

Town of Longmeadow
Minutes of the Finance Committee
May 9, 2023 – Longmeadow High School Room A15

Finance Committee Members present: Nora MacKay-Chair, William Welch-Vice Chair, Erica Weida-Clerk, Maury Garrett Jr, John Dineen, Andrew Lam

Visitors: Marty O’Shea – Superintendent Longmeadow Schools, Sean Van Deusen-DPW Director, Mike Barbieri-Select Board Administrative Assistant, Jenni Ford Arnold – Resident, Dan Murphy-Resident

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Visitor comments:

Marty O’Shea: The proposed plan for rebuilding the playgrounds for the 3 elementary schools meets with the schools’ goals to be inclusive. They have received complaints about the current playgrounds. Trying to work with the current playgrounds would be putting good operational money into bad solutions.

Jenni Ford Arnold: (She was representing a larger group of parents who were at the meeting) Current solution of putting mats on the playground do not meet APA code because gaps need to be less than ¼ inch. Current structures have outlived their lifespans and structures are out of compliance. Playgrounds need to have equal access. Her daughter Jordan, who is in a wheelchair, has gotten hurt on the playscapes a couple of times. Playgrounds are a future liability issue.

Sean Van Deusen: DPW will add new playgrounds to capital planning process.

Dan Murphy: Also spoke briefly in support of the new playgrounds.

Approval of Minutes:

The committee voted on the following meeting minutes:

A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes of the 4/26/2023 meeting as presented. (Approved 5-0) Andrew Lam abstained.

Town Meeting Warrant Article Discussion:

The Finance Committee met to further discuss warrant articles number eight for the Town Meeting that evening.

A motion was made and seconded to reconsider Article 8. (Approved 6-0)

Discussion:

The committee restated what had led to the original no vote: The funding was not articulated. Needed more input from the DPW and Town Manager. Only one option was presented.

A majority of the committee agreed that these concerns have been addressed. While still concerned with the cost, the Finance Committee better understood the thought process behind the proposal.

A motion was made and seconded to recommend approving Article 8. (Approved 5-1)

Motion to adjourn at 6:55 pm (Approved 6-0)