



Merrimac Finance Committee Regular Meeting

Meeting Date: 02/04/26

Present: Marcia Zosack, Thomas Ackerman, Michael Marden, Michael Bevilacqua, David Olds, Corey Cane

Absent: David Luoma, Ken Tingle

I. Call to Order

II. Minutes Approval

1. Meeting Minutes- January 27th, 2026

to approve meeting minutes from January 27th, 2026.

RESULT:

MOVER: Michael Marden

SECONDER: Thomas Ackerman

AYES: Marcia Zosack, David Olds, Corey Cane

ABSENT: David Luoma, Ken Tingle, Michael Bevilacqua

III. New Business

The regional dispatch committee has asked for two Finance Committee member representatives, they will be Corey Cane and Michael Bevilacqua. Going to look at having additional departments back to discuss cuts in their budgets- senior center in meal services and library in hours. David and David are the representatives for those departments and will go back to discuss with them. The Essex Regional increase this year was because all the departments who had been short staffed are now fully staffed. The Governance Committee is going to come before the Select Board at the beginning of March. Next meeting February 24th at Pentucket with the School Department.

1. Police, Animal Control, Parking Clerk
Eric Shears, Police Chief

Salary increase of \$27,800 to promote a Sergeant to a Lieutenant's position and promote a patrol officer to the position of Sergeant.

Expense increase of \$1,775 in advertising and legal notices which includes media relations firm and advertising costs. There is a committee set up to look into the regionalization of dispatch. While the belief is that it will save a significant amount, there will be additional costs associated with not having the dispatch staff in the building to cover all the tasks that they currently do. As always, not included in the budget it to hire an additional officer to have three on staff at all times to cover anytime an officer needs to be out of the office for court, training or vacation.

Capital planning request for a new police cruiser and taser replacements, which need to be upgraded as of last year.

2. Fire, Emergency Management
Larry Fisher, Fire Chief

Salary increase of cost of living of 3.5%, is really looking for support not decreasing the COLA as it is getting more difficult to keep staff from going to larger departments with the ability to offer more benefits. The additional \$40,000 is money that was cut from the budget last year that was dependent on a grant that they did not get.

Expenses related to building costs, going to move some funds around from existing articles.

3. Whittier Tech
Maureen Lynch, Superintendent. Kara Kosmes, Business Manager

Building project committee has been formed, there are multiple options from relocating, rebuilding on site or renovating. Still in the eligibility phase before the feasibility study, looking to increase students to possibly 1,500. Can not go into schematic design until the Regional Agreement has been amended, hoping this time next year each Town will be brining a new agreement to Town Meeting for approval. There has been adjustments to what programs are offered based on enrollment and interest. Student enrollment for Merrimac is 39, 3% over overall enrollment. with the new admissions Merrimac will have 10 seats, still 3%. Capital costs are the feasibility study, approximately \$2.5 million, and a Wastewater Treatment Plant study anticipated at \$550,000. School committee will meet in March to vote on the budget.

IV. Adjourn

to adjourn

RESULT:

MOVER: Michael Marden

SECONDER: Thomas Ackerman

AYES: Marcia Zosack, David Olds, Corey Cane

ABSENT: David Luoma, Ken Tingle, Michael Bevilacqua

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 day in advance of the meeting:

[emailto:commissioner@townofmerrimac.com](mailto:commissioner@townofmerrimac.com) or 978-346-0525