

Lunenburg Finance Committee Meeting Minutes
Bilotta Meeting Room
Lunenburg Town Hall
February 19, 2026

Present Members: Chair Chris Menard, Clerk Tom Gray, Committee Member Tanya Dall, Committee Member Ana Lockwood, Committee Member Jay Simeone

Absent Member: Vice Chair Jean Russell, Committee Member Mike Rupp

1. Call to Order

The meeting opened at 7:02 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Announcements

There were no announcements.

4. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public.

5. Town Manager & Finance Director Reports

Town Manager states the FY25 close out deadline was previously extended through February 28, 2026. The office expects to meet the deadline.

Free cash has not been certified but preliminary results suggest it will be in excess of \$3,000,000.

Town Manager suggests making a deposit into the stabilization fund and the health insurance fund if possible.

6. Current Business (order may change)

a. Preliminary Budget

Town Manager states the budget being presented is not balanced and is reliant on an override.

FY27 Revenues

Property Tax: \$36,332,933.80

State Aid: \$11,404,917.00

Local Receipts: \$3,360,524

Enterprise Funds: \$338,397.19

Totaling: \$51,436,771.99

FY27 Property Tax

FY 2026 Levy Limit: \$32,910,811

2 1/2% Increase: \$822,770.28
Estimated New Growth: \$400,000
Excluded Debt: \$2,199,352.52
Maximum Allowable Levy: \$36,332,933.80

FY27 Total Revenue Available for Appropriation

Starting Revenue: \$51,436,771.99
Less Non-Appropriated Expense: \$1,441,496
Offset Receipts: \$112,147
Assessors Overlay: \$260,000
Cherry Sheet Assessments: \$1,069,349
Less Levy Appropriated to the Capital Plan: \$244,576

FY27 Expenditure Summary: \$49,750,699.99

Maturing Debt: \$2,537,578.36 (-.39% Decrease)
General Government Unclassified: \$4,312,004.12 (4.97% Increase)
General Government: \$3,205,051.24 (8.20% Increase)
Public safety: \$5,118,965.26 (12.56% Increase)
Public Works: \$208,177.51 (13.33% Increase)
Facilities and Buildings: \$1,203,408.16 (12.74% Increase)
Human Services: \$480,162.04 (.040% Increase)
Schools: \$30,115,565.00 (11.04% Increase)
Culture and Recreation: \$662,162.24 (3.62% Increase)
Intergovernmental: \$2,635,339.93 (9.94% Increase)
Tax Title: \$30,500 (No Change)

The total budget for FY27 as presented is \$53,107,913.87. The available revenues for FY27 amount to \$49,750,699.99, resulting in a FY27 deficit of \$3,357,213.88. New revenue for FY27 totals \$1,374,263.89. The Monty Tech Assessment stands at \$117,858.00, leaving \$1,256,405.89 to be allocated between the School and Town budgets. The School receives 53.33% and the Town receives 43.91%.

The Schools would receive \$689,059.28, bringing their total budget to \$2,875,712.00 with a deficit of \$2,186,652.72.

The Town would receive \$567,346.61, bringing their total budget to \$1,737,907.77 with a deficit of \$1,170,561.16.

The Town Manager states that the budget is fluid and may be revised over the next several weeks to months.

Important Upcoming Dates:

- 4th Shift Fire Presentation 2/23/26
- Finance Committee Public Hearing 3/19/26
- Annual town Meeting 5/2/26 at 9 AM

Chris Menard inquired into the investment income for this year as well as actuals. Town Manager will provide these documents.

Ana Lockwood inquired about the public relations firm. Town Manager confirms the contract with John Guilfoil Public Relations costs \$10,000 and the agreement has been ongoing for several years.

Tom Gray asked about a discussion at a previous meeting regarding free cash being reconciled and questioned why the annual audit did catch it. Town Manager states this error would not be included or reviewed in the town audit. The last concluded audit for the town was FY24.

Tanya Doll questions if there is a penalty for not closing out books. Town Manager states penalties are severe, and the state can hold back state aid funds.

Chris Menard thanked the Town Manager for implementing and utilizing a format for budget presentations.

b. Fire Department Budget

The Fire Department budget presentation was provided by Fire Chief Patrick Sullivan.

In the past year, there was a 19% increase in mutual aid response as well as a 37% increase in EMS mutual aid.

The total budget request (including the possible 4th shift): \$2,097,555.42.

There are current and ongoing contract negotiations with the firefighters' union. Rates are expected to increase due to educational incentives and certifications.

The budget lines for radio maintenance, portable radios, and vehicle maintenance have increased due to inflation.

Grants & Donations:

- \$7,400 grant from the state to provide fire safety for kids and seniors.
- \$15,000 to \$19,000 Firefighter safety grant to purchase equipment.
- \$5,000 donation from the firefighter's association to purchase equipment.
- \$165,000 money received from Nashoba Valley Mitigation.

The Emergency Manager Preparedness grant is typically received but this hasn't come to fruition. Chief Sullivan applied for the assistance to firefighters grant to replace Engine 2 but hasn't heard any update.

Ana Lockwood inquires about the man hour increase for coverage at the station. Chief Sullivan states 16 hours will be added per diem. Instead of a 7-day cycle, career staff would work an 8-day cycle. Currently, there are 96 hours of per diem being utilized per week.

Chris Menard mentioned recent findings from a Boston fire were the result of hoses being inadequate. Chief Sullivan hasn't purchased any hose replacement but is looking into it.

c. Police Department Budget

The Police Department budget presentation was provided by Chief Jeffrey Tibido.

The total budget request is \$2,581,557.92. This is a 1.2% increase over FY25.

Personal: \$2,331,947

Salaries: \$1,672,862

Incentives: \$265,787

Overtime: \$294,389

Training: \$98,909

Purchase of Service: \$23,450

Supplies: \$35,015

Other: \$37,238

Animal Control: \$46,125

Lockup: \$20,600

Front Desk Radio Watch: \$104,764

Nashoba Valley Regional Dispatch: \$216,098

Vehicle Maintenance: \$67,000

Regarding the animal control budget, Chief Jeffrey Tibido states they are starting to explore regionalization animal control as well as shared services.

The town was awarded the jail diversion mental health grant totaling \$109,000. This has been used for a co-response clinician.

There has been discussion about promoting 1 of the school resource officer to a detective position. This would then leave 1 resource officer to rotate between all of the schools.

Chief Jeffrey Tibido states upon comfort k9 Hank's retirement, there are plans to implement another comfort dog program.

Chris Menard inquired into the dispatch budget line and the option of having an in-house dispatch center. Chief Jeffrey Tibido states the cost would be substantial to hiring multiple dispatchers as well as running the center.

Ana Lockwood asked for the total number of cruisers in the fleet. Chief Jeffrey Tibido confirms there are 15 vehicles in the fleet.

d. Facilities Department Budget

The Facilities Department budget presentation was provided by Facilities Director, Chris Ruth.

Public Building Utilities Budget: \$ 287,500 (29.88% Increase)

Facility Maintenance Budget: \$770,474.56 (8% Increase)

Parks Budget: \$145,433.60 (8.18% Increase)

The TCP Revolving Fund currently has \$33,500.

Chris Ruth states that despite decommissioning 50% of TC Passios there is only a 20% decrease in the heating costs.

Tanya Dall inquires if the department is still hiring for the Park Director position. Chris Ruth confirms there are ongoing interviews. Tanay Dall suggests hiring someone with grant writing experience.

Chris Menard inquired into the status of decommissioning and the prior capital project to replace the roof of TC Passios. Chris Ruth has started the decommission and has spoken to all stakeholders to relocate. The capital project to repair the roof will not be going forward. Town Manager intends to fund the operations of the building through FY27 with hopes that the funds will not need to be expended.

Chris Menard requested a quarterly report regarding prior capital requests and their status.

7. Old Business

a. Potential FY27 Prop 2 ½ Override

b. TriBoard discussions (Prior and Upcoming)

8. Minutes

There were no minutes to approve.

9. Committee Reports

There were no Committee reports.

10. Actions and Topics for Future Meetings

There were no actions or topics to add to future agendas.

11. Important Dates & Upcoming Meetings

a. Finance Committee – February 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26

Public Works presentation moved to March 12

12. Public Comment

Ana Lockwood is maintaining a list of all questions for department heads regarding their budget. Questions should be sent to Ana Lockwood and added to the Sharepoint file.

13. Adjourn

There was a motion to adjourn by Tom Gray, seconded by Jay Simeone. Roll call vote.
All in favor.

The meeting closed at 10:23 PM.