

**Warrant Committee Meeting  
Education; Protections (Police CIP)  
Monday, February 21, 2022**

**I. Call to Order/Roll Call:** 6:00pm by Chair Libby; 13 voting members present

**Present:** J. Berberian, B. Chaplin, C. Chappell, K. DesVeaux, M. Kelly, S. Libby, L. Lopez, B. Reece (had to leave at approximately 6:45pm), C. Ryan, A. Sasner, E. Sassaman, C. Smith, K. St. Germain; **Absent excused:** C. Cough, J. Young

**II. Approval of prior meeting minutes:**

**A. February 16, 2022**

Chair Libby made a motion to accept the minutes from the February 16, 2022 Warrant Committee meeting. This motion was seconded by Mr. DesVeaux and was approved unanimously (13 Yes, 0 No).

**III. Public Comment Period**

Maya Caines, a Jackson Laboratory employee who serves on the MDIRSS Anti-Racism Task Force noted that the ARTF has provided recommendations to the school board as part of their goal of fostering a safe and equitable school environment. Three topics in particular were highlighted: curriculum and culture, professional development, and implementation of restorative justice practices. On behalf of the ARTF, Ms. Caines expressed hope that these recommendations would be reflected in the 2023 school budget. Vice Chair Berberian requested that these prepared comments be provided to the Warrant Committee; this text is appended to these minutes.

**IV. Education Subcommittee: Findings and Recommendations for Revenue, Expenses, and CIP Expenses**

Chair Libby turned the meeting over Mr. Chaplin, Chair of the Education subcommittee. Before proceeding, Chair Chaplin praised the teachers and staff at the Connors Emerson School, and that they have done a magnificent job during the pandemic. The Education subcommittee met with Heather Webster, Nancy Thurlow, Mike Zboray, and members of the school board to discuss the proposed 2023 budget. This discussion included a review of expenses and recent adjustments, such as to oil costs and salary negotiations.

Chair Chaplin moved and Chair Libby seconded a motion to recommend to the voters of Bar Harbor the Education expenses and CIP expenses for FY23 as presented February 3, 2022 and recently adjusted and table the vote on the revenue amount. Ms. Webster stated that the SUN (students with unique needs) room teacher was sought last year, but they did not receive

qualified candidates. These students are currently working with generalist special education teachers. Ms. Webster noted that it is difficult for these staff members to become specialized for the SUN room needs. Chair Libby suggested that the vote on the revenue be tabled, as that part is not typically controversial and there will be additional data in a few weeks. In that case, the education revenue vote could be held at the March 21, 2022 Warrant Committee meeting, at which time there should be a more final number to consider. Chair Libby moved and Vice Chair Berberian seconded a motion to amend the main motion such that the Warrant Committee recommends to the voters of Bar Harbor the Education expenses and CIP expenses for FY23 as presented February 3, 2022 and postpone definitely the Education revenues until March 21, 2022.

*The motion to amend the main motion passed unanimously (13 Yes, 0 No).*

Mr. Sutherland asked about the amount of the CIP expenses. Ms. Thurlow responded that it would be the original amount less \$57,000 for computers/technology, \$10,000 for safety, and \$100,000 from the building repair CIP line. Chair Libby also clarified that the number the Warrant Committee would vote on for the regular expenses was the original number that the school committee presented to the Town Council that included the SUN room support. Mr. Zboray stated that as he had recently discussed with the Education subcommittee \$100,000 would be subtracted from the original CIP budget in addition to the removal of the \$57,000 and \$10,000 as the school committee sought to balance their needs with the interest of a lower tax burden for Bar Harbor citizens. Chair Libby stated that the amended CIP had not yet been presented to the Town Council. He suggested amending the motion to specify the amounts for both the expenses and CIP expenses. Ms. Thurlow confirmed the specific amounts, including the subtotals of both the CIP general expenses and debt service. Chair Libby moved and Mr. Sassaman seconded a motion to amend the main motion such that the Warrant Committee recommends to the voters of Bar Harbor the amount of \$7,896,586 for Education expenses and the amount of \$279,311 for Education CIP expenses reflecting \$217,890 for general CIP expenses and \$61,421 for debt service.

*The motion to amend the main motion passed unanimously (13 Yes, 0 No).*

Chair Libby repeated the full text of the amended motion: Shall the Warrant Committee recommend to the voters of Bar Harbor the amount of \$7,896,586 for Education expenses and the amount of \$279,311 for Education CIP expenses reflecting \$217,890 for general CIP expenses and \$61,421 for debt service for FY23 as presented February 3, 2022 and postpone definitely the Education revenues until March 21, 2022?

*The motion passed unanimously (13 Yes, 0 No).*

Chairs Libby and Chaplin thanked the school staff and Education subcommittee for their work.

#### **V. Public Works, Recreation, Protections subcommittee: Police Department CIP Expenses**

Chair Libby turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Berberian, Chair of the Public Works, Recreation, and Protections subcommittee. The Police Department CIP Expenses section of the

Protections budget was tabled at the February 16, 2022 meeting to provide the subcommittee time to solicit and review additional information from Chief Willis. Vice Chair Berberian noted that she recently shared additional details about the taser budget line in the CIP that Mr. Sutherland received from Chief Willis with the full Warrant Committee. She asked if there were any comments or questions. Mr. Chaplin asked if the handle color of the taser was different from that on firearms. Chair Berberian confirmed this was the case and Ms. St. Germain added that the grip handles are a very visible yellow. Ms. Kelly noted her appreciation for having this topic raised for further discussion and future planning. Mr. Sassaman said that he had a related but non-budgetary recommendation. Chair Libby suggested that this could be addressed shortly with other general recommendations after the budget portion of the agenda. Chair Berberian moved and Chair Libby seconded a motion to recommend to the voters of Bar Harbor the Police Department CIP expenses for FY23 as presented and amended by the Town Council on February 10, 2022.

*The motion passed unanimously (12 Yes, 0 No).*

## **VI. Additional Warrant Committee Discussion and Recommendations**

Chair Libby said that he was happy that the Warrant Committee could adapt to the Town Charter changes and find a path forward with the budget process. He suggested that the Warrant Committee bylaw committee could meet again at the conclusion of this season and consider what additional modifications could be made to make the process run more efficiently while still aligning with the Charter requirements. He stated that there were three additional weeks in this budget season. Mr. Chaplin asked about the Warrant Committee's responsibilities during the next evening's joint meeting with the Town Council. Chair Libby responded that there were no substantive disagreements between the two bodies, except that our motion supports the SUN room We would meet with Town Council and try to come to an agreement about that difference. If an agreement cannot be reached, both budgets go to the Town Meeting for a vote. He added that if additional changes to the budget are made, then the respective Warrant Committee subcommittee(s) may need to reconvene so that they could present their recommendations to the full Warrant Committee. Mr. DesVeaux expressed his surprise at the lack of community participation apart from school-related issues. Chair Libby responded that although the occasional issue may elicit significant public feedback, there is generally not major turn out from the public during this part of the Warrant Committee season.

At this time, Chair Libby solicited non-binding recommendations from Warrant Committee members that could be put forward to the Town Council at the next evening's joint meeting. Votes on these recommendations are to demonstrate the support of the Warrant Committee.

Ms. Smith made and Mr. DesVeaux seconded a motion to recommend to the Town Council that disclosure requirements for non-profit agencies including revenues, expenses, and impact be revised to bring those in harmony with what is requested of cooperating agencies.

*The motion passed unanimously (12 Yes, 0 No).*

Ms. Ryan suggested that the three items that relate to the Chamber of Commerce in the nonprofit agencies section of the budget could be consolidated into a single budget line item, with the understanding that the Chamber is supporting those specific events. She added that the Town Council did not approve the full original budget for two of the three events. Ms. Lopez agreed with Ms. Ryan. Ms. Smith asked if there was a way to be sure the Chamber would still support those three events if there was a single budget item. Chair Libby said that this was a topic worth exploring, though it may be helpful to first have a conversation with the Finance Director. Ms. Ryan suggested that a motion could be made at the March 21, 2022 meeting after that discussion.

Mr. Sassaman gave his thanks to Vice Chair Berberian and Police Chief Willis. He remarked in particular that Chief Willis had been very responsive to his questions and offered ride along opportunities. Per Mr. Sassaman, Maine Police Departments are required to create annual use of force reports, and he suggested that these reports that are typically for internal purposes be shared with the Town Council and Warrant Committee. People's names and other identifying information would be redacted first. Mr. Sassaman emphasized that he does not feel that the Bar Harbor Police Department is guilty; his motion is to build on current communications and facilitate greater openness. Mr. Sassaman made and Ms. Chappell seconded a motion to recommend to the Town Council that the Bar Harbor Police Department make public their annual use of force reports in a manner that is respectful of the privacy of people named in this report. Mr. Sassaman added that police departments generally can set their own rules and that there are towns that already publish similar reports. Mr. DesVeaux asked if this was within the Warrant Committee's purview. Vice Chair Berberian responded that there is a portion of the budget related to firearms, and use of force reports may help provide relevant information for the level of funding needed for those expenses. Chair Libby agreed that this was not a policy position, but a non-binding recommendation related to the budget. Ms. St. Germain noted that the firearms and tasers are replaced on a schedule that is in line with the need for replacements and upgrades. Chair Libby noted that the Warrant Committee has no authority in such cases other than to recommend items, rather than compel action on them.

*The motion passed (9 Yes, 2 No, 1 Abstain).*

Vice Chair Berberian asked whether Ms. Ryan's request to have some yard waste pick-up should be put forward again. Ms. Ryan replied that there had been a pilot program this year related to this request.

Chair Libby discussed how this year's Warrant Committee budget season had a very accelerated schedule, which is ultimately governed by the Town Charter. He suggested that the Town Council would work with the town's legal counsel to determine if the budget season could be extended by two weeks without violating Town Charter requirements. Chair Libby made and Vice Chair Berberian seconded a motion to seek to extend the budget season by two weeks in consultation with the Town's legal counsel. Ms. Chappell expressed her concern that an additional two weeks may still be problematic. Ms. Lopez noted that an extended timeline was to improve the efficacy of the Warrant Committee, and that the time compression negatively impacted the Warrant Committee's ability to function optimally. Vice Chair Berberian noted

that this timeline was the majority opinion of the recent Charter Commission, and she echoed that this request would need to be reviewed by legal counsel. Ms. Smith asked if the budget process could start earlier, as the dates noted in the Charter deal primarily with deadlines rather than the initiation of the process. She thought that having the budget start annually on July 1 rather than January 1 could provide some flexibility. Ms. Lopez noted that starting earlier could impact the Town Clerk's ability to effectively manage elections, though she would have appreciated updated budget pages. Chair Libby suggested that the main motion could be amended to make a more general request to add time to the budget season. Ms. Chappell made and Ms. Ryan seconded a motion to amend the motion on the floor to recommend that the Town Council work with the town's legal counsel to determine whether the budget timeline could be extended.

*The motion to amend the main motion passed unanimously (12 Yes, 0 No).*

*The amended motion passed (11 Yes, 1 No).*

Ms. Ryan noted her appreciation for the presentations put together by Mr. Sutherland, and that it would be helpful for people to have additional overviews and frameworks for how town money is spent. Chair Libby added that he shared this sentiment. Ms. Ryan added that it wasn't a particular request, but more "big picture" information is always welcome. Vice Chair Berberian noted that the Town Council goals were also included in the budget binders and were similarly helpful.

## **VII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Libby moved to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:47pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Smith  
Secretary, Warrant Committee

## **Appendix**

Full, unedited text of Maya Caines' prepared remarks from the public comment period, as received by the Warrant Committee on February 21, 2022:

Hello everyone,

Over the past year and a half the MDI RSS ARTF has provided recommendations to the school board to make the schools on the island a more equitable, safe and inclusive environment. In June of 2021, the task force presented a plan to the school board which highlighted three topics: Curriculum and culture, professional development, and implementation of restorative practices.

The task force hopes that the 2023 budget reflects our recommendations to the school board. We want to acknowledge the complexity of the MDI school system funding but believe our requests are important not only for the HS but K-8 education as well. Here are reminders of our initiatives and updates on the work we've done, and we hope it will be factored into the budget.

The recommendations are as follows:

- 2 trauma-informed social workers from racial minority groups to be available across the district as needed (1 at Conners Emerson 1 at MDIHS). Having this representation will empower students, especially students of color, to feel more comfortable reporting racism and provides an adult who can empathize and advocate for them. What incentives can we offer these job openings? Can we conduct a nationwide search to cast a wider net. What resources are we using to get a diverse array of applicants?
- Mandatory curriculum audit and provide teacher-led equity audit training. This provides an important outside perspective on our education and ensures our students can benefit from multicultural perspectives and voices.
- Provide mandatory on-going all staff training on privilege, racism and white supremacy in schools. The training should be delivered by an organization that centers racial minority groups with experience working with predominantly white schools.
- Work with local organizations to implement systemic restorative practices in our schools. We suggest hiring a restorative justice liaison, a neutral party to facilitate any reported incidents. Furthermore, this group should work in collaboration with the Bar Harbor Police Department to provide mental health caregivers for those in crisis on the island to minimize use of weapons (like tasers) when a community member is in distress and provide appropriate and productive support to students when facing crisis

We want the ARTF's work to continue and hope that the task force's efforts are supported not only by the schools but the local community.

Thank you time we are happy to answer any questions or provide clarification. We look forward to continuing this important work with the support of our community.