

Finance Commission Minutes

Thursday April 16, 2026 6 pm

Town Hall/ Gathering Room

Meeting called to order at 6:03 pm by Chair Matt Gorzkowicz

ROLL CALL:

Present: Matt Gorzkowicz, Karin Chavis, Shannon Poulos(6:40pm), Christian Buonopane, Michael Gillespie, Kim Dimes, Paul Reardon

Absent: Bill Gault, Joe Hanlon, Max Tassinari

Present on GoTo access: Sarah Johnson/Finance Director, Robbie Powers/Ass't. CFO

Motion by chair to accept minutes of April 9, 2026 with correction of changing Paul Reardon from absent to present; Motion by Kim Dimes, second by Christian Buonopane.

Yes vote/ Gorzkowicz, Chavis, Buonopane, Gillespie, Dimes, Reardon.

No vote/none, Abstain/none. **Motion passed.**

Chair introduced Chief Calandra, Winthrop Fire department who started by presenting a short review of FY 26 Fire Budget. Because of 4 retirements, 2 unexpected, and 1 transfer to Mass Port Fire the department has been short- handed because of these. By contractual agreement there are 7 minimum Fire Fighters on each group from April to December and 8 Fire Fighters Jan., Feb, and March, these open spots required OT cost increases, \$41,000 (Jan), \$42,000 (Feb), and \$35,000 (March). In February 3 new Fire Fighters started at the FF Academy in November, graduated in February and started immediately. There are 4 recruits going June 8th to FF academy, graduate August 21 this will fully staff the department. The cost for each recruit to attend the academy is \$26,000. This is for salary and full equipment gear.

Budget for FY 27 is satisfactory to the Chief. There is a new Engine being delivered next month that is a lease to own. This cost is \$880,000. This will be paid for completely, March 2029. The Chief also has a ladder truck in que for the town at a cost of \$1,700,000. The time frame is 5 years for actual ladder ready to be delivered. To purchase this apparatus, a funding source is necessary by November 2026. Current ladder is 21 years old. To eligible for grant money, ladder must be 25 years old, so grant is possible.

New maintenance policy for vehicles has the vehicles going out every 6 months for routine maintenance has started hoping to decrease problems with vehicles.

Chief has plans for having the Ambulance service taken over by the Fire Department. This cannot happen until new Fire House is open where the space for vehicle is in the plans. In anticipation 4 Fire Fighters have completed and are licensed Para Medics with 2 more in school at present. The seed money to purchase and equip ambulance needs to be identified. Currently our contract service answers 10 medical aids per day with average cost per run of \$3,000. The town would not realize all of this as revenue because of associated costs, but it would be some new revenue source. These would be Fire Fighters, so if the town had a major fire, there would be extra FF available, their truck would be out of service and an outside ambulance would be activated.

The Chief more than once expressed the excitement of the FF staff in anticipation of new Fire House, On Tuesday April 21, 2026, the 3 February recruits will be sworn in, 2 FF will be promoted to Lt. and 1 LT. to Captain. Exciting for the department, the FF and their Families. The Chief left the meeting.

The Commission continued with discussion. The value of "AI" was discussed with both Matt and Shannon expressing their use and the advantages. It was stated the both the Town Manager and Ass't. Town Manager is involved in a Test Pilot on this. The legalities of this computer service would need to be vetted.

Other things of note, a possible 3 year outlook on increasing mandatory costs, such as Health Insurance. Sarah said she has something like that now, will tweak and send to Matt.

Mentioned the departments all ordering their individual supplies whether from WB Mason or Amazon. Robbie stated they order only from what is on the State list, so all prices are the same for each department.

Shannon brought up who is responsible for the upkeep of Playing Fields, Parks and Playgrounds. Since this is un clear, the DPW will be asked as well as the Town Manager for clarification

Matt will be sending an email to the Town Manager with various questions for the commission.

Meeting adjourned at 7:44 pm.

Next meeting Thursday April 23, 2026 Harvey Hearing Room

Minutes by:

Karin Chavis