

**MINUTES**  
**Warrant Committee Meeting**  
**January 17, 2023**

<b>Warrant Committee Members</b>	Participating remotely: Jeremy Marsette, Sharon Tatro Participating in person: Stephen Callahan Chair, Peter Michelson, Brent Nelson, Jillian Rafter, Robert Sloney, Ed Vozzella Absent: Mather Eldred	
<b>Guests</b>	<b>In Person:</b> Kristine Trierweiler, Town Administrator Frank Gervasio, Assistant Town Administrator	
<b>Meeting Location</b>	By remote participation via Zoom and Chenery Hall, Medfield Town House	
<b>Meeting Times</b>	Meeting convened: 7:00 pm	Meeting adjourned: 7:54pm
<b>Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Approved minutes of 10/24/22 4 in favor and 3 abstain</li> <li>● Approved minutes of 1/9/23; 7 in favor and 1 abstain</li> </ul>	
<b>Operational Budgets (including votes taken)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	
<b>Warrant Articles (including votes taken)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	
<b>List of all documents and exhibits used</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● FY 2024 Budget Calendar</li> <li>● WC assignments by Budget Category</li> <li>● FY 24 Warrant Committee Planning Schedule</li> </ul>	
<b>Other Business</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	
<b>Follow-ups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None</li> </ul>	
<b>Dates for Meetings including WC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● None currently</li> </ul>	
<b>Discussion with Financial Team</b>	<p>Steve previewed the agenda for the meeting and then asked to review and approve minutes. All minutes were approved unanimously by those who attended those and other abstaining.</p> <p>Minutes will be assigned in an alphabetical order, Sharon Tatro will do the minutes for Jan 17<sup>th</sup> and so on.</p> <p>The planning calendar was reviewed. A placeholder meeting has been added for March 6<sup>th</sup>. Steve would like to have people submit date requests for your department to come to speak about their budgets. The schedule will prioritize budgets and financial related articles first so hopefully those are all voted on prior to the printing of the warrant.</p>	

Bob would like to move Public Safety to the 14<sup>th</sup>. Jeremy will do DPW on the 28<sup>th</sup> instead.

The Annual Reports are being worked on and Kristine mentioned that the plan is to have them ready for the town meeting.

Kristine read a question from the public who wanted to know when the Warrant Committee website would be updated. She apologized it wasn't done yet and committed that it would be done soon.

Kristine went through a FY 2024 Budget Outlook presentation. She had presented this at the last Selectboard meeting and wanted to recap it for the Warrant Committee. It started with a recap of the limited sources of income the town has with a reliance on residential property taxes and limited growth of state aid and limited sources of new revenue. This is further hampered by increasing fixed costs that the town doesn't have a lot of control over like insurance and utilities. However on the bright side the town has a strong free cash balance and ARPA available.

The budget as a starting point is being done with conservative assumptions such as a 2.5% property tax levy increase, 2.5% state aid increase, a limited increase in local receipts and available new revenue of \$1.1M. Kristine reviewed the history of state aid to give rationale for the assumptions made in the budget.

On the expense side, the largest drivers of increased expenses are fixed costs that increase like health and liability insurance and OPEB.

Kristine also reviewed a FY 24 Town Department Outlook and highlighted that a Human Services Division has been created as an umbrella over the COA, Outreach, Veteran's Services and the Public Health Nurse to create more synergies and greater cooperation. It is being led by Kathy MacDonald. The budget includes two new positions. They are a Facilities/Energy Project Manager to provide an additional resource in the Facilities department as well as increasing the open position of a Conservation Agent to full time as they have not been able to fill it part time. The other budget driver will be the police negotiations that are still ongoing.

Kristine spoke about the Capital Budget and stated that it is anticipated all FY 24 requests will be able to be fully funded this year without issue and anticipate that will be the case in FY 25 as well. A lifecycle analysis is being created on all capital items. A capital item is a minimum of \$5,000.

The next steps for the FY24 Budget is the School Committee Budget hearing on the 26<sup>th</sup>, upcoming warrant committee meetings with department heads, anticipating the release of Governor Healey's Budget Proposal in March and then the warrant hearing on 3/20.

Kristine answered questions on the options for controlling health insurance costs. The town is part of a consortium that negotiates as a group and then the rates vary based on town experience. There have been discussion about making the high deductible option the towns primary plan but that is still ongoing.

The land fill was discussed about the progress to be able to lease for solar use. Kristine explained that she is working with DEP about the issues that the land fill wasn't capped and will keep us abreast as the process moves forward.

Steve requested that when the Warrant Committee gets the draft budget that include information on where the town stands in compliance with the financial policies. Kristine affirmed they can do that but to realize that the first draft is not a balanced budget so it won't potentially meet it in that draft. She announced that they just finished the process of affirming post the last town meeting that the town did indeed meet the financial policy for last fiscal year. Kristine's team will be providing us a memo on the status of free cash and it will include the mention that this last town meeting was the first time no free cash was used and will also include what the turnbacks were into free cash but she didn't have the turnback number on hand. A discussion for the new members happened to explain what turnbacks are and people were encouraged to make that be part of the discussion people have with their department heads. Kristine mentioned that we never penalize a department for a turnback as we don't want people to think they are use it or lose it. Steve commented that we do want to make sure that there isn't a consistently high turnback.

Steve mentioned that we should anticipate a discussion this year on how to use the free cash balance that has been increasing. Kristine explained that last year transfers had been made into other funds like Capital Stabilization and OPEB since we didn't need the funds to offset operating. A discussion about why its important that we have a healthy stabilization fund so that when things like COVID happen there are resources to help minimize layoffs and other reductions in services.

There are no warrants available yet as it is open until the 24<sup>th</sup> of January.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55pm.

<b>Attachments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FY 2024 Budget Calendar</li> <li>• WC assignments by Budget Category</li> <li>• FY 24 Warrant Committee Planning Schedule</li> <li>• FY 24 Budget Outlook Presentation by Kristine Trierweiler</li> </ul> <p>Link to Zoom Recording:  <a href="https://medfield-net.zoom.us/rec/share/EOZ0xyO0-PQlgRAoDvDzUWoJDWDIFBrInierh4qAF8xQ8FCCSWaFrghidEayVACH.T9uK62LGZswHyWmy">https://medfield-net.zoom.us/rec/share/EOZ0xyO0-PQlgRAoDvDzUWoJDWDIFBrInierh4qAF8xQ8FCCSWaFrghidEayVACH.T9uK62LGZswHyWmy</a>  Passcode: g=c1BM?c</p>

Respectfully Submitted: Sharon Tatro

Approved minutes to be sent to: [ktrierweiler@medfield.net](mailto:ktrierweiler@medfield.net)

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