



Town of Nantucket Finance Committee

February 15th, 2024 – Minutes

131 PLEASANT STREET, TRAILER ROOM A AND REMOTE PARTICIPATION VIA ZOOM

Staff:	Brian Turbitt, Finance Director; David Gray, Sewer Director; Mariya Basheva, Assistant Town Accountant; Libby Gibson, Town Manager
Attending Members:	Denice Kronau, Chair, Peter Schaeffer, Joseph Wright, Stephen Maury, Christopher Glowacki, Joanna Roche, Jeremy Bloomer, Rob Giacchetti, Jill Vieth
Absent Members:	

Finance Committee Meeting Introduction and Public Comments

- Denice Kronau calls the meeting to order and requests approval of the agenda. Motion to approve by Peter, Seconded by Stephen. **Roll call vote: Joe - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Chris - Aye, Rob - Aye, Stephen - Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**
- Public comments are opened and closed without any raised hands.
- David Gray is invited to present on his department's achievements and activities.

David Gray's Presentation on Sewer Department Achievements

- David Gray discusses the Surfside Road area project, highlighting the completion of major infrastructure components and upcoming tasks.
- The hiring of a storm water manager and the completion of year 1c of the MOP program are mentioned.
- Installation of a dewatering centrifuge and PFAs/PFOA testing at the Surfside treatment facility are discussed.
- David Gray explains the significance of the testing data for future planning and potential treatment methods.

Discussion on PFAs/PFOA Testing and Future Treatment Methods

- David Gray elaborates on the sources of PFAs/PFOA in waste streams, including landfill leachate and carpet cleaners.
- Stephen Maury and David Gray discuss the chemical components in carpets contributing to PFAs.

- Jeremy Bloomer inquires about the cost and feasibility of PFAs treatment technologies.
- David Gray mentions the high cost of pilot programs and the need for further data to identify specific contamination sources.

Exploring Off-Island Solutions and Local Technologies

- Joanna Roche suggests exploring off-island trucking companies for waste disposal.
- David Gray discusses the challenges and potential solutions for waste management on Nantucket.
- Stephen Maury mentions proposals for PFAs destruction technologies that are not currently operational in the U.S.
- David Gray highlights the complications of air emissions from PFAs treatment and the need for informed decision-making.

Operational and Capital Expenses Overview

- David Gray provides an overview of operational expenses, including electricity, vehicle maintenance, and sludge disposal costs.
- Capital expenses are discussed, including potential projects for alternative sewer water infrastructure and CMOM program repairs.
- The Somerset needs area extension and Sconset area sewer redesign and reconstruction are highlighted.
- David Gray mentions the need for new equipment and the challenges of maintaining aging infrastructure.

Training and Staffing Challenges

- David Gray emphasizes the importance of training for his team, including specialized training in confined space entry, chemical safety, and equipment operation.
- Jeremy Bloomer inquires about salary and wage increases, which are attributed to overtime and staffing changes.
- Brian Turbitt explains the impact of the new contract on salary increases and the challenges of retaining staff.
- David Gray discusses the reduction in repair and maintenance costs due to the return to pre-COVID pricing.

Article 2 Appropriation of Unpaid Bills and Article 4 Revolving Accounts

- Brian Turbitt presents the list of unpaid bills, explaining the reasons for each, including transition issues and training disputes.
- Motion to adopt Article 2 (Appropriation Unpaid Bills), Made by Chris, Seconded by Peter. **Roll call vote: Joanna - Aye, Joe - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Chris - Aye, Rob - Aye, Stephen - Aye, Peter – Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**
- The appropriation of \$6 million for the airport fuel revolving fund is discussed, with a note on the potential for future increases.
- Motion to adopt Article 4 (Revolving Accounts Spending Limits for Fiscal Year 2025). Made by Peter, Seconded by Jeremy **Roll call vote: Joanna - Aye, Joe - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Chris - Aye, Rob - Aye, Stephen - Aye, Peter – Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**

Article 24 Appropriation Waterways Improvement Fund and Article 25 Ambulance Reserve Fund

- The appropriation of \$367,000 from the Waterways Improvement Fund for harbor maintenance and improvements is approved. Motion to adopt Article 24 (Appropriation Waterways Improvement Fund) made by Peter, Seconded by Stephen. **Roll call vote: Peter – Aye, Stephen - Aye, Rob - Aye, Chris - Aye, Joanna - Aye, Joe - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**
- The appropriation of \$900,690 from the Ambulance Reserve Fund for firefighter and ambulance supplies is also approved. Motion to adopt Article 25 (Appropriation Ambulance Reserve Fund), made by Peter, Seconded by Jeremy **Roll call vote: Peter – Aye, Stephen - Aye, Rob - Aye, Chris - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Joe – Aye, Joanna - Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**

Article 26 Ferry Embarkation Fee and Article 32 Appropriation for Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for Airport Employee Accrued Liabilities

- The appropriation of \$200,000 from the ferry embarkation fee fund for public safety and emergency services is approved.
- Motion to adopt Article 26 (Ferry Embarkation Fee) made by Jeremy, Seconded by Peter. **Roll call vote: Peter – Aye, Stephen - Aye, Rob - Aye, Chris - Aye, Jeremy - Aye, Joe – Aye, Joanna - Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**
- The appropriation for the special purposes stabilization fund for airport employee accrued liabilities is tabled due to the airport's decision not to contribute this year.

- Motion to take no action on Article 32 (Appropriation for Special Purposes Stabilization Fund for Airport Employee Accrued Liabilities) made by Peter, Seconded by Rob. **Roll call vote: Jeremy – Aye, Joe – Aye, Joanna – Aye, Chris – Aye, Rob – Aye, Peter – Aye, Stephen – Aye, Denice – Aye. Unanimous.**

Article 36 Appropriation: African Meeting House Investigation

- The appropriation for the African Meeting House investigation is not pursued by the sponsor. Motion not to adopt Article 36 (Appropriation African Meeting House Investigation). Made by Chris, Seconded by Jeremy. **Roll call vote: Jeremy – Aye, Joe – Aye, Joanna – Aye, Chris – Aye, Rob – Aye, Peter – Aye, Stephen – Aye, Denice – Aye. Unanimous.**

Article 72 Repeal Chapter 141: Stretch Energy Code - Discussion on Stretch Code and HERS Ratings

- John Fones and Eddie Ward present their concerns about the stretch code and HERS ratings, highlighting the cost and efficiency issues.
- Nat Lowell adds his perspective, emphasizing the need for a hybrid approach to building codes.
- Lisa Sullivan, the Green Communities Program Coordinator, explains the benefits of the stretch code and the financial implications of leaving the program.
- Andy Buccino and Vince Murphy provide additional context on the carbon accounting and climate change implications of the stretch code.

Article 72 Repeal Chapter 141: Stretch Energy Code - Discussion on Building Code and Energy Efficiency

- Jeremy Bloomer highlights the challenge of addressing global issues with single-issue concerns, particularly regarding the warrant article on building code changes.
- Jill Vieth inquires about the percentage of Massachusetts electricity generated through carbon sources, with Vince Murphy providing an estimate of 50-55%.
- Stephen Maury and Andy Buccino discuss the carbon accountancy of stretch-compliant and base code-compliant houses, with Andy suggesting Andy as a HERS writer for detailed information.
- Andy Buccino provides a breakdown of New England's energy mix, emphasizing the role of natural gas and the potential of heat pumps in cold climates.

Article 72 Repeal Chapter 141: Stretch Energy Code - Impact of Building Code on the Community

- Joanna Roche raises concerns about the impact of the building code on the building community, questioning the reasons for stepping away from the agreement.
- Rob Giacchetti asks about the impact of different appliances on HERS ratings, with Andy Buccino explaining the differences in energy and carbon intensity.
- Eddie Ward discusses the broader implications of climate change and energy consumption, suggesting a tabling of the discussion for further studies.
- Denice Kronau emphasizes the need to reconcile the code's impact on the island with the broader context of 291 communities adhering to the code.

Article 72 Repeal Chapter 141: Stretch Energy Code - Challenges and Solutions in Energy Efficiency

- Vince Murphy highlights the importance of public hearings and the potential limitations on building efficiency if the code is abandoned.
- Jill Vieth and Nat Lowell discuss the practical challenges of transitioning to all-electric appliances, particularly for restaurants and the reliability of electric systems.
- Lisa Sullivan explains the process of code development and the importance of continuous improvement in energy efficiency.
- Christopher Glowacki and Vince Murphy debate the potential impact of the code on electricity consumption and the need for a third cable.

Article 72 Repeal Chapter 141: Stretch Energy Code - Hybrid Approach and Future Considerations

- Stephen Maury suggests considering a hybrid approach to the building code, allowing for a mix of electric and gas appliances.
- Nat Lowell emphasizes the importance of continuous improvement and the practical challenges of transitioning to all-electric systems.
- Andy Buccino argues for the benefits of energy efficiency and the potential for the town to lead in sustainable building practices.
- Denice Kronau proposes postponing a decision to allow for further reflection and additional information, particularly on the cost and operational impact of the code.

Next Steps and Action Items

- Stephen Maury requests specific information on the cost and carbon impact of the building code, with Andy Buccino agreeing to provide detailed studies.
- Denice Kronau assigns Stephen to work with John and Andy to ensure the accuracy of the cost and carbon impact studies.
- Vince Murphy expresses gratitude for Andy's willingness to assist and emphasizes the importance of understanding the parameters of the study.
- The committee agrees to postpone a decision on the building code article to allow for further discussion and reflection.
- Motion to adjourn the meeting, made by Peter, Seconded Chris. **Roll call vote:, Joe – Aye, Jill - Aye, Jeremy – Aye, Chris - Aye, Rob - Aye, Peter – Aye, Stephen - Aye, Denice - Aye. Unanimous.**