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Town of Ludlow, Massachusetts
Finance Committee Meeting

Minutes of June 24, 2026
Meeting began at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Chad Mullin, Mike Kelliher, Aneta Lombardi, Mike McGrath, and Brandon Quiterio.

Also Present: Marc Strange, Town Administrator

First Order of Business: The Pledge of Allegiance

NEW BUSINESS

Welcome New Committee Members:

Mr. Mullin welcomed the new committee members and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Mr. McGrath introduced himself and stated that he has been a Ludlow resident for about 12 years and he thought that volunteering to help out with the Finance Committee would be a good thing to do.

Mr. Mullin stated that he is now the Chairman of the finance committee and has been a Ludlow resident for about 30 years. He spent 12 years on the school committee and wanted to continue serving the town in a capacity like this.

Mr. Kelliher introduced himself, stating he has been a Ludlow resident for 28 years. He was on the school committee for 12 years and has been on the finance committee for the past two years.

Ms. Lombardi introduced herself, stating that she has been a Ludlow resident for about 20 years and has been on the finance committee for about 4 years. She has a background in finance and accounting and wanted to share her knowledge and help the community.

Mr. Quiterio introduced himself and stated that he has been a Ludlow resident his entire life, 33 years. He wanted to get involved with the town and he is a CPA by trade.

Mr. Mullin thanked everyone for introducing themselves and also mentioned that Becky Elias has also joined the committee and that they should have one more person that applied and is waiting to be vetted. Once that is complete, they should have a full complement. The other two members, Susan and Michael are away this week.

Committee to Review Year-End Transfers:

Mr. Mullin explained that they asked department heads to come in and provide an overview for the year-end transfers. These are overages in the department's cost center for a variety of reasons. The Finance Committee approves an account with a different cost center to cover the expense within the other cost center.

They will begin with Michelle Hill, Treasurer/Collector.

Ms. Hill explains that these are prior to her time. One of the items that are over was the collection services, this was under \$25,000 the prior year and now we are playing catch up with that. The other one was legal services, and the biggest reason was because there was an auction and that is an expensive process to go through. The big one was the staffing issue.

Mr. Kelliher asked if they are finished with the outside consultants or where there be more for the upcoming fiscal year?

Ms. Hill stated that they are not finished but it will be a bare minimum moving forward. There are some lingering issues that need to be addressed and then audits that need to be caught up on. The day-to-day stuff will be done by herself; it will no longer be done by the consultants.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer for the Treasurer/Collector's office as printed in our packet, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Lavoie, Deputy Fire Chief on behalf of Chief Pease. There was an excessive amount in one account, and they had an overage in another account. Therefore, they want to move the \$25,000 from Firefighter salaries to ambulance overtime.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the account transfer for the Fire Department in the amount of \$25,000 from fire fighter salaries to ambulance overtime, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Strange explained that it took a while to get free cash certified this year and they have been without a Town Accountant for a few months. The consultants, Clifton, Larson and Allen came in and made a mad dash to get everything closed out for fiscal 2025 and get free cash certified and will stay on to handle the interim town accountant work. Because of this, there is an overage in the accounting service line in the amount of \$50,000 and they are requesting \$50,000 from the FinCom Reserve to cover it.

Mr. McGrath asked where the money is coming from for the transfer?

Mr. Kelliher explained that they keep \$100,000 in FinCom reserves for situations like this.

Mr. McGrath stated that on the sheet they were given it looks like it's coming from accounting and going to finance committee.

Mr. Kelliher stated that it is backwards and needs to be corrected.

Mr. Strange suggested just striking it out on the paper.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer for the Accounting Services of \$50,000 from the finance committee reserve fund, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Brennan, Chief of Police, first they are looking to transfer from capital outlay and general expenses to cover shortages related to the Special Police, career incentive, clothing, longevity, out of grade and 111F. They have had a number of retirements over the last year, and a long-time sergeant on long term injury leave which resulted in a lot of staff working overtime or out of grade.

Moved by Mr. McGrath to approve the transfer of \$16,661.63 from ammunition, vehicle uplift, all other purchases, office supplies, conference and travel to special police, career incentive, clothing, longevity, out of grade and chapter 41, 111F, seconded by Mr. Kelliher. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer of \$3,633.93 to the appointed official line item from a variety of line items within the police department as printed, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chief Brennan explained that the second one is due to police retro for the recently settled contract in May. This affected salaries, clothing allowance, detective bureau stipend and longevity increases. They would like to take money from their state 911 grant to apply to the police retro and that funds are in good shape.

Mr. Kelliher asked if they build anything into the budget when they know negotiations are going on?

Chief Brennan stated that they do but it exceeded their expectations.

Mr. McGrath asked how long the contract is good for?

Chief Brennan stated that it is good for two years and explained that it's hard to predict because you never know how negotiations are going to go.

Mr. Kelliher asked if all of these increases have been factored into the FY27 budget now?

Chief Brennan said the salaries have been factored in. The others have not yet, however it is not a large amount of money.

Moved by Mr. McGrath to approve the transfer of \$94,577.44 from the 911 state incentive grand and move to cover miscellaneous expenses as listed, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Chief Brennan stated that the police dispatch relies on the 911 state funds to cover overtime, training, etc. and that is what he would like to use to cover these.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer of \$135,396.03 from the various accounts listed to the various accounts listed for the police department, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Ms. Lombardi to approve the transfer for \$608.00 from overtime training to EMT tuition and training, seconded by Mr. McGrath. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Mullin explained that the next one was submitted by Melissa Rickson, Hubbard Library and is a transfer from the appointed official's full-time line of \$9222.00 to the building repairs and maintenance account.

Mr. Kelliher read the explanation that the transfer was for both the boiler and fire suppression sprinkler system which needed emergency repairs.

Mr. McGrath asked what the appointed full-time position means?

Mr. Kelliher stated that it is probably a position that wasn't filled.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer of \$9,222.00 from the appointed official full-time line item for the library to the building repair and maintenance line item, seconded by Mr. McGrath. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goodreau explained when the electricity and gas bills were switched from town hall to the DPW to be paid, they realized there was going to be a problem with the street lighting account right away. The DPW projected it would be \$190,000 short and it appears that they are going to hit that figure. The DPW did not put this in the budget, so they didn't know until they started coming to the DPW to be paid. Next year it looks like it's probably going to be about \$140,000 short. Moving forward, the DPW will enter the budget and will have a better handle on it, but the cost of electricity doubled from last year to this year.

Mr. Strange stated that there is an \$85,000 credit from the former Veterans Park school that we will be applying to this account for fiscal 27.

Mr. Goodreau explained that Eversource will just move the credit from the Vets Park account to the Streetlight account.

Mr. Kelliher asked what happened to the \$190,000 that the town was short this year? He asked if the bills were not paid?

Mr. Goodreau explained that there was only \$280,000 in the account to begin with. All of the bills have been paid. Every account is negative right now. It is currently \$120,000 in the hole.

Mr. McGrath asked if Eversource services the town and asked what the town is doing to reduce our exposure to high electrical costs?

Mr. Goodreau explained that the town is charged so much for each head on the light pole. It's constant every month whether the light is working or not. He believes the cobra head is \$60.00 per month and some of the LED's are \$25-30 per month. It's not necessarily a usage. That is the way they do streetlights in every community. There is no other option for us.

Mr. Kelliher asked if Eversource is doing any type of grant program to change over to LEDs.

Mr. Goodreau stated that he hadn't seen anything like that recently.

Moved by Mr. McGrath to approve the transfer of \$190,000 from the school health insurance account to Streetlighting, seconded by Mr. Kelliher. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Strange is requesting \$7,500 from the school health insurance account into town counsel services. The town has a flat fee for the town counsel general services, but they pay by the hour for labor. They just finished negotiations with some of the unions and that's why they are over.

Mr. McGrath asked why they are moving money from the school health insurance line?

Mr. Kelliher explained that they budget \$25,000 per year per staff member and that covers the town's portion of the family plan. The biggest pot of the money is for the schools, but some are single people, or a couple or don't use the insurance at all so there is some variation there. That account is used for other things when needed.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve the transfer of \$7,500 from the school health insurance line to town counsel service line item, seconded by Mr. McGrath. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Mr. Goodreau explained now that the DPW is in charge of the public buildings' accounts, they caught a mishap with the Community Center. This account was underestimated and they are \$50,000 over, therefore we are transferring \$50,000 from the DPW account to the Community Center account. Also, the DPW estimated so much per ton for recycling costs and the cost is slightly more than was estimated and there is also a fuel surcharge now. The DPW also zeroed out the snow and ice budget. There was \$6,000 left that wasn't covered at town meeting. The DPW held onto some money in street maintenance possibly for the West Street bridge because they didn't want the town to have to borrow money. We're transferring money into that account because we had line painting and crack sealing set up so that money will get moved

into there to perform those jobs. They have also saved some money in chapter 90 funding. Five or six streets will be done in the next 2 or 3 weeks also.

Mr. Mullin thanked them for being fiscally responsible.

Mr. McGrath asked what the community center was?

Mr. Goodreau explained that is the Boys and Girls Club.

Mr. McGrath asked what was going on with the bridge?

Mr. Goodreau explained that they are currently in the design phase with a consultant. Springfield hired this consultant. They are looking for a more serious repair because they need to do something that's going to last longer because Putts Bridge is going to be under construction shortly. Putts Bridge is estimated at \$69 million. That is a state project, no town funds for that. Ludlow will probably have to pick up half the cost for the repairs on West Street, along with Springfield, but Springfield has picked up all the engineering costs so far. The last repair cost the town \$200,000 and this one will be more than that.

Mr. McGrath asked if it will be repaired and not replaced?

Mr. Goodreau believes that once they complete Putts Bridge, West Street Bridge will be a complete replacement.

Mr. McGrath confirmed that while Putts Bridge is being repaired, West Street will have to be repaired to be strong enough until Putts Bridge is opened up again.

Mr. Goodreau stated that they may completely replace West Street bridge first and then go on to Putts. The state is trying to figure out what they have for funds over the next five years.

Mr. Kelliher asked if the recycling fee was part of the trash contract?

Mr. Goodreau explained that it was but the average that was coming in when they estimated the budget was \$75, and they put it in for \$80, however it is now \$102 because they used to get paid for it but now the market is so bad that they don't.

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to approve to transfer a total of \$186,243.71 from the laborer salaries, transportation services, sidewalk/curbing maintenance and purchased/contractual services

line items to the snow public works supplies, street/road, street/road repair/maintenance, energy services, and garbage/recycle collection service line items, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Committee to select a representative to the Public Safety Facilities Planning and Oversight Committee:

Moved by Mr. Kelliher to appoint Aneta Lombardi as a representative from the Finance Committee to the Public Safety Facilities Planning Oversight Committee, seconded by Mr. McGrath. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Moved by Ms. Lombardi to approve the meeting minutes from May 6, 2026, seconded by Mr. Kelliher. Vote 5-0. All in favor.

Bi-annual payroll for Finance Committee Secretary signed by Mr. Mullin.

OLD BUSINESS

Year to Date Munis Expenditures:

Mr. Mullin explained that each month the Finance Committee takes a look at the prior month's expenditure. The Munis packet is every department and every account within the department and their expenditures each month and any encumbrances that have been factored in as part of their expenses for the year. On a monthly basis, the finance committee takes a look at this MUNIS report and if there are any questions on the expense that month, Mr. Strange is there to answer some of those questions for us to the best of his knowledge at that time. If there is further follow-up, he will bring it to us the following month.

Mr. Strange suggested that the committee reviews the MUNIS report and asks if they see any budgets over 50% early in the fiscal year to mention it to him.

Mr. Mullin stated the percentage used is important to pay attention to.

Mr. Kelliher is not as concerned when it's one line item in the department but if the entire department's budget is over expended, that is when he is concerned. It's also not as bad when they are transferring within the department, but coming from other departments is more concerning. He asked Mr. Strange where the money is coming from for the town health insurance that is \$214,506.68 in the negative?

Mr. Strange wasn't sure and had to look into it.

Mr. Kelliher is concerned about that.

Mr. McGrath asked if there were any more payrolls for this fiscal year?

Mr. Strange stated that there are only two more days for payroll in FY2026.

Mr. Kelliher explained to the new members that they will not see any transfers for the schools because under Mass General Law, they are allowed to move money from line item to line item within their budget. The reason for this is so they can be more nimble if a new child moves into the district and needs special needs, they can move the money right away and not have to go through the whole transfer process or wait until the end of the year to do it. The business manager, superintendent and school committee keep track of their budget and any transfers that need to be done. They don't come to the finance committee or the Select Board for permission.

Mr. McGrath asked if there is a limit to how much sick time an employee can accumulate? The private sector doesn't do that.

Mr. Strange said it depends on the collective bargaining agreement.

Mr. McGrath asked if there is a way to eliminate that?

Mr. Strange said it all depends on the contracts and sometimes it can be significant.

Mr. Kelliher stated that when he was on the school committee, they would try to guess who was going to retire and how much they had to budget for that.

Ms. Lombardi asked Mr. Strange if he anticipated any other transfers?

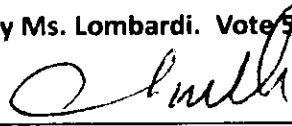
Mr. Strange does not anticipate any but sometimes things pop up. Suggested a clean-up meeting for the second week of July. He is going to look at the town health insurance that was brought up and see where they are after the last payroll.

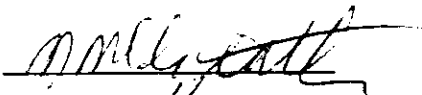
Mr. Kelliher is glad to see that most of the transfers were inter-department, like the DPW where they are really managing their budget.

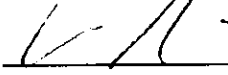
CLOSING COMMENTS

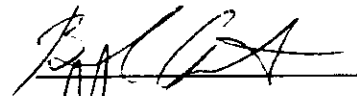
Mr. Mullin welcomed Michael and Brandon. He also thanked Aneta for stepping up and joining the new Public Safety Oversight Committee.

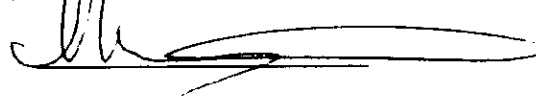
Moved by Mr. Kelliher to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Lombardi. Vote 5-0. All in favor.


Chairman









Ludlow Finance Committee