



**Finance Committee  
Regular Meeting  
10/02/23**

I. Call to Order

PRESENT: Archibald, Zosack, Gustison, Luoma, Bender, Tingle

ABSENT: Marden, Ackerman, Bevilacqua

II. Minutes Approval

1. Motion to approve meeting minutes from June 5th, 2023

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Marcia Zosack
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Rob Gustison
<b>AYES:</b>	Archibald, Zosack, Gustison, Luoma, Bender, Tingle
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Marden, Ackerman, Bevilacqua

III. Fall Town Meeting Articles

1. Motion to decrease the amount appropriated in Article 8 of the Annual Town Meeting by \$174,129.

To decrease the amount appropriated in Article 8 of the Annual Town Meeting by \$174,129, per the following adjustments:

- Reduce PRSD Assessment by \$140,129
- Reduce Essex Tech Assessment by \$30,000
- Reduce Health Insurance by \$35,000
- Increase Medicare by \$5,000
- Increase Cemetery Wages by \$2,000
- Increase Cable TV Expenses by \$12,000
- Increase Maintenance of Town Buildings by \$12,000

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Kenneth Tingle, Board Member
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Rob Gustison
<b>AYES:</b>	Archibald, Zosack, Gustison, Luoma, Bender, Tingle
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Marden, Ackerman, Bevilacqua

2. Motion To raise and appropriate \$30,000 for Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, Recycling Collection.

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To cover the increase in tipping fees and a fuel surcharge. Trash bags are about \$140,000 in revenue and trash contract is approximately \$300,000. The Town has already increased the price of trash bags. Tipping fees went up from \$70 to \$90.

The location of this meeting is wheelchair accessible and reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities requiring assistance. If you need a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Town of Merrimac’s ADA Coordinator, Robert Sinibaldi, at least two business days in advance of the meeting: [commissioner@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:commissioner@townofmerrimac.com) or 978-346-0525.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	David Luoma
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Marcia Zosack
<b>AYES:</b>	Archibald, Zosack, Gustison, Luoma, Bender, Tingle
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Marden, Ackerman, Bevilacqua

3. Motion To authorize the Select Board to enter into a contract for a term of Five-Year (5) years with Toshiba for the lease of the copier machines in town for a sum of \$5,568.00 for FY2024.

To authorize the Select Board to enter into a contract for a term of Five-Year (5) years with Toshiba for the lease of the copier machines in town for a sum of \$5,568.00 for FY2024.

Priced out with Toshiba, Konica and Cartridge World. Toshiba was the cheapest by approximately \$10k by going into a 5 year contract from a 3 year on the State Contract.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	David Luoma
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Marcia Zosack
<b>AYES:</b>	Archibald, Zosack, Gustison, Luoma, Bender, Tingle
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Marden, Ackerman, Bevilacqua

#### IV. General Discussion

Information distributed on the Open Meeting Law training being hosted by the Town November 2nd at 6PM.

Recommendations presented by a member on what can be done as a committee to improve. The process is favored towards being able to onboard new members easily. To help with dialog this year during the presentations we would like members gathering their thoughts and questions and allow for an appropriate amount of respectful discussion afterwards. A number of items recommended can be considered to look at our current process. Need to focus on not being too processed that it interferes with the end goal, while we want to make sure we are following the law.

Want members to participate and act more in the overall process, with representatives not just on Capital Planning, as there was previously a member active with the School Committee Budget who went line by line doing a detailed analysis of it. Would like to have any information that will be discussed at the meetings at least 48 hours in advance instead of at the meeting. Would like to potentially assign out a department to each member to meet ahead of time-issue being deliberation, as long as it does not go beyond that. Would like a focus on the changes from year to year with quantitative justification on increases. Hesitant to go out to individual departments prior to the initial meetings, looking for more discussion after the requested budget and prior to budget cuts.

Moderator concerned about the way the number is presented at Town Meeting. The public doesn't understand the numbers. Prior Finance Committee Chairpersons would read off line by line which was then greatly condensed. Recommended to have more description from the Finance Committee. Finance Committee would like to see a balance, as the whole process is done through posted public meetings and residents are able to attend and ask questions any time. Moderator concerned the wording on the articles can be confusing, and would like to see the rationale more detailed. Members stressed again that this is a public process beginning many months prior to Town Meeting, with a public information night as well.

Next meeting will be Monday, October 16th at 6:30 PM. Will discuss engagement with Town Departments and a preliminary schedule for the spring.