Town Manager states there is no financial impact.

ARTICLE 15

This article changes the title of Land Use Director to Director of Planning and Economic Development. Additionally, these articles create the temporary position of Special Assistant to the Assessor.

Jay Simeone asks if Director of Planning and Economic Development are separate roles and suggests that having a position between Building Commissioner and Town Manager is atypical.

ARTICLE 16

The Select Board and Town Manager are reviewing SAP amendments to update bylaws and improve employee recruitment and retention, excluding the Personnel Committee.

ARTICLE 17

The Town is discontinuing the use of “Personnel Boards/Committees” and consolidating human resources authority under professional management and dedicated human resource staff.

Ana Lockwood notes that if things are working now, there is no urgency. She believes this change would distance government from citizens.

b. FY26 First Quarter Actuals vs Budget

Chris Menard noted that the FY26 first quarter reports require improvement. The Committee plans to collaborate with Katie McKenna, once she is fully oriented, to bring the reports up to the desired standard.

c. Upcoming Tri Board Topics

- i. School Budget Presentation
- ii. General Government
- iii. Unclassified
- iv. Debt Service

The Town Manager will poll Committee members regarding their availability to schedule the next Tri Board meeting.

Chris Menard suggests creating a budget calendar with the Town Manager.

7. Old Business

a. Prior Tri-Board Meetings

8. Minutes – July 8 (Tri-Board)

There was a motion to approve minutes from September 25, 2025, and October 9, 2025 by Ana Lockwood, seconded by Tom Gray. Roll call vote. Jay Simeone aye, Ana Lockwood aye, Tom Gray aye, Chris Menard aye.

9. Committee Reports

There was a conversation noting that some Boards/Committees have not held meetings lately. Chris Menards proposed reorganizing and assigning committees at an upcoming meeting.

10. Actions and Topics for Future Meetings

No further actions or topics were identified for inclusion on upcoming agendas.

11. Important Dates & Upcoming Meetings

- a. Tri-Board Meetings –TBD
- b. Finance Committee – Nov 13 (Public Hearing)
- c. Special Town Meeting – Nov 18

12. Public Comment

There was no comment from the public.

13. Adjourn

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

The meeting closed at 9:03 PM.