



BOARD OF FINANCE MEETING

RICHARD H. SMITH TOWN HALL

Regular Meeting

Date: February 24, 2026

Time: 7:00 PM

1. Call to Order

Chair **Tim Puglielli** called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Attendance:

Tim Puglielli, Barry Luff, Carmella Balducci, Michael Weglarz, Cynthia Torres (Selectman), Duane Gates (Selectman), Carol Jones (Selectman), Paula Fernald (Finance Director)

2. Approval of Minutes – January 27, 2026

Motion to approve: Barry Luff

Second: Carmella Balducci

Motion Passed 4-0

3. Approval of Minutes – February 10 & 17, 2026 Budget Workshops

Motion to approve both: Carmella Balducci

Second: Barry Luff

Motion Passed 4-0

4. Audience of Citizens

None.

5. Treasurer's Report

Tim Puglielli reviewed the February balances.

Rate Updates

- No changes in Liberty or Ascend rates since the last meeting.

Reviewed:

- Capital rates
- ARPA funds
- Wire transfers totaling \$3.2 million since last meeting
- Educational grants short-Term Investment Interest Earnings

- Bond payments
- Capital improvements
- Energy update

6. Recommendations of Selectmen

First Selectman Carol Jones reported discussions with the Town Crew regarding sidewalk clearing equipment options:

- Bobcat purchase
- RFP for outside contractor

Further details will be reported at the next meeting.

7. Update on Anticipated 2026 Financing

Firehouse Status

- Brush truck delivery delayed until April
- Fire truck delivery delayed until August
- Interviews underway for RFPs

8. Fire Department & Fire Marshal FY 2026–2027 Budget Review

Fire Department Budget

- Physicals: \$7,000 (no change)
- Training: No change
- Operating expenses: Increase of \$3,000
- Building supplies: No change
- Fire equipment & supplies: Increase of \$1,000
- Vehicle maintenance: Increase of \$5,000
- Communications: No change
- Personal losses: \$400 (no change)

Administrative Support Proposal

- Part-time administrative assistance (15–20 hours/week)
- \$25/hour
- Estimated annual cost: \$19,500
- Duties: Scene documentation forms and meeting minutes

Operating Expense Details Include:

- Hydrotesting
- SCBA filling station quarterly testing
- Ethanol-free fuel
- Adam's Supermarket
- Door repairs
- Verizon wireless (iPad)
- Equipment repairs
- All Waste
- Electrical work (generator testing)
- Plowing
- Hose and ladder testing
- Electronic management system

Capital Planning

- Structural firefighting gear: 5 sets annually (20–25 interior firefighters)
- Corrosion repair planning (ladder truck)
- Winthrop Station improvements:
 - Rear door replacement: \$8,000
 - Roof replacement (2027–2028): \$27,000
 - Generator replacement (2028–2029): \$55,000
 - Positive experience noted with micro grants

Next 5 Years:

- Apparatus replacement planning

Fire Marshal Budget

- Salary increase request: \$8,000
 - 4 hours/week
 - To meet inspection schedule deadlines
- Fuel reimbursement (approx. one tank per month)
- All other line items remain flat

9. WPCA Financial Support Update

- Tamaya began employment through AR Mazzata
- Training started today

10. FY 2024–2025 Year-End Financials

- One additional extension into March for audit start
- Extension anticipated to align with completion timeline

11. FY 2025–2026 Budget Review

Motion to move discussion to March 3 Special Meeting: Michael Weglarz

Second: Barry Luff

Motion Passed 4–0

12. Other Business

- Review of property reappraisal analysis and Bond Requirements
 - Shift from residential to commercial
 - Firehouse bond impact: \$348 per household
 - Sewer bond payoff impact
 - \$959 per household increase starting point (prior to any budget spending increase)

13. Adjournment

Time: 8:09 PM

Motion to adjourn: Barry Luff

Second: Carmella Balducci

Motion Passed 4-0