

## Board of Selectmen-Finance Committee Joint Meeting

Town Hall Community Center, 3 East Main Rd. Peru, MA

Wednesday, May 10, 2023 @ 6:00 P.M.

1. **Call to order:** Chairman Leach called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Roll Call Select Board:** Selectboard Chairman Leach present, Selectman Cullett present,
3. **Roll Call Finance Committee:** Finance Committee Chairman, Paul Hickling present, Finance Committee Member Darryl Darby present, Finance Committee Member Doug Haskins present, Finance Committee member Jesse Pelkey arrived at 6:40 p.m.

Public Attendance: Bonny DiTomasso

4. **State recording status:** Selectman Leach recording under Exemption E for personal reasons.
5. **Pledge Allegiance to the Flag:** Led by Selectman Leach
6. **Review and Approve Finance Committee Minutes/Board of Selectman from 05/03/2023**  
Finance Committee Chairman Hickling motion to approve pending changes 05/03/2023 Fin Com/BOS minutes Fin Com member Haskins second, all in favor 3-0  
Selectman Leach motion to approve 05/03/2023 pending changes Fin Com/BOS minutes  
Selectman Cullett second, all in favor 2-0
7. **Discussion of Annual Town Meeting Warrant:**  
It was noted that if **Article #3** and **Article #4** pass the tax rate will go up. Selectman Cullett felt that these articles need a motion on the floor for a secret ballot. Fin Com member Darby felt that voters feel more comfortable with a secret ballot.  
ATM Warrant **Article 34** Parking brake was repaired on fire truck, maxi cans were installed on the front brake and now the parking brake holds at 1,000 RPM Fin Com member Haskins felt that the tire chains damaged the tires. ATM Warrant **Article 34** will be reduced from \$40,000 which was to replace axel on fire truck to \$5,000 for tires.

Selectman Cullett mentioned that Susan Koziara was interviewed as an Assessor. Ms. Koziara is very interested, but she feels that the stipend needs to be negotiated. She will not accept the position for \$3,500.00 per year. Ms. Koziara explained other towns have one assessor that has the primary role and the other two Assessors work less hour. Ms. Koziara proposed working 12 hours per week @ \$30.00 per hour totaling \$18,720 per year. It was suggested that Ms. Koziara would be asked to work 18 hours per week and discontinue with Patriots Properties. Fin Com member Haskins mentioned that the town would have to opt out of the contract with Patriots. The boards were concerned that breaking the contract may be costly to the town. TA Walker mentioned that the \$18,720 salary Ms. Koziara is requesting would be minus the \$3,500. stipend. Selectman Cullett mentioned that the Selectboard needs to negotiate with Ms. Koziara and ask her if she is willing to do 100% of the assessing in house. Fin Com member mentioned that Assessor Amy Davidson's last day is May 22, 2023. Fin Com Chairman Hickling motion to support getting out of contract with Patriots and ask Ms. Koziara if she wants to complete all the assessing

in house, Fin Com member Darby second, 3 yes 1 no Fin Com member Pelkey voted no because he did not have all the figures.

TA Walker will contact Susan Koziara regarding doing all assessing in house and to request her presence at the next Board of Selectmen meeting.

TA Walker was asked by the Selectboard to forward citizen's petitions to KP Law tonight to get a ruling.

ATM Warrant **Article 27:** The Board of Selectmen will be talking to inspectors about 90-10 or 80-20 to retain fees, with the intention of Permit Eyes being self-sustained.

Fin Com member Haskins motion to accept changes on Annual Town Meeting Articles, Fin com Chairman Hickling second, 3-1

Selectman Leach motion to accept changes on Annual Town meeting Articles, Selectman Cullett second, 2-0

Fire Chief Pelkey mentioned that the quote to fix the garage door openers is \$9,900 and new garage door openers from Overhead Doors would cost \$15,000. Devine from Hadley, MA would replace door openers for \$8,800. Fire Chief Pelkey suggested using ARPA funds for the new garage door openers. Selectman Cullett mentioned that he does not see an issue and recommended slide locks to keep the doors closed. Chief Pelkey mentioned that the company does not recommend slide locks and could cause problems during an emergency call.

Selectman Cullett mentioned that everyone is trying to avoid increasing the tax rate.

Fire Chief Pelkey asked where the funding will come from for the Fire Engine repairs. Selectman Cullett suggested using ARPA funds to pay for the fire engine repairs and wants the fire engine back in service, Selectman Leach agreed.

8. **Discussion of FY24 Budget:** TA Walker questioned if the Insurance Appropriation would be decreased since she does not need town insurance. Selectman Leach mentioned that the Town Administrator position is benefited; therefore, the appropriation will not be decreased. Fin Com Member Darby mentioned that the Health Department budget was increased to \$15,500.

**9. Public Input:** Bonny DiTomasso mentioned that if 5 out of 7 towns vote in favor of the school budget it passes. If the school budget is not passed by June 30, 2023, last year's appropriations will be used until a Special Town meeting is held.

**10. Adjourn:** Selectman Leach motion to adjourn joint meeting at 7:38 p.m. Selectman Cullett second, unanimous vote to adjourn. 2-0. Fin Com Chairman Hickling motion to adjourn joint meeting at 7:38 p.m. Fin Com member Haskins second, unanimous vote to adjourn 4-0

Items used:

Finance Committee Draft minutes from 05/03/2023, joint meeting

Atm warrant

FY Budget worksheet

Estimates Garage Door openers

Respectively submitted,

*Terry L. Walker*

*Town Administrator*

Verne Leach, Chairman Board of Selectman \_\_\_\_\_

Bruce Cullett, Selectman \_\_\_\_\_

Douglas Haskins, Fin Com Member *Douglas Haskins*

Samuel Haupt, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_

Paul Hickling, Fin Com Chairman *PH*

Jesse Pelkey, Fin Com Member \_\_\_\_\_

Darryl Darby, Fin Com Member *Darryl Darby*

RECEIVED  
JUN 7 2023  
*Kim Leach*  
TOWN CLERK  
TOWN OF PERU